

**Approved Minutes of the
Hartford Conservation Commission
August 1, 2016**

Members Present: Karen Douville, Dana Hazen, Mary Hutchins, Shawn Kelley and chair Jon Bouton.

Staff Present: Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Resident Tom Kahl and Boy Scouts Connor Chandler and Adam Potter.

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held at the Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, WRJ on Monday, August 1, 2016 in Room 312. Chair Jon Bouton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Introductions were made.

- 1. Approval of Minutes:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes to the Draft Minutes of July 11th. Karen Douville noted a correction. Jon suggested a change and addition. The Commission agreed. Jon stated that the minutes are approved by unanimous consent with the noted changes.
- 2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes or additions to the agenda. Matt Osborn requested that the HCC Budget and Lower Hurricane Reservoir be added to the agenda. The Commission agreed.
- 3. Town Forest Eagle Scout Project:** Boy Scouts Connor Chandler and Adam Potter were present to discuss possible Eagle Scout projects in the Town Forest. Jon Bouton reported that he met with Connor and Matt Osborn last week to discuss possible projects. Connor spent some time in the Town Forest since then and presented the HCC the following list of projects:
 - Install a box culvert on the Moose Brook Trail to fix a wet section of trail
 - Repair the Trailhead Kiosk
 - Construct a trailhead kiosk at the south end of the Town Forest
 - Repair the bridge on Simonds Way

Adam Potter stated that he is interested in designing and constructing a solution to the West Side Trail drainage problem. He will be submitting a proposal to the HCC soon.

Karen Douville asked if the projects would impact any of the wetlands. Jon explained the wetlands conservation plan that the Town is required to adhere to as part of an Act 250 permit. Matt Osborn read from the conservation plan requirements.

Connor Chandler asked if the Town has funds that could be used to purchase materials for the projects. Jon Bouton responded that the conservation fund could be utilized. The HCC agreed. Connor and Adam will obtain cost estimates for the materials.

The HCC reviewed photos and examples of designs from other sites that Connor provided. Matt Osborn suggested designing a smaller kiosk for the south end of the Town Forest similar to the Maanawaka Conservation Area kiosk. The HCC agreed.

Jon Bouton suggested that Connor and Adam work with Matt Osborn and a HCC member. Dana Hazen volunteered. Dana made a motion to accept Connor Chandler's proposal (noted above) for an Eagle Scout Project in the Hartford Town Forest. The motion was seconded by Mary Hutchins and approved unanimously.

4. **Natural Resources Review:** Karen Douville reported that she has continued to work with Janice Berger on the natural resource review of all Hartford parcels 25 acres and larger using mapping layers and data from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. Karen noted that they utilized the 2008 Linking Lands Alliance survey of town resident's top conservation properties. There was a discussion of the data and the attributes. Jon Bouton noted that the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources data will be updated over time. He suggested meeting with Karen and Matt Osborn to get a better understanding of the data and how to use it. Jon thanked Karen and Janice Berger for the amount of time and effort that they have put into the project. The HCC agreed.
5. **Land Management Subcommittee:** Jon Bouton reported that Dana Hazen added wetlands information to the Town Forest Trails Map giving us a completed map. Dana requested that the HCC review the map for accuracy. He also suggested field verification. Jon stated that we need to get back to the Land Management Subcommittee with the map and come to a resolution on trails. Jon stated that the HCC will need to conduct site investigations and noted that the HCC may need to hire a wetlands specialist. Tom Kahl stated that instead of a full-scale wetlands inventory, the HCC might want to consider having a wetlands specialist look only at the wet areas at trail intersections. Jon Bouton suggested obtaining quotes for a wetlands inventory limited to trail crossings areas and a full-scale wetlands inventory. Matt Osborn agreed to inquire. Jon thanked Dana for adding the wetlands information to the trails map. The HCC agreed.
6. **Lower Hurricane Reservoir:** Jon Bouton reported that Town Forest neighbor Judy Lombardi notified Matt Osborn and Jon that the small conservation pool at the former Lower Hurricane Reservoir site has a very small amount of water and is filling in with vegetation. She is disappointed with the lack of water in the pool and requested that the HCC place the item on the agenda for discussion. Matt reported that he contacted Todd Menees of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Rivers Program about conducting a site visit. Todd agreed to schedule a site visit in the coming weeks. Jon expressed concern about the ecological function of the rip rap and the amount of time it will take to establish a more natural appearance.
7. **Town Forest Boulders/Water Bar Work:** Jon Bouton noted that the Department of Public Works did some water bar repair work on Reservoir Road. He asked about the boulder work. Matt Osborn agreed to discuss with Highway Superintendent Allyn Ricker.
8. **Invasive Plants:** Karen Douville noted that she spotted a small section of invasive plants in Clifford Park and reported it to the Parks and Recreation Department. She suggested removing them now while the area is small and not wait until they spread.
9. **Linking Lands Alliance:** Karen Douville reported that the Linking Lands Alliance will be applying for a grant to develop bobcat curriculum for schools.

