

Approved Minutes of the
Hartford Conservation Commission
March 5, 2018

Members Present: Angie Emerson, Dana Hazen, Mary Hutchins, Tom Kahl, Shawn Kelley and chair Jon Bouton.

Staff Present: Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: None.

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held at the Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Jct. on Monday, March 5, 2018 in Room 2. Jon Bouton called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

1. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes or additions to the agenda. Matt Osborn responded Flavors of the Valley. The HCC agreed.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes to the Draft Minutes of February 5, 2018. Jon made a correction. Being no other corrections, Jon stated that the minutes are approved by unanimous consent with the noted correction.
3. **Hartford Master Plan:** Matt Osborn distributed copies of the Natural Resources Chapter of the Hartford Master Plan. Matt noted that the chapter was last updated in 2003. He stated that the HCC worked closely with staff in putting together the chapter in 2003. He stated that this is an opportunity for the HCC to help shape the update. There was discussion. Shawn Kelley wasn't sure all of the inventory information is necessary. He suggested an appendix instead. Mary Hutchins expressed concern about restrictions on private property. Angela Emerson noted that Act 171 needs to be addressed in the Town Plan. She also noted that she attended a workshop last year and the speaker noted that it is important to have recommendations in the Town Plan relating to Act 250 applications. Jon Bouton noted that he isn't sure how to proceed with work on the update. He suggested that the HCC start by reading the Natural Resources chapter for the 4/2 HCC meeting. He also suggested that the HCC read the Land Use chapter as well. The HCC agreed.
4. **Natural Resources Review:** Tom Kahl distributed a list of resources about land management and stewardship, wildlife and conservation to be handed out to property owners. He noted this was suggested by former Conservation Commission chair Chuck Wooster. Mary Hutchins suggested placing the links on the town website. The HCC agreed. Mary agreed to work on designing the information into a brochure.
5. **HCC Bylaws:** Matt Osborn reported that it was requested that he review the proposed bylaw changes in relation to the Town Charter. Once completed, he will put together a memo to the Selectboard noting the reason for each of the changes. At that point, the HCC can move forward with scheduling a vote on the proposed bylaw changes.
6. **Town Forest Trails:** Angie Emerson reported that the Map Team comprised of Jon Bouton, Dana Hazen, Tim Schaal, Matt Osborn and herself met on February 23rd. It was agreed to keep moving forward on revisions to the trails map which is being done by HCC member Dana Hazen. The Committee agreed to pursue working with the Upper Valley Trails Alliance to conduct a trails assessment this spring. Angie noted that the proposed plan for assessing the trails and the proposed content of the map can be presented to the Recreation Steering Committee meeting in May. Jon Bouton suggested holding off on distributing the draft map to the public. The HCC agreed.

7. **Town Forest Trail Signs:** Jon Bouton stated that it is important that we have standardized trail signs. The HCC agreed.
8. **Town Forest Recreation Planning Project:** Matt Osborn reported that as of two weeks ago, Hartford had 72 completed on-line surveys for the Town Forest Recreation Planning Project. This was the most of the ten towns participating in the Town Forest project. Tom Kahl reported that the HCC had hard copies of the survey at the HCC table at the pre-town meeting. Matt noted that the survey will be closed on Wednesday.
9. **Invasive Plants:** Dana Hazen reported that the Emerald Ash Borer was discovered in Orange County. This is the first sighting of the invasive insect in Vermont.
10. **Community Resilience Organization Hartford (CROH):** Jon Bouton reported that CROH is joining forces with an Antioch University Professor and the Bugbee Senior Center on a Resilient Seniors Project that will focus on the vulnerability of seniors during extreme weather events. The project will include community meetings and a survey of seniors.
11. **Announcements/Reports:**
 - a. Town Meeting Table: Tom Kahl reported that there was a light turnout during the pre-Town Meeting information table part of the schedule Saturday morning. The HCC agreed that it is good exposure for the Commission and agreed to participate in the event next year.
 - b. Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission Regional Plan: Matt Osborn distributed a section of the Regional Plan Natural Resources Chapter. He also distributed a schedule for the update.
 - c. Upper Valley Land Trust Conservation Commission Gathering: Jon Bouton reported that Tom Kahl and he attended the annual Conservation Commission gathering of the Upper Valley Land Trust. He stated that there was a good turnout. He also reported that there was an informative presentation on the Vermont BioFinder.
 - d. HCC Snowshoe: Angie Emerson reported that there was a good turnout (14 people) for the February 17th HCC & Green Mountain Club snowshoe in the Town Forest. Angie thinks that co-sponsoring with the Green Mountain Club helped with attendance and hopes to do it again next year. The HCC agreed.
 - e. Sprague Wetlands Permit: Matt Osborn distributed a state wetlands permit application for the construction of a house and driveway off Valley View Road.
 - f. Flavors of the Valley: Matt Osborn reported that the Hartford Energy Commission wants to know if the Conservation Commission would like to share a table at the Flavors of the Valley event at Hartford High School on April 8th. The cost would be \$75. The HCC agreed not to participate.
12. **Next Meeting:** Jon Bouton noted that the next HCC meeting is scheduled for Monday, April; 2nd.
13. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.