

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, August 27th, 7 PM

In person: Westminster Institute

To join by Zoom, contact

westminstervtconservation@gmail.com

1. Call to Order Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm Present: Tatiana Schreiber (chair), Kestrel Craig (treasurer), Amy Moreland, Jim Calchera, Rachael Shaw (secretary)

2. Adjustments to Agenda- no adjustments

3. Acceptance of Minutes: 7/30/26 – Minutes read and accepted by unanimous consent with correction: Jessica Barsaleau is a Flood Plain Manager with the VT DEC

4. Communications and Public Comment:

a) 1.Email communications - Tatiana went over the public comments we have received on our gmail account. These included several educational opportunities, a landowner technical assistance program, as well as different legislative topics (revisions to the federal roadless rule and the VT bear hunting rules) which have open comment periods. Commission members can refer to the document that Tatiana shared for links. Several of the comment periods end soon, so we are advised to share our thoughts. The summary document is in our google drive.

2. Newsletter Round Up: Amy shared her collation of info from the newsletters we have received in our gmail account. This document is in the google drive.

b) Rockingham CC minutes report - No minutes available for July 13, no August meeting. As Mike Ghia has stepped down as chair, Rachael will ask current Chair Christine Armiger if their gmail account is being monitored, and remind her to share the RCC minutes with us as had been done previously.

5. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) –

a) Town Plan input process: confirm date/place for work session - We will have a special meeting on Sept 3, 6 PM at the West West library. Amy will ask Lachlan Francis for an update on the status of the Planning Commission. Kelley reports two members have stepped down.

b) Rodenticide campaign - Anna Morris, an educator at VINS, said that it would be fine to have several CC's co-sponsor an event which we had proposed to her. It costs as much as \$300 but there may be ways to offset the cost. Members are encouraged to look at the RaptorsAreTheSolution.org (RATS) which has some great resources.

Tatiana contacted Michelle Bos-Lun and she will get back to us soon on potential speakers/resources on rodenticides. Could plan for a November event. Tatiana will write to Putney and Dummerston CC's to ask if they would like to co-sponsor with us.

c) Church planting, sign and maintenance - Sign is made, looks beautiful. Nice work Kestrel! Kestrel and Jim will schedule a day to install the sign. Date for church planting work day: October 18, 10:30 am. We will invite potential volunteers to spruce up the site and prepare it for winter.

d) Town Forest AVCC grant planning

Next steps -Jim walked the log landing with Charles Lovell of Charles Lovell Contracting, who suggests road fabric, as well as 8 inches of gravel over 15,000 square feet. (15 plus truckloads at 10 yards a load.) He suggested talking to Bazin Brothers about a potential donation or discount on gravel from their gravel pit. Cold River Materials are another possibility. Jim will talk to Ben Masure about possibly getting the town to do the work. State permitting personnel have requested drawings of the proposed parking area to assist in the final determination of the need for a permit. Kestrel and Jim will coordinate on getting the drawing. Jim is fairly confident that we won't be needing any permits. Tatiana suggests watching the recordings of the AVCC Town Forest Stories Webinars, as they become available (see especially the Pownal Story which has recently revitalized their Town Forest which had limited accessibility). There is a town policy on Class 4 roads and trails. The Selectboard can either upgrade or downgrade a road. Jim will resolve whether or not we need any permits by next meeting. If no permit needed, we can go ahead with building the kiosk. Kestrel will come up with a design-8 feet tall to top of columns, and about 6 feet wide), Jim will ask Stephen Major if he can coordinate a visit, and develop a materials list.

e) Recruitment of volunteers for CC projects - Rachael will send an email with the survey to the list of contacts she created from people who have attended our programs and forums in the past years. Introduction shall cover why we have their email addresses and thank them for their past participation with our programs/forums.

6. New Business:

a) West West fair Sept 12- tabling? -copy of surveys available, Amy, Rachael and Kestrel will make sure that everything is set for the tabling. Event is roughly 9- 3 pm. Rachael has a table. Amy will staff the table; Tatiana can provide breaks.

b) Review open meeting FAQ - postponed.

c) Fall birding event? -postponed to a spring event, will book Cory Ross of WCNRD and Audubon, for the Springtime. Tatiana will follow up with Cory. Cory also noted that progress is being made with the SEVCA habitat improvement project that we are co-sponsoring. Work should begin in the spring, so we may be able to provide more information on that in conjunction with the birding event.

7. Other Business: Schedule Wood duck box clean out in the winter. Will do so at the September or October meeting.

8. Date of Next Meeting: Sept 24, 7 PM, Westminster West Library

9. Adjournment at 8:43 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Rachael Shaw, Secretary