

## NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

5:30 P.M. Municipal Building

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Commissioners Russ Barrett, Debbie Zuaro, Pam Knox, Ruth Ruttenberg, Laura Hill-Eubanks; Jane Pekol arrived at 6:40.
- II. **SET/ADJUST AGENDA:** None
- III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes of April 8, 2018; approved 4-0-1.
- V. **DISCUSSION:**
  - a. **TDS Fundraising Activities and Issues:** More than \$4500 has been raised for the TDS/Paine Mountain/Town Forest land purchase thus far. T-shirts printed and will be sold for \$20 per shirt. Available at the Farmer's Market. Shirt had image of Paine Mountain on it. May add NCC logo for next printing.

Grants: Did not get AVCC or High Meadows Foundation. Waiting to hear on Kelsey Foundation, Ben & Jerry's, and Rotary. Open Spaces Initiative is a possibility, but requires conservation easement on property; check on whether it would be required on TDS parcel only, and whether this is worth pursuing (funding amount is significant). River Conservancy is also a good possibility because 60-80% the property is in the Berlin Pond watershed.

Fundraising subcommittee member Kati Osgood would like to create a new website for Paine Mountain/NCC. Would promote Paine Mountain purchase. NCC members asked that it include conservation and that NCC have oversight of content. Kati would also like to republish the Paine Mountain Guidebook.

Footrace is planned for August 18. Select Board must give approval, but initial reaction was positive. Debbie thought a celebration of Paine Mountain would be in order after the funding deadline was reached and near the time of the footrace.

A new press release about the TDS/Paine Mountain project will be submitted to Northfield News.
  - b. **Potential Solar Farm on Cheney Field:** The Northfield Utilities Commission is proposing to install a utility scale solar farm over the Cheney Field part of the Town Forest. NCC members expressed concerns over whether this type of project would be appropriate in Cheney Field, and discussed the issues it raises. The trail that leads from Byam Hill Rd and into the Cheney Field is currently the only known public access point into the Town Forest. If access to the Cheney Field were restricted by solar farm developers, it could impact access to the Town Forest and could also impede access by logging equipment. Russ, Debbie, and Laura will work on explaining issues and concerns to the public, and will plan to meet soon with the Select Board.

- c. **Dustin's Pasture:** Dustin's Pasture is town-owned forestland located in both Berlin and Northfield. The land is adjacent to the Berlin Town Forest. It is landlocked and difficult to get to. NCC will organize a public hike to visit the parcel.
- d. **Conservation Camp:** NCC has received no responses to its request for applications to send kids to conservation camp. Rotary has given the NCC grants that would pay the fees for three children to go to conservation camp over the summer. Pam and Ruth will look at possibility of sending kids to day camps.
- e. **Officer Elections:** Motion by Ruttenberg to re-elect current officers for coming year: Pam Knox as Chair, Russ Barrett as Vice-Chair, Jane Pekol as Secretary, and Laura Hill-Eubanks as Treasurer. Seconded by Barrett. Motion carried 6-0-0.

**VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

- VII. OTHER BUSINESS:** Russ has joined the Clean Water Advisory Committee ("CWAC") at the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. The committee will look at projects to improve water quality in the Upper Winooski River watershed, and how to prioritize those projects in our region.

Jane organized a successful and informative energy forum that took place in April. Laura represented the Planning Commission at the forum and will forward along the slide presentation.

- VI. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

*These minutes are subject to changes and approval at the next meeting but are substantially correct.*