

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, 8/28/25 at 7:00 P.M
Westminster West Library, in person meeting

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.
Present: Tatiana Schreiber (chair), Kestrel Craig, Rachael Shaw (secretary) Absent: Jim Calchera
2. Adjustments to Agenda: add report on Blake and Higgins Dam site to Other Business.
3. Acceptance of Minutes: 6/26/25 – minutes read and accepted by unanimous approval.
4. Communications and Public Comment:
 - a. Email communications – 12

Tatiana shared several recent communications to our email account. She created some new labels for archiving incoming mail: one for grant opportunities, and one for new member or volunteer interest (so we can follow up). She encouraged members to read the newsletters. We are getting newsletters from VNRC, VECAN, CT River Conservancy, Urban and Community Forestry program, and others.

 - Dana Williams of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies was asking for input from CC members about what would be useful on their website for the [Vermont Bee Lab](#) about impact of pesticides on bees. She has all the input she needed, but still happy to answer any questions about the project: dwilliams@vtecostudies.org
 - VCAN Newsletter –SunDay is a day of action on September 21st, celebrating solar and wind power, and the movement to leave fossil fuels behind. There will be events across VT, visit www.sunday.earth to learn more.

- The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) invites members of the conservation community to their annual meeting to be held on Zoom at **12:00 – 1:30 pm on Wednesday, September 10th**. The meeting will include presentations from some recent Tiny Grant recipients and their project partners, as well as AVCC programmatic and financial reports, membership updates, and the election of up to three new members to their Board of Directors. Lastly, there will be a preview what's ahead for the AVCC and its members, and solicit our thoughts and feedback on how AVCC can best support our commission moving forward. Tatiana registered for us, so we will receive the link at our gmail address. They are also looking for two new board members. Kestrel said she can probably attend. Tatiana may also be able to attend. Perhaps Jim will be able to join as well.
- b. Rockingham CC Minutes from July 14 - brief discussion of the point of checking their minutes: to see if there is anything relevant to our group/coordination of projects, ideas etc, and report on this, not summarize whole meeting. Rachael reviewed these minutes. They mentioned “the WCC might manage the (Saxtons River Blake Higgins) site with help from the RCC.” The site is technically in Westminster.
- 5. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) –
 - Road salt issues – identifying sensitive areas - We split up the paved roads of the Town to drive to review for sensitive areas , i.e. wetlands, brooks, etc. 1.Kestrel - N. Westminster, Westminster Station and Center, 2. Jim- Morse Brook, Westminster Heights and Back Westminster Road. 3. Rachael- Kurn Hattin/Patch Road, Piggery Road, 4. Tatiana: Westminster West Road. One way to mark regions would be to “drop pins” using an online map. When we have our

suggestions, we can coordinate with Town/state to post “Low Salt Application” areas.

- Town Plan/Planning Commission listening sessions – update – Town Manager Lou forwarded Tatiana’s recent email about this to Lachlan Francis. Lou said Lachlan will call us. Our preference is to help with planning the input events, not just co-hosting them. [Addendum: per the Gazette, two listening sessions have already been scheduled on Monday, Sept. 29 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Westminster Institute/ Butterfield Library and Thursday, Oct. 2, from 6 to 8 pm at Westminster West School/Studio Y.]

c. Planting by church – signage and maintenance – Rachael and Tatiana cleared the weeds around the shrubs. Kestrel working on sign layout. About 3-4 feet by 8-12 inches. We will need to place an order to replace plants that died in January. Rachael shared photo of signage at Canoe Brook Nature Preserve . Reminder to Rachael and Jim to check for wood for project

d. Town Forest forum – synthesis of public input at forum - All information is in our google drive in Town Forest folder. Each of us is invited to continue adding notes from the separate groups and the group discussion into these thematic categories, which is which is the last tab on the document, and create more themes or sub themes if you see them.

6. New Business:

a. Planning birding event at SEVCA. Tatiana heard back from Cory Ross and Vic Baisley that they are very interested in having the birding event and suggested Friday morning October 3. Tatiana moved that Tatiana and Kestrel be appointed to a sub-committee to plan this event. Kestrel seconded. The motion passed.

b. Cory Ross of the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District also mentioned that he got the go ahead (i.e. a grant) to do an engineering study at SEVCA to make improvements to the site (driveway, parking, drainage) to support

wildlife habitat at the wetland and will be hiring an engineering firm to do the study.

7. Other Business:

a. Blake and Higgins Dam site— Haley got back to Kestrel and said that she will check in with her director. When she gets back to Kestrel, Kestrel will ask if Haley'd be able to help us write a proposal re: purchase/management of site.

8. Date of Next Meeting: Sept 25th, Westminster Institute

9. Adjournment at 8:45 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Rachael Shaw, secretary