

**Plainfield Conservation Commission**  
Meeting Minutes 16 September 2015

Convened 7:15 p.m.

Present: Sarah Albert, Becky Buchanan, Michael Billingsley, Julie Hackbarth, Kate Harper, Mary Trerice, Jan Waterman

Absent: Charlie Cogbill

Guest: Jessica Rubin (8:45)

Minutes: Minutes from August meeting approved.

Inventory Project: The permission process is concluded. Brett will be continuing with site visits. The last few parcels he was given permission to access pleased him very much, and he thanks us all for our hard work on this phase of the project. Michael asked for and received approval to rearrange the spreadsheet by sites, for Brett's convenience, after which Michael will "freeze" it so no more changes can be made to it, except by him if need be. Jan will check with Brett about when we can set a date for his final report at a public forum.

Rain Garden work date:

The CC has scheduled a rain garden work day with Shawn White (Friends of the Winooski) for planting on September 27, to start at 1:00. Shawn will bring the plants, and Kate will bring some large plastic bags for weeds removed on that day. Volunteers always welcome.

Old Home Day: Mary reported that the CC float, a cardboard coffin created and pulled in the parade by Michael, and filled with invasive plants, was a hit. Volunteers handing out information brochures along the parade route reported lots of interest and concern about invasives. The information and plants display at the Rec Field was also very successful, judging by the steady stream of people coming by, asking questions and engaging in conversation with CC members and with Bruce Howlett (USDA/NRCS) who was very knowledgeable and a great source of information.

An added benefit was the participation of Jessica Rubin, who would like to continue involvement with the CC.

Town Forest Work Day: On Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, we will have a work day at the town forest to remove as many invasives there as possible before the logging happens. (Rain date Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>.) We will meet at the Park and Ride for carpooling at 12:30, and access the forest via the Gonyeau Rd. entrance, intending to work from 1:00 – 4:00. Bring snacks, water bottles, gloves. Jan will bring her weed wrench, and ask if Allen Clark can come with his weed wrench as well. Sarah will ask Rose Paul to join us. Michael will compose a press release for FPF, and a listing for the World calendar, and will circulate the drafts to CC. Jan will coordinate efforts.

Brook Naming Hearing: October 13<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. at the Midstate Library Service Center in Berlin. Michael will notify Grandmother Jeanne Brink and the Abenaki Language Group. Assuming the name "Mskaskek Brook" is approved, Michael will work with the Selectboard to organize and publicize a commemorative public ceremony at the brook. He passed along from Grandmother Jeanne the information that it has been 80 years since an Abenaki name has been given to a geographic feature in Vermont.

Meeting Room Closet: At an earlier meeting, we discussed getting shelving for the meeting room closet, to help with organizing the space to provide more and better storage. Sarah spoke with Linda Wells about this, and Linda said she would contact someone who's done similar work in the town office in the past.

Street Tree Inventory: Sarah and Nicko Rubin, the town Tree Warden, have been working with Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) to arrange an October inventory of Plainfield's village street trees. The inventory will

be conducted by UVM student volunteers and the information gathered will be part of an ANR database. Because of the data sharing, the project requires Selectboard approval which they will address at their next meeting.

Sue Morse presentation: The Marshfield Conservation Commission would like our cooperation to hire Sue Morse for a public educational presentation on the subject of big cats. Her fee is \$400. They have already pledged \$100, have secured commitments of \$100 each from the Cutler Library and the Jacquith Library, and asked if we could contribute \$100. We have enough money for public outreach and education in our budget to cover this. We might also ask for donations at the event to help defray costs. Michael moved that the CC provide \$100 for this event; the motion was approved unanimously. Sarah will be point person on this. The proposed date for the event is Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Community Resilience Organizations (CROs): We discussed a project proposed to the Selectboard this past Monday by Peg Elmer-Hough. She is organizing a consortium of towns which will strengthen their systems of response to crises by networking with each other and by coordinating resources available within each one, including food shelves, emergency response teams, shelters, town energy coordinators, conservation commissions and more. There is grant money available to Plainfield to take part in this effort, and the Selectboard decided to submit an application. Michael attended this Selectboard meeting, and is willing to work with Peg and Selectboard member Betsy Ziegler to complete the application. Peg is asking the CC for a letter of support to submit with the grant application. After discussion, we came to consensus, directing Michael to draft the letter and circulate to the CC; when it's finalized, Kate will sign it.

Jessica Rubin entered at 8:45.

Brainstorming on Climate Change: We reviewed an invitation from the Plainfield and Marshfield energy teams to attend a brainstorming session on September 23 at Twinfield; pizza at 6 p.m.; discussion at 6:30. (RSVP by 9/18.)

Jessica was introduced and shared with us some of her interests and experiences related to conservation. She intends to join us for future meetings.

Meeting adjourned 9:05 p.m.

Next meeting: October 21, at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jan Waterman, Secretary  
Plainfield Conservation Commission