

Plainfield Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes 21 August 2013

Present: Sarah Albert, Becky Buchanan, Kate Harper, Jan Waterman

Absent: Charlie Cogbill, Julie Hackbarth

Guest: Rebecca “Becky” Cushing

A warm welcome to Becky Cushing, who has expressed interest in joining the commission. She will send a note to that effect to the Selectboard.

Minutes: Minutes from July meeting approved.

Town Plan: The Planning Commission has forwarded their last draft, adjusted after their public hearing, to the Selectboard. At their meeting on August 26th, the Selectboard will set a date for their public hearing. Jan asked everyone present to review this draft and send the Selectboard their comments.

Town Forest /Trails: Sarah and Allen Clark walked with county forester Russ Barrett during his evaluation of the town forest. She reported that Russ recommended harvesting red pine now, as there’s a market for it. We should get the harvesting done before having the trails built. Since Russ is retiring soon, he may not have time to mark trees for us. Rather than putting off the marking and harvesting until his successor is in place and available, we could see about hiring a forester, ideally someone who is familiar with abutting properties who could view larger area as a whole. Cost of the service could come out of proceeds from the timber sale. We’d like any extra funds from sale to go into Conservation Fund, or if needed, use them as matching funds for trail construction grant. Sarah created and distributed a proposed timeline and budget for town forest work. (attached) She will present the tree harvesting idea to the Selectboard ASAP for their ok.

We discussed applying for the large grant which would fund trail building work from Forest, Parks and Recreation Dept’s Recreation Trails Program (RTP); consensus was definitely “yes.” This year, they’ll allow costs of work on Class 4 roads to serve as matching funds, under certain conditions which it seems the town could easily meet. Sarah will begin work on grant application and take a draft to the RTP workshop for feedback. Luke O’Brien also offered to donate a day or two of his time towards the required match if needed. Becky C. suggested asking townspeople to help with construction of trails during a fun/work day towards the end of the project. This would help publicize the creation of town forest trails and supply more volunteer hours which could count towards the match.

AVCC Tiny Grants: We were awarded one of four grants; notification will be published in newspaper soon. Next steps discussed. Sarah invited Luke O’Brien to come and flag the trails; he hopes to do so next month. “Before and after” photos would be a good addition to the report we’ll submit to AVCC.

Littlewood Farm Conservation Easement: It seems the agreement has just been signed, but we haven’t received official notice yet.

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission has launched their new Forest Stewardship Program. Jan attended the first meeting and will continue to serve as liaison. They will have another meeting on Sept. 25.

Next meeting: 7:15 p.m. September 18, 2013

Respectfully submitted by:

Jan Waterman, Secretary
Plainfield Conservation Commission

Town Forest timeline draft

Talk w/ selectboard about:

- Russ Barrett visit & tree harvest, hiring a forester for marking trees
- allocation of profits to conservation fund
- downgrading of section of Gonyeau Rd.
- grant match

[selectboard meetings: 8/26, 9/9, 9/23]

ongoing: work with Luke on work scope, budget figures (part of AVCC grant)
 talk w/ bike/ped people* about feasibility of connecting Gonyeau & Maxfield
 talk w/ Mike Nolan about time/materials cost for Maxfield Rd. parking area upgrade and culvert/roadbed
 repair on Gonyeau Rd., cost of concrete barriers

Sept. 11: RTP workshop, Mt. Philo state park

Sept. 18: next CC meeting

Sept. 30th : RTP grant deadline

Sept/Oct: Luke flags trails (part of AVCC grant)

Oct/Nov: forester marks trees

Winter: Logging takes place

January: RTP grant notification

Spring 2014: Revisit trail routes w/ Luke, post-logging; schedule crew for fall

Fall 2014: Trail construction

*Jon Kaplan, VT Bike/Ped Program Manager
 Nancy Schulz, VT Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition

RTP budget--including work on class 4 road	low	high	
Trails development, including water berms	4,800	8,400	61%
Bog bridging materials	150	150	1%
Trailhead kiosks (2)	600	1,000	7%
Signage, map and pamphlets	150	300	2%
Barriers to restrict motorized access (2 points)	200	400	3%
Grading of parking area, stone fill, define edges	1,000	1,500	11%
Culvert replacement, grading of trail section	1,000	2,000	15%
Total	\$7,900	\$13,750	
20% town match	\$1,580	\$2,750	
RTP budget--without work on class 4 road	low	high	
Trails development, including water berms	4,800	8,400	71%
Bog bridging materials	150	150	1%
Trailhead kiosks (2)	600	1,000	9%
Signage, map and pamphlets	150	300	3%
Barriers to restrict motorized access (2 points)	200	400	3%
Grading of parking area, stone fill, define edges	1,000	1,500	13%
Total	\$6,900	\$11,750	
20% town match	\$1,380	\$2,350	