

Draft Minutes of the
Hartford Conservation Commission
February 4, 2019

Members Present: Angela Emerson, Dana Hazen, Mary Hutchins, Tom Kahl, Lee Michaelides and chair Jon Bouton.

Staff Present: Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Katie Mann.

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held at the Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Jct. on Monday, February 4, 2018 in Room 2. Jon Bouton called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes or additions to the agenda. Tom Kahl suggested discussing dates for 2019 HCC events. The HCC agreed.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any corrections to the Draft Minutes of December 3, 2018. Being none, Jon stated that the minutes are approved as written by unanimous consent.
3. **HCC Priorities:** Jon Bouton asked the HCC to discuss priorities for 2019. Matt Osborn distributed copies of the 2018 Annual Report. The HCC came up with the following list:
 - Add the Town Plan Natural Resources Chapter to the list
 - Review Town Plan Natural Resources Chapter recommendations
 - Finalize the Town Forest Trails Map
 - Review the Town Forest Recreation Plan Final Report
 - Continue contacts with large property owners
 - Wetlands Mapping
 - Scenic Resources update
 - Collaborate with the mountain bike community regarding trail maintenance
 - Town Forest Trails work with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps
 - Green-Up Day
 - Annual Town Forest snowshoe outing
 - Annual Town Forest vernal pool walk
 - Participate in the Hartford Community Coalition Block Party
 - Invasive Plants Education
 - Enhance Town Forest wildlife habitat diversity
 - Review all of the Town Forest plans and inventories

Angie Emerson suggested organizing the HCC priorities by category and selecting the top three priorities. The HCC agreed. Angie came up with the following priorities:

Conservation:

1. Property Owner Contacts
2. Town Plan Natural Resource Chapter Goals, Strategies & Actions
3. Review of the Town Forest plans and inventories

Recreation:

1. Town Forest Trails Map
2. Contract with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps for trails work in the Town Forest
3. Trails Day

Education:

1. HCC sponsored events (snowshoe outing, vernal pool walk & invasive plant outing)
2. Participate in the Hartford Community Coalition Block Party

The HCC agreed with the list. Angie volunteered to do a timeline.

- 4. Hartford Town Plan Update:** Jon Bouton reported that he has been working on the final touches of the Draft Natural Resources Chapter of the Town Plan. It includes the introduction, habitat blocks and reviewing comments from the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission regarding the 2014 Town Plan. Jon agreed that once he has finished with the revised draft, he will distribute it to the HCC.
- 5. Natural Resources Review:** Tom Kahl agreed to update the follow-up letters to property owners and submit to Jon Bouton for his review and signature.
- 6. Town Forest Recreation Plan:** Jon Bouton noted that the Recreation Plan needs to go back to the Selectboard. Matt Osborn suggested that it take place after Town Meeting since the Selectboard is very busy at this time. The HCC agreed. Tom Kahl asked about the additional materials that were to be provided by the consultant. Jon agreed to follow-up.
- 7. Town Forest Trails Assessment:** Angie Emerson noted that the HCC needs to meet to discuss the trails assessment. The HCC agreed to meet on Tuesday, February 19th at 4:00 p.m.
- 8. Town Forest Snowshoe:** Angie Emerson suggested holding the HCC Annual Snowshoe outing at the Town Forest on Saturday, February 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Matt Osborn agreed to work on promotion of the event.
- 9. Driveway Workshop:** Jon Bouton reported that in Decemeber, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission sponsored a workshop for homeowners on driveway maintenance and stormwater management. Matt Osborn noted that Watershed Consulting Associates presented. They helped the Town in developing stormwater standards for the Subdivision Regulations. He noted that they do good work. Jon thinks it would be great to hold the workshop here and that the HCC could possibly co-sponsor the event with the Community Resilience Organization Hartford. The HCC agreed it was a good idea. Jon agreed to investigate.
- 10. LL Bean Event on the Hazen Trail:** Matt Osborn reported that he was contacted by LL Bean about using the Hazen Trail for hikes and snowshoe outings. The group size will be limited to 10 people. Matt noted that parking is limited and suggested that they carpool to the site. The HCC agreed.
- 11. Community Resilience Organization Hartford (CROH):** Jon Bouton reported that CROH will be sponsoring a workshop on Wednesday, April 24th on the Hurricane of 1938 by Steve Long, author of the book "38".

12. Connecticut River Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study: Matt Osborn presented a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about a Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study for the Connecticut River that is being planned. The letter noted that the Army Corps is soliciting comments at this time. Lee Michaelides agreed to put together a letter about some of the river and watershed issues facing Hartford.

13. Prayer for the Woods: Jon Bouton distributed a Prayer for the Woods which he thinks would be appropriate for the Town Forest. The HCC agreed. Mary Hutchins volunteered to wood burn the prayer. Jon thanked Mary.

14. HCC Schedule of Events for 2019: The HCC agreed to the following schedule:

- Vernal Pool Walk: Saturday, April 20th 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Town Forest
- Green-Up Day: Saturday, May 4th 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Town Hall
- Trail Work Day: Saturday, May 11th 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Town Forest
- David Chang Conservation Area Visit: Monday, June 3rd 6:00 p.m. followed by HCC Meeting
- Maanawaka Conservation Area Visit: Monday, July 1st 6:00 p.m. followed by HCC Meeting
- Trail Work Day: Saturday, September 14th 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Town Forest

15. Coffee with Committees: Jon Bouton reported that the HCC was invited to have a table with information about the Conservation Commission on Saturday, March 2nd prior to Town Meeting. Jon noted that he reserved a table for the HCC. Jon suggested focusing on the Town Forest Recreation Plan. The HCC agreed. Katie Mann volunteered to prepare a flyer.

16. Announcements/Reports:

- a. HCC Opening: Jon Bouton asked Katie Mann if she is still interested in joining the Conservation Commission. She responded yes. The next step is to make application to the Town Manager's Office and schedule an interview with the Selectboard.
- b. Tom Ostler's Natural Resources Class: Jon Bouton suggested asking the Class to do some invasive plant control in the Town Forest. The HCC agreed. Matt Osborn reported that there is a small area of Japanese Knotweed along Reservoir that should be dealt with soon to prevent spreading. The HCC agreed.
- c. Town Forest Boulders: Jon Bouton noted that following the dumping of roofing materials two years ago near the vernal pool, the HCC had discussed placing boulders around the entrance to the Southside Trail to prevent further illegal dumping. Mary Hutchins suggested dropping a tree instead. The HCC agreed. Mary volunteered to take care of it.
- d. Town-wide Trails Project: Mary Hutchins reported that the local snow mobile club, the Hurricane Riders, have been working with property owners to develop a trail between Neal Road and Quechee.

12. Next Meeting: Jon Bouton noted that the next HCC meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 4th.

13. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.