

## Northfield Conservation Commission

### Minutes of the Meeting on Wednesday, January 11, 2017

6:30 PM --- Municipal Building

- I. **Roll Call:** Present were Commissioners Laura Hill-Eubanks, Christine Barnes, Jane Pekol, Ruth Ruttenberg, Leslie Matthews, Nathaniel Miller, Pam Knox
- II. **Set/Adjust Agenda:** Added Conservation Camp Scholarship, Backroads, SolSmart Designation
- III. **Public Participation (Scheduled):** None
- IV. **Approval of Minutes:** December 12, 2016
  - a. Approved 6-0-1
- V. **Discussion**
  - a. Zoning Regulations
    - i. Facing opposition to repairing and expanding the riparian buffers. New regulations on stormwater management may not currently stipulate riparian buffers. Ruth will contact Danielle Fitzco who may know the best management practices. We had included riparian buffers in our piece for the Town Plan. No Zoning Administrator has been hired and there have been issues with the Planning Committee.
  - b. Winter Carnival
    - i. March 11-12 Memorial Park and Falls Fields. We are invited to participate on the 11<sup>th</sup>. A nature walk was suggested for NCC to lead. Jane and Pam will coordinate. The school forest may be easier for families with children than the Town Forest this time of year.
  - c. Town Forest Recreation Planning Summit
    - i. The Summit is January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in Bethel. (Snow date 1/25)
  - d. NCC Priority Function Tally
    - i. Water Quality ranked first in importance, Stewardship of public lands ranked second, and then Land Conservation
    - ii. Our next focus can be presented at Town Meeting along with the Conservation Fund vote which will allow us to leverage grant money. We can then seek out landowners who want to put their land under conservation easement.
    - iii. We need to come up with a way to present the idea of the Conservation Fund for Town Meeting—pamphlets that explain the Fund.
  - e. Conservation Camp
    - i. Pam has created an application. We need a subcommittee of NCC who will go over and approve the applications.
    - ii. Pam will ask the TA's at the middle school how best to distribute the applications. We can also leave these in the library.
  - f. Town Annual Report
    - i. Our piece of the draft is due at the end of the month. Christine will do the writing this year (1.5 page).
  - g. SolSmart Designation

- i. Jane Pekol and Nick Laskovski got permission from the Selectboard to apply for SolSmart Designation for the Town. This is a program of the federal DOE aimed at reducing the “soft costs” of solar energy development. If Northfield is selected for Solsmart Designation we would receive an Advisor (a paid position) who would work on the goals of cost reduction.
- h. Town Forest Stewardship Plan
  - i. Discussed the proposed process for establishing new trails through the Town Forest Stewardship Committee. This will be located in a chapter after Recommendations.
  - ii. New trails “should” not be created in the area with frequent bear sitings.
  - iii. Area of deer winter habitat “must” be managed specifically to enhance the conifer overstory...Prohibit the creation of new trails in this area.
  - iv. Arrowwood will be at the public hearing on this Plan.

**VI. Adjournment**

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 8:05