

Natural Resources and Conservation Committee

June 14, 2023

Meeting convened 7 pm. Agenda approved

Don Rendall, Chandler Noyes, Fred Morgan, Jon Cocina, Gail Albert, Bob Pacquin, Christine Haines attending

- Christine is minute taker
- Minutes from May approved, Bob abstains due to absence from that meeting
- No public comment

Discussion with Jens Hilke, Vermont Fish and Wildlife

- Gail, Don ask about how to bring up natural resources with Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD). Jens- should come up on its own
- Don asks about Act 171 and forest blocks
- Jens: Arrowwood fulfills “identify” part of forest habitat block requirement – it is the science. Use the map and VCRD to plan going forward, then add map to 2027 town plan.
- Question from Persis (community member) about new homes act
- Jens- Out of his realm! But need to focus on regulation reform. We have right to strengthen regulations.
- Don asks which towns to look at for examples.
- South Burlington, Williston. Rural towns not good examples
- Other thoughts
- Public outreach important so people understand regulation during authorization
- “Walks and Talks series”?
- Resource protection is written into town plan, need to get stronger regulation written into regs, not relying on “tradition” or “agreements”
- Try to push for connector protections. Need to have a pattern of conservation areas in mind. Use riparian network as a starting point. Then use various planning strategies to achieve pattern in future land use map.
- Streamlined regs in rewrite may help- easier to follow simpler rules
- Gail asks about legality of regulations around people yards
- Jens- not much you can do.
- Don- are there riparian laws we should be looking at?
- Jens - Shelburne seems to be in good shape

Introduction to Matt Lawless, new town manager.

- Conversation about our main goals and objectives, motivations
- Don- more protections for natural resources, often seems to be ignored.
- Chandler- public supports natural resource protections, as shown through open space funding votes.

Planning for meeting with PlaceSense consultants

- Bob: Three important priorities:
 - Want zoning regulations to reflect town plan priorities
 - SNRCC wants earlier input in the review process

- Need money for open space plan, the ability to approach people about land.
- Gail brings up concern about moving many decisions to administrative review
- Chandler- need to keep steering conversation back to priorities in town plan
- Don- we need to have lots of talking points so that they hear our issues
- Gail- we need to be sure to give them our priorities so they will include them
- Bob- VCRD meetings should help make those priorities clearer.
- We need to work on definitions, to clarify and define terms like Open Space
- Jon- where else will we fit into the 18 mo process with consultants. Need to make sure we present the science (maps), not our frustrations. Town plan supports resource protections

Planning for meeting VCRD July 27 4:30 pm. Suggestions on who to invite?

Agenda planning for next meeting. Mostly PlaceSense meeting. Also, Check in with VCRD process (Bob will send email about meeting).

- Need to plan for booth for Shelburne Day, Aug 19th. Present information on Arrowwood project. Other thoughts?
- Chandler arranged work with Lewis Creek association on frogbit removal day. Mon 26th 7-10 am
- Jon moves to post official involvement in the project.
- Gail seconds
- All approve

Review of pickleball court project on Spear St, at the golf course.

- Jon motions for no comment on the project
- Bob seconds
- All approve.

Bob moves to adjourn. Gail seconds. All approve. 9 pm.