

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, 2/24/2022 at 7:15 P.M.

Location – Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84041004176?
pwd=KzZPeWhCTHdmbDcyeTV0NithVzJtUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84041004176?pwd=KzZPeWhCTHdmbDcyeTV0NithVzJtUT09)

Meeting ID: 840 4100 4176

Passcode: 775348

1. **Call to Order** Meeting called to order at 7:18 pm.
Present: Tatiana Schreiber (chair), Alma Beals, Rachael Shaw (secretary), Kestrel Craig, Sarah Waldo, Stephen Major
2. **Adjustments to Agenda**
Added in a brief discussion of Open Meeting Law for the benefit of members new and old.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes: 1/13/2022** - Minutes read and approved by unanimous consent.
4. **Communications and Public Comment: none.**
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action)** –
 - a) Invasive species brochure – status - Tatiana has all information. We will get it done ASAP.
 - b) Website for Conservation Commission – progress - Add to Agenda for next meeting to talk about what we

would want on our website. Rachael willing to help with creating website if it doesn't work out to have a student help.

c) Allen Marsh forum - status The water quality testing data won't be available until later in the Spring/Summer, so the date of the forum should be changed to later than April 24. It would also be helpful to know the results of the wildlife/trapping bills that are currently being discussed in the state legislature. July or August might be good, because the marsh would be very active. Alma will check with Marie Caduto about when the water testing will be done. Tatiana will ask Michelle Bos-Lun if she will be the moderator. Discussed goal of forum and agreed purpose was primarily to provide opportunity to share ideas and concerns for conservation of this shared resource over time. The educational component and data-sharing would be valuable information but should be kept to no more than half the time of the overall event, to ensure time to allow discussion.

d) follow-up on beaver deceiver performance – Rachael had a tour with local property owner Kevin Brennan of the beaver wetlands near Wright Way. It is a fairly complex network. Kevin has removed/disrupted dams when they were causing floods in his field (across from the Westminster West fire station). He has also helped maintain the functionality of the beaver deceiver. He supports the beavers and the habitat they provide to all the other species and is doing his best to work out

compromises with the beavers. Tatiana will check in with Chuck as to the perspective of the road crew. Additional beaver deceivers might be useful in other culverts, possibly Beebe Road.

e) ideas for articles to write for Gazette- Alternatives to lawns/reducing lawn footprints for the May issue. We can collaborate on this.

f) Town Plan progress - Tatiana updated us on the progress. The Planning Commission is working on the Town Plan, and will ask us for our input in the next couple months.

6. **New Business:**

a) Report back on tracking event (2/6/22, Westminster West village)- We had 18 participants, perfect conditions and saw the tracks and sign of fox, squirrel, mouse, fisher, bobcat and ruffed grouse. We greatly benefitted from the expertise and enthusiasm of local naturalist Martha Mitchell, who donated her time, and the generosity of land steward Kathy Kingston. Rachael wrote an article and took pictures and sent them to the Gazette. We will share information about this event on our website. Martha is willing to participate in another similar program next winter.

b) Additional public/educational events - We will plan an ephemeral program for late April, possibly on the Hidden Springs Road trails (Millbank's property). Rachael and Sarah will work on organizing the program before our

next meeting. Stephen pointed out that ephemerals tend to accompany maple sugarbush areas (low acid soil, limestone outcroppings, deciduous trees)

c) Elect vice-chair - It would be good to have someone available in the event the chair can't do it. Sarah nominated Stephen to be the vice-chair. Rachael seconded. Stephen elected vice-chair by unanimous vote. Will re-visit in a few months to see if other Commission members are interested in this role at that time.

7. **Other Business:** none.

8. **Date of Next Meeting: March 24, 2022**

Westminster West Library or Zoom, TBD.

9. **Adjournment at 8:35 pm.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Rachael Shaw, secretary