

**Approved Minutes of the
Hartford Conservation Commission
March 7, 2016**

Members Present: Janice Berger, Mary Hutchins, Shawn Kelley and vice-chair Karen Douville.

Staff Present: Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Dana Hazen and Graham Kelley.

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held at the Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, WRJ, Vermont, on Monday, March 7, 2016 in Room 312. Vice-chair Karen Douville called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

1. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** Karen Douville asked if there are any changes or additions to the agenda. There were none.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Karen Douville noted a correction to the Draft Minutes of February 1st. She asked if there were any other changes. Mary Hutchins made a correction. Being no other changes, Karen stated that the minutes are approved by unanimous consent with the noted changes.
3. **Conservation Priorities:** Karen Douville reported that she has been working with Janice Berger on conservation priorities. She noted that the HCC has worked on this two other times in the last few years. She stated that this time she received assistance from G.I.S. Planner Pete Fellows of the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission. Pete provided a new gis map layer of parcels by owner and not the traditional individual parcels. The new map layer will be uploaded into Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Atlas maps to assist in prioritizing parcels for conservation. Karen noted that Janice and Karen will not do any prioritizing and will leave it up to the HCC.
4. **Town Forest Building Debris:** Mary Hutchins reported that she will pick up the remaining building debris that was dumped near the south-side vernal pools. Mary will use her ATV to collect the materials.
5. **Linking Lands Alliance:** Karen Douville reported that the wildlife program presented by forester Patrick Bartlett at Damon Hall in Hartland on February 13th was well-attended.
6. **Community Resilience Organization Hartford (CROH):** Matt Osborn reported that the CROH Committee is planning a Hazard Awareness and Resilience Week August 22-27. The event coincides with the 5th anniversary of the Tropical Storm Irene flood and will culminate with a large event to be held August 27th. He stated that CROH is looking for partners for the event.
7. **Hartford Subdivision Regulations:** Matt Osborn reported that the Hartford Selectboard adopted the Draft Subdivision Regulations as presented following the February 16th public hearing. Staff had provided an overview of the Subdivision Regulations to the Selectboard on February 2nd. Matt noted that the last update was done in 1987. It took several years to

develop the draft and the Planning Commission held a total of 48 workshops. He stated that the Subdivision Regulations update continued implementation of the 2007 Master Plan. Karen Douville noted that in developing the 2007 Master Plan, there was a great deal of community involvement. Matt agreed stating that numerous community meetings were held over a five year period to solicit public input. Matt stated that the Master Plan recommendations emphasized the importance of protecting Hartford's rural character and natural resources. Some of the Master Plan recommendations were implemented in the 2008 amendments to the Zoning Regulations, such as the Rural Lands Overlay District, Wildlife Connector Overlay District, the Agriculture Overlay District, and the Forest Conservation zoning district. He went over planning standards in the Subdivision Regulations that attempt to ensure that new development is designed in such a way to protect rural character and natural resources noting that it is a significant improvement over the 1987 Subdivision Regulations. Karen acknowledged the work of Matt, planning staff and the Planning Commission in completing the Subdivision Regulations amendments.

8. Town-wide Trails Project: Mary Hutchins reported that the Quechee business community expressed an interest in creating a snow machine trail from the south side of Hartford to Quechee and that progress on the trail has been made. The trail will utilize Class 4 roads along with some private property and the Vermont State Park. Karen Douville asked if the trail could be used other times of the year. Mary responded yes for hiking and biking, but probably not ATV use.

9. Announcements/Reports:

- a. HCC Snowshoe: Shawn Kelley reported that the Annual HCC Snowshoe that was held on February 20th was a success. There were nine participants. They spent time touring the Town Forest and identifying trees. A cookout was held at the end of the outing.
- b. Vernal Pool Walk: Karen Douville stated that she wanted to wait until the April 4th HCC Meeting to select a date for the vernal pool walk since it is so weather dependent.
- c. Annual UVLT Conservation Commission Gathering: Matt Osborn reported that the Annual Conservation Commission Gathering of the Upper Valley Land Trust is scheduled for Tuesday, March 29th at the Center for Cartoon Studies in Downtown White River Junction.
- d. Staying Connected Wildlife Habitat Meeting: Matt Osborn reported that there will be a meeting on wildlife habitat connectivity in Bethel on Thursday, March 10th.
- e. Recruiting New HCC Members: Dana Hazen reported that he submitted an application to the Town Manager's office to serve on the Conservation Commission. He is awaiting an interview with the Selectboard.

10. Next Meeting: Matt Osborn reported that the next regularly scheduled HCC meeting will be held on Monday, April 4th.

11. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.