

THE WRITTEN MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF THE DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING. MOTIONS ARE AS STATED BY THE MOTION MAKER. MINUTES SUBJECT TO CORRECTION BY THE SHELBURNE NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMISSION.

**TOWN OF SHELBURNE  
SHELBURNE NATURAL RESOURCES AND  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION (SNRCC)  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
January 10, 2024**

**\*Hybrid**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Don Rendall (Chair), Gail Albert, Jon Cocina, Christine Haines, Sean MacFaden, Bob Paquin, Chandler Noyes, and Jonathan Richardson

**ADMINISTRATION:** Aaron DeNamur, Shayne Geiger

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Members of the public included, Mark Pennington, Jim White, Sarah Ray, Donna Fialkoff, Tracey Beaudin

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Jon Cocina called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**2. IDENTIFY MINUTE TAKER**

Chandler Noyes will be minute taker.

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

**MOTION by Gail Albert, SECOND by Jon Cocina, to approve the agenda for January 10, 2024, meeting, VOTING: Unanimous (8-0); motion carried.**

**4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

None.

**5. MINUTES**

**MOTION by Gail Albert, SECOND by Jon Cocina, to approve the minutes of December 13, 2023, as presented with the following exception—remove Bob Paquin’s name off the minutes as he was not present.**

**VOTING: Unanimous (8-0); motion carried.**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Jim White:** What will NRCC’s new role be in protecting natural resources in specific under proposed updated bylaws? Will NRCC have capability to provide a rebuttal?

**Aaron DeNamur:** PC will have public hearing; will then provide recommendation to Select Board. SB would be ones to have final approval. If NRCC had comments to provide, now would be time to make recommendations.

**Don Rendall:** When will PlaceSense issue draft article 6? **Aaron DeNamur:** Soon.

**Jim White:** Asks for clarity on what NRCC is planning on doing.

**Don Rendall:** This topic is on our agenda.

**Jon Cocina:** Current focus to get our feedback incorporated now, rather than solely waiting to provide comments only after draft is sent out.

**Don Rendall, Aaron DeNamur:** Hopefully hand bylaw to PC in July-September... Aaron hopeful for adoption by Fall 2024.

**Jim White:** Can the Commission ‘speak as one voice’? Certain individuals from Commission are very engaged, but individuals alone not always as powerful as the full Commission.

**Jon Cocina:** Our recommendations regarding bylaws will go out as the Commission.

## 7. DISCUSS HOW TO APPROACH MEETING WITH PC JANUARY 25

**Aaron DeNamur:** Unlikely PC will have draft by January 25. NRCC should still meet with them even if they don’t have draft. Please send whatever documents NRCC wants to have included in the PC agenda packet.

**Don Rendall:** Would like to ask PC about their view on the zoning overlays that have already been proposed? Would PC be looking for additional natural resource protections?

**Aaron DeNamur:** Should wait on some of these questions since the PC will not have the entire document yet—thus they can’t fairly answer the question.

**Jon Cocina:** Our initial thought was PC would have full draft bylaw document... which we now know they likely won’t. So, what will be worthwhile to bring forward to PC?

**Aaron DeNamur:** This will be NRCC’s opportunity to talk about their most important issues. Initially thought NRCC wanted to talk about Arrowwood study only.

**Don Rendall:** One item would be getting PC’s thoughts on habitat connectors.

**Aaron DeNamur:** PS will be at PC meeting to hear PC & NRCC’s thoughts.

**Don Rendall:** Should we send our draft environmental regulations to PC?

**Aaron DeNamur:** Should wait until PC first has draft bylaws from PS. Will see if PS can get draft finished prior to the meeting.

**Jon Cocina:** Last meeting brought up inconsistencies in which maps indicate which lands are conserved... is it fair to ask how they are reconciling those?

**Don Rendall:** PS has mentioned that they have encountered some irregularities. Aaron DeNamur will follow up with PS and see if they have looked into this.

**Sean MacFaden:** Seems like we are in a bit of a bind since draft bylaws may not be complete by then. Assume PC has seen Arrowwood study, understands both the forest blocks and habitat corridors... what will be most useful to bring forward at the meeting? South Burlington provides a model on how to incorporate the forest block and habitat corridor language into zoning regulations.

**Aaron DeNamur:** Fine to provide examples to PC.

**Sean MacFaden:** Can bring up these examples and the ideas they incorporate and pose how they relate to Shelburne? Notes he hasn’t worked on any of the mapping issues yet.

**Jon Cocina:** Does the Town or Pam have the “best” dataset for mapping? Discussion with Sean MacFaden on example of the conservation of Association Lands. Should try and identify the dataset that is most current. Want to ensure we are all working with the same datasets.

**Christine Haines:** Biggest question will be how forest blocks fit into the regulations. How should the Arrowwood map be used going forward?

**Bob Paquin:** Would be great to have draft of bylaws, but like recap of Arrowwood study, South Burlington example. Have our ideas reflected in the Town Plan. Make list of key points we don’t want to have lost in the drafting.

**Jonathan Richardson:** Asks for clarification on wetlands protections. Don Rendall is proposing ~200-foot buffer zone. Will bring up at PC meeting.

**Gail Albert:** Have we addressed grasslands? Cliffs? Considerations for limiting mowing lawns, time of year that blasting occurs. Discussion about how to incorporate into bylaws.

