

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Shelburne Natural Resources & Conservation Committee (SNRCC)**  
**6:30PM, March 8, 2023**  
**(Hybrid Meeting held In-person and via Zoom Platform)**

**Attending:**

SNRCC Members: Gail Albert, Jon Cocina, Mike Schramm, Bob Paquin, Fred Morgan, Chandler Noyes, Christine Bevacqua (departed 8:05pm), Sean MacFaden (arrived at 7:10pm)

Members of Public: Jonathan Richardson, Percy, Rowland Davis (arrived at 7:30pm)

6:37 Meeting called to order

Preliminary matters:

1. Confirm minute taker – Mike taking minutes.
2. Review and Approve Agenda
  - Gail noted that she wanted to add review of draft lawn sign discussion to agenda
  - Chandler noted incorrect spelling of “Heindel” on agenda
3. Review and Approve 2/8/23 minutes
  - Mike noted that he was present for 2/8/23 meeting (attended in-person)
  - Fred moved, Jon seconded. All approved.
4. Review and Approve 1/12/23 minutes – Jon moved, Chandler seconded. All approved.
5. Public Comment (for items not on agenda) – no public comments.

Review of draft lawn sign:

1. Mike has prepared a draft “Land Conserved” lawn sign for review and discussion.
2. Christine noted that the word “is” should be inserted “Land is Conserved”
3. Mike noted that preliminary pricing for fifty (50) 24”x18”, two sided signs is approx. \$500.
4. Gail motioned that we present request to fund lawn signs to Selectboard (from Committee funding, not Open Space Fund), Jon seconded. All approved.

Guest: Jonathan Richardson – re: project management on Town owned properties:

1. Jonathan introduced himself and identified his background in wildlife conservation
2. Jonathan noted impact of habitat fragmentation particularly on song birds
3. Jonathan provided detailed overview regarding risks associated with invasive species, primarily focusing on bush honeysuckle and buck thorn.
  - i. Importance to work on removing invasive species from understory. Potential to increase bio-diversity.
  - ii. Jonathan to become certified chemical applicator this spring
  - iii. Invasive removal is not “one and done”. Plan on multi-year, ongoing effort. Need to be replanting native species.
  - iv. Jonathan noted the likelihood of additional invasive plants into northeast due to impacts of climate change.
  - v. Jonathan suggested conducting a habitat rehabilitation inventory in town
  - vi. Invasive removal is a lot of work. Jonathan willing to lead up team of volunteers. Fun to do projects, can see results.
4. Mike asked if Jonathan was aware of SAFE group in town. Jonathan noted that he was not aware of this group but will look in to.

Follow-up on Feb 15 Craig Heindel discussion / Comments on Arrowwood mapping presentation – Strategy going forward

1. Gail noted desire to be more proactive with landowners regarding land conservation
2. General agreement amongst group that charter clause to work with willing landowners would not preclude us from reaching out to landowners.
3. Jon noted that we now have forest report from Arrowwood that could be used to guide outreach/discussion with landowners.
4. Gail questioned how we should advance? Workshops? Outreach? Need to be non-threatening. Identify potential tax benefits.
5. Christine noted support for the workshops approach. Leverage forest report.
6. Gail questioned if workshops would be neighborhood specific or townwide.
7. Bob noted that we should utilize entities such as Vermont Land Trust who are experienced in land conservation, guiding conversations with potential willing landowners. Bob noted process used to protect Long Trail corridor; systematic outreach to landowners. Bob noted need for “ambassador” and that workshops can be hit-or-miss. Focus on high priority areas from Arrowwood’s forest report. Entities that do this type of work, such as VTLT, can help us to develop strategy. Need to reach-out to these organizations for support.
8. Gail noted that she is getting tired of doing much of the heavy lifting of the committee work. Anyone want to lead up the conservation approach effort?

9. Jonathan noted that there are a variety of approaches to consider when planning conservation outreach to landowners. Noah's Ark example.
10. Christine noted that we should look at forest report and landowner data. Sean noted that this is not difficult to do with parcel map data.
11. Sean recalled earlier discussion about potential for a town land trust. This entity could potentially work more aggressively towards land conservation. Sean noted issue years earlier with SNRCC being reprimanded by Selectboard for what they thought was advocacy. SNRCC has been more cautious since this incident.
12. Rowland Davis provided overview of SAFE (Shelburne Alliance for the Environment)
  - a. Group keeps environmental issues in town front and center, particular focus on land use planning
  - b. SAFE not formal committee, allows for more flexibility
  - c. Noted many similar goals as SNRCC
13. Gail noted upcoming work with Vermont Council on Rural Development
  - a. Let our voices be heard during this process
  - b. Bob noted, VCRD community meetings are typically well attended
14. Gail questioned what our approach should be with Planning Commission moving forward
  - a. Arrowwood report recently presented to Selectboard. Conversation not as engaging/robust as Arrowwood discussion with PC. Mike Ashooh asked what next?
  - b. Sean questioned how to best protect our most valuable natural resources, need legal approach. Recommended that developers need to consider forest data layer (from Arrowwood report) when planning development.
  - c. Mike noted that South Burlington is a good example to study regarding what came next following Arrowwood forest report. The City created overlay district for the identified forest blocks, where development is restricted. Mike noted that Marla on PC works for South Burlington Planning Office and is very well informed on what followed Arrowwood report in South Burlington. She could be great resource. Sean noted that there was political momentum in South Burlington to protect remaining undeveloped areas. Same momentum here? Sean noted general stated desire of Town to simply land use regulations. Mike noted that regulations could be streamlined but still have "teeth" to aggressively protect our remaining natural resources. Sean noted that his belief is that current regulations are complex due to varying/competing needs in Town plan.
  - d. Rowland noted Hinesburg offers another example. Also, that he has heard that Brandy Saxton has submitted a proposal in response to the Town's RFP for regulatory review process effort.
  - e. Gail concluded that we need roadmap/approach for moving forward. Sean noted that he will reach-out to Pam Brannigan (CCRPC) for recent data set.

Development Review – Shenk / Shelburne Road:

1. Jon noted that this development was anticipated at time of earlier associated development with access off of Martindale Road.
2. Mike questioned stormwater treatment system for new development proposed on Shelburne Road. Currently not shown on plans. Jon noted that response will likely be that the developer will comply with state regulations for stormwater treatment.

Other Items:

1. Mike noted that he does not plan renew his term on the SNRCC when his current term expires on 4/1/23.

8:20 Motion to Adjourn – Jon moved, Fred seconded. All approved.