- 10. Save Dewey's Pond Committee:** Shawn Kelley reported that the milfoil removal is scheduled for mid-August. Matt Osborn noted that he will provide the HCC with the specific dates.
- 11. Community Resilience Organization Hartford (CROH):** Jon Bouton reported that the CROH Committee has many interesting workshops scheduled for the Resilience Week August 22-27. Matt Osborn noted that he will e-mail the HCC the schedule.
- 12. HCC Brochures:** Mary Hutchins reported that the Commission agreed to get quotes for 1,000 copies of the bear brochure. She will work on it. Karen Douville reported that the Ottauquechee Natural Resource Conservation District will be providing a link to the HCC Brochures and will be crediting the HCC.
- 13. Announcements/Reports:**
- a. Recruiting New HCC Members: Shawn Kelley reported that he posted a notice on the Hartford List Serv about the HCC openings. Jon Bouton noted that Tom Kahl saw the posting and decided to come to the meeting. He encouraged Tom to apply to the Selectboard to serve on the Commission. Tom replied that he is interested in applying.
 - b. HCC Budget: Matt Osborn reported that new Town Manager Leo Pullar announced that the due date for the town budget will be moved up from mid-October to mid-September. Matt distributed a copy of the 2016/2017 proposed budget. Jon Bouton suggested that he meet with Matt to prepare a draft for review at the September 12th HCC Meeting. The HCC agreed. Matt suggested requesting that the conservation fund line item be returned to the HCC budget. The Commission agreed. Jon suggested identifying wetlands delineation to the list of conservation fund projects. The HCC agreed.
 - c. Town-wide Trails: Mary Hutchins reported that she spoke with Chuck Wooster and Chuck would like the Committee to start meeting again this fall.
 - d. HCC Website: Karen Douville reported that on the HCC webpage, the newsletters are labeled by year and not topic which makes it harder to use for the reader. She suggested changing to topic. The HCC agreed.
 - e. Town Forest Volunteers: Matt Osborn reported that he spoke to Town Manager Leo Pullar about the downed trees in the Town Forest from the July 23rd windstorm that hit the Upper Valley. Leo stated that volunteers can work on tree removal as long as they have signed a volunteer release form. Jon suggested that the HCC conduct an inventory of the downed trees. Mary Hutchins, Jon and Matt volunteered.
- 14. Recognition to HCC Member Karen Douville:** Jon Bouton thanked HCC member Karen Douville for her seventeen years of service on the HCC. He stated that Karen was responsible for many accomplishments during her tenure. Shawn Kelley wished Karen the best on her recent appointment to the Board of the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions.

15. Next Meeting: Jon Bouton reported that the next regularly scheduled HCC meeting will be held on Monday, September 12th.

16. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.