Northfield Conservation Commission

Minutes of the Meeting on Wednesday, December 14, 2016

6:30 PM --- Municipal Building

- I. **Roll Call**: Present were Commissioners Laura Hill-Eubanks, Christine Barnes, Jane Pekol, Ruth Ruttenberg, Leslie Matthews
- II. Set/Adjust Agenda: Added Energy Meeting
- III. Public Participation (Scheduled): None
- IV. **Approval of Minutes:** November 9, 2016
 - a. Approved 6-0-0

V. Discussion

- a. Recreation Grant
 - i. Pam will get a hearing in front of the Selectboard soon to ensure that the Trails Grant is signed and moves forward.
 - ii. There is the potential for the establishment of a maintenance fund.
- b. Zoning Regulations
 - i. Laura gave the Planning Commission the memo for Zoning Regulations for the Town Plan. She will follow up with them.
- c. Energy Meeting
 - i. Local Energy Plans have to conform with State and Regional Energy Plans. Towns will then get deference and have a say in renewable energy siting.
 - ii. A meeting on this was scheduled for the same time as this NCC meeting. Laura will get information.
- d. Roadway Tree Cutting
 - It is the opinion of NCC that the Town should take advantage of the opportunity (from a federal grant) to consult and advise 10 Vermont towns on best practices for that town's specific roadways.
 - ii. Moved to approve Ruth's public statement on this issue and to add this to Pam's outreach efforts to those involved
 - iii. In recent cuttings, 15' stumps have been left where there is a "posted" sign on the tree slated for cutting
- e. Creating Conservation Fund and NCC Operational Fund
 - i. Potential to set up a Fund
 - 1. To expand and enrich the Town Forest
 - 2. To maintain the Town Forest in its current and future state
 - ii. Discussed the idea of a ballot funding initiative to start this fund. We would need to get 30 signatures or to get the Selectboard to put this on the next ballot. This could be "seed" money to then get larger grants and matches.
 - iii. There may be viable land acquisition options out there now
 - iv. We could just ask to set up the fund, for starters
 - v. Would need to establish framework for how the money gets spent
 - vi. NCC will try to get on the Selectboard meeting agenda and ask to get the Conservation Fund on the ballot and to ask for modest Operation Funds
- f. Future Plans

 Individually filled out AVCC Meeting Survey on Priority Functions, rating priorities from most to least important

g. How to Eat your Landscape

- TED Talk—shows community in Britain that has planted all public spaces in edibles
- ii. Christine has spoken to a few interested folks, potential donors, potential coalition members
- iii. "Vegetable Tourism," pollinators, native plants, public education
- iv. This lends itself well to the "plant a row" initiative of helping provide fresh vegetables to those in need. There are also "wood sharing" programs in other areas in this same vein.
- v. This is a potential for the Water Street Park and adjoining land.
- vi. Christine will let Anne Donahue and the Rotary know that we are interested in supporting this. (Motion was made and approved).

h. Stewardship Plan

- i. Laura will write up the language on "rules" that need to be included and fleshed out
- ii. Leslie worked on the Trail Map.
 - 1. Question on where the directional arrows, and discussed the color coding of the trails, how that could work in black and white.
 - 2. Take off QR code area
- iii. Town Forest Stewardship Committee will be an "advisory committee." We would ask for applications and then recommend the members to the Selectboad for approval.

iv. Town Forest History

1. Could be "mapped"—map cultural and significant historical features like the barn foundation, old piping

v. Arrowwood

- 1. Ruth will email Michael and discuss the possibility of us finishing the document and Arrowwood coming to Selectboard meetings to present.
- We can send a copy of the final changes. Leslie will figure out how to present our tracked changes/document comparison to them. Ask whether or not this is necessary.
- 3. Ruth will ask Arrowwood whether the public forum or the Selectboard presentation should come first.
- 4. Discussed final punch list.
- 5. Add Green Mountain Family Practice or Shaw Center to help orient folks to the map.
- 6. Potentially remove some of the road names (of roads at the bottom) to help de-clutter the map
- 7. Discussed the possibility of a website

VI. Adjournment

a. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35