**Sean MacFaden:** Hard to develop such specific regulation that would pass legal bar. These topics are more public education type of ideas.

**Jonathan Richardson:** This would be a good opportunity for public outreach.

**Jim White:** Would it make sense to get a feel for where PC is going with scenic views? Don mentions PC has discussed this, Aaron confirms it will be discussed. Jim references previous SB meeting and the rural feel of the Town and how to protect this identity, as documented in the Town Plan. Is the PC going to have a conversation about this?

## 8. SNRCC GOALS FOR 2024 – CHANDLER

**Chandler Noyes:** Brings up topic of engaging in conservation and natural resource projects aside from focusing on bylaw rewrite and large land conservation deals.

**Gail Albert:** Used to have farm talks, native tree planting, other activities.

**Aaron DeNamur:** Dan Albrecht from CCRPC would like to talk to NRCC about funding they have for non-regulatory stormwater projects.

**Shayne Geiger:** Mentions initiative to have signage at stormwater projects that indicate what project is accomplishing. Asks if we have considered having a community tree nursery—notes that other towns do this.

**Jonathan Richardson:** Guided hikes—has reached out to State botanist, former State botanist and they are interested in coming out. Ty-Haul trail... have one project we can focus on for many years, e.g., go from one end of the trail to other clearing the invasives.

**Aaron DeNamur:** Do something with the tree committee—tree warden concerned about damage being done to trees at the parade ground by the farmers market.

**Jim White:** Could use these smaller projects to protect natural resources that aren't able to be incorporated into the bylaws, e.g., bird habitats.

**Jon Cocina:** Will need to identify top projects to work on.

**Mark Pennington:** Striking the confusion at the SB meeting about definition of "Open Space". Shelburne Forward Together meeting next week, discussing SNRCC and SAFE goals. Do we reapproach renaming the Open Space Fund? Gail Albert mentions the Open Space Plan being reuploaded to the Town website.

**Sean MacFaden:** Current Open Space Plan does not need to be modified in any significant way.

## 9. DISCUSS NEXT STEPS FOR CONSERVATION ACTIONS & DISCUSS WRITING A CONSERVATION PLAN & LANDOWNER OUTREACH (Combining Items #9-11; discussion went back-and-forth).

**Don Rendall:** Receiving pressure from SB to create a newer / updated conservation plan. SB would like NRCC to draft a set of goals, and with each goal, a set of strategies. Shows example document.

**Jim White:** For example could focus on roaming species like the ones mentioned in the Arrowwood study.

**Aaron DeNamur:** May have funding in next fiscal year to put out RFP to have consultant help draft/craft conservation goals and how to achieve them.

**Christine Haines:** Likes this idea and the focus it puts on achieving actionable items.

**Sean MacFaden:** Not sure why we would take a species-specific approach. Forest block analysis should be focus—they encompass a wide breadth of species & biodiversity. Discussion by Christine Haines, Don Rendall, Gail Albert on what topics to focus on.

**Jonathan Richardson:** Focusing on specific species has been very effective elsewhere, particularly in engaging children in conversation efforts. Many endangered species in Town that could benefit.

**Mark Pennington:** Group has formed to achieve the 30 by '30 goal. Fish and Wildlife has put out educational materials on how to put together a Conservation Plan.

**Don Rendall:** SB Chair Mike Ashooh points towards the Paths committee's recent document that lays out their goals, strategies to achieve them, cost, dates to accomplish, etc...

**Gail Albert:** Not appropriate for NRCC to identify select [private] properties that become the Commission's goal to conserve. More appropriate to provide educational awareness and outreach on conservation and let willing landowners come to us.

**Aaron DeNamur:** Would be good to sit down with SB and get clarity on what kind of document they want NRCC to prepare.

**Bob Paquin:** Difficult to come up with a plan, when unsure what properties in the future will be available for conservation. As part of the capital budget, need to build OSF so that when the time comes and a conservation opportunity presents itself, we are able to engage. Discussion of how ARPA funds could be applied.

**Sean MacFaden:** We are certainly capable to creating a document of outlining conservation goals and strategies... but fear it may be for naught based on the process of conserving land. Need to clarify whether this is really what the SB wants.

**Jon Cocina:** Agrees we need to meet and clarify with SB.

## 12. SIGNS AND FLAGS

**Don Rendall:** Where are we at with this, now that former member who was tasked with this item has since resigned. Shayne Geiger asks for more information about this initiative. Don Rendall explains.

**Bob Paquin:** Need something simple like a vinyl banner with Commission's name on it to have for events like Shelburne Day.

**Jonathan Richardson:** Mentioned informational signs like at Shelburne Bay. Discussion of informational signs at other areas like LaPlatte nature park, LaPlatte overlook.

**Jim White:** Shelburne desperately needs wildlife crossing signs. Linked to wildlife corridors (i.e., Arrowwood report).

**Don Rendall:** table further discussion until next meeting.

## 13. OTHER BUSINESS

**Don Rendall:** SB voted down \$173,000; voted for \$100,000 to be put on the ballot for the OSF.

**Shayne Geiger:** Shelburne's new stormwater coordinator. Introduces himself (BS in Ecology; three seasons for Forest and Park services; MS Ecological Landscape Design &

Planning). Looking forward to tying together stormwater projects and other environmental projects.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Jon Cocina, SECOND Gail Albert, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous (8-0); motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

*Respectfully Submitted by Chandler Noyes*

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Signature For the SNRCC

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Date