

Weathersfield Conservation Commission
Thursday, March 28, 2024
7 pm
Weathersfield Proctor Library

Present: Ryan Gumbart, Marina Garland, Cheryl Cox, Bruce Cox, Howard Beach, Anna Vogel, Heather Shand, Ellen Clattenburg
Guest: Ernie Shand

Board reorganization

The following people were nominated:

- Chair Ryan (nominated by Howard, seconded by Cheryl)
- Vice-chair Bruce nominated by Ellen, seconded by Marina
- Secretary - Ellen nominated by Ryan, seconded by Anna
- Treasurer - Cheryl nominated by Ryan, seconded by Ellen

Heather moved that the secretary cast one ballot for the slate above. Howard seconded the motion and all approved

Set regular meeting time and date

Heather moved and Cheryl seconded the motion to keep our meetings on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm.

Agenda review

Howard moved and Ellen seconded the motion to add Hydro dam relicensing to the agenda. All approved.

Minutes: February 22, 2024

Cheryl moved, Marina seconded that we accept the minutes as submitted. All voted in favor.

General projects update -

Ryan clarified that the section numbers that appear by each project reference the part of the Town Plan that is applicable.

1. **Waterway Naming Project.** Brandon (with Ryan's reminders) will set up a time for us to be on the agenda
2. **Conservation Commissioner packet:** Ryan will send this out to all members electronically as the attachments make it quite long.
3. **Town Forest Management Plan.** Nothing currently to report. Hannah Dallas continues to work on it.
4. **Town Forest Interpretive trail.** Ryan reported that our request for funds from the ARPA grant is still on the slimmed down ARPA list. We should cross our fingers!
5. **Town Walks** (co-sponsored with the Historical Society): Ellen and Anna have gotten more information from Steve Aikenhead (more to come, too). The first walk will be in June. We are in the process of getting people willing to check the trails ahead of time, get permission from

landholders, and find leaders. Steve will lead a June walk from Stoughton Pond to Springweather Nature Area.

6. **Town Forest Kiosk** - Cheryl and Bruce have been working on two things: Rules and Regulations and Interesting facts for the visitor to put the forest in a fuller context. There was agreement on the rules and regs – concise and not overwhelming but complete. Some discussion about hunting season - add something brief about dogs on a leash and wearing orange. Another suggestion was to remind people to forage responsibly. Cheryl found a good picture to remind people about ticks. The Welcome and Explanation was well done. Ellen emailed Dave Fuller during the meeting to find out when the last dairy farm stopped operations. Heather will contact UVLT about signage for the Town Forest (to note that they hold the conservation easements).
7. **AVCC Tiny Grant for interpretive sign** – The AVCC Tiny Grant proposal was reviewed. AVCC Tiny Grant. Ellen moved and Heather seconded a motion to spend \$200 for the interpretive sign. (The AVCC tiny grant would be \$500 and \$100 from WPR). All voted in favor. Ellen can now submit it.
8. **Agricultural products**: Ryan found a Directory of Services that had been published by the town, and it is far more inclusive than the ag products we had discussed earlier.
9. **Tree Planting**: Marina had come up with a number of possible trees. Ray feels that next year would be better timing. Ellen and Marina will be thinking about a grant to pay for trees, one likely due in January 2025. Ryan reminded the commissioners that he and Ray Stapleton had traveled throughout the town looking at trees for pruning and possible dangerous trees should/when they get infested with emerald ash borers. Perhaps this will be another grant we apply for.
10. **Town Plan Review**. Bruce had commented extensively on the Town Plan section we were sent. These did not show up on the document Ryan had forwarded (he suggested that maybe doing this on Google Docs would make it easier for all to see). Discussion about the Town Plan continued. Ellen wondered about noise pollution which seems to have been left off. Howard explained that the state had warned about helipads - that it is very hard to prohibit them unless Towns specifically address the issue. It turns out that writing this into the Town Plan is harder than just saying now. He noted that the legislature is looking at drones. Ellen will talk to Julie Levy about noise pollution. One of Bruce's suggestions involved expanding the Town's definition of agricultural land to include sugarbushes and orchards.

There was a brief discussion of site visits, Howard explained how this ended. The burden was placed upon the applicant to hire an engineer.

Budget review

Cheryl has spoken to Steve Hier who explained how to rectify our budget (which has \$179 incorrectly taken off our budget this year). Brandon said it would be better for us to overspend this year by that amount.

Connecticut River Dams We will submit a comment, not intervene.
Ryan will set up a letter and share for us to add comments.

Other/new business - none

Adjourn - Howard moved, Bruce seconded the motion to adjourn. It was 8:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Ellen Clattenburg

Next meeting will be Thursday, April 25 at 7 p.m. Location to be announced later.