

Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission Meeting

November 14, 2023

Minutes Approved

Members present: Craig Heindel, Don Dewees, Barry Estabrook, Karen Pettersen, Matt Gorton via Zoom

Members absent: Joe Nelson, Jen Cirillo, Amy Dohner

1. Craig opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.
2. The October 10, 2023, minutes were accepted as amended.
3. Budget Update: According to an email from Amy, we have a balance of \$1,018.00.
4. Town Forest
 - a. Craig reported that there had been no updates from the Vermont Master Naturalists group. Two members of the group had recently welcomed babies into their families, slowing progress in their report.
 - b. Management Plan Update: Craig said he had called the Audubon Society about whether they had a bird expert who might lead a walk through the forest with an eye on determining bird species present and identifying bird habitat. They had yet to return his call. He will try again. Craig said the revised plan should include an evaluation of avian habitat and include specific objectives and goals with input from someone knowledgeable. Matt said that he might have the necessary skills and would undertake the project pro bono if he has the time. Craig said we should create and adhere to a schedule for putting together the revised plan. Craig volunteered to contact the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation official who acts as a liaison with managers of Town Forests. Don will reach out to the new Addison County forester when the position is filled to ask if he or she can help us with the plan. Don and Craig raised the possibility that the Conservation Commission might want to create a survey to be handed out at the Town Meeting provided we had made adequate progress on the plan. Matt said he had skills creating surveys.
 - c. Spring Boundary Walk: We will set a date or dates at the February meeting of the Conservation Commission—one to mark boundaries, one to identify and eradicate invasive plant species.
5. Zoning Board Applications: Craig said that there was nothing new, but we would check to see if any came up prior to the Conservation Commission's December meeting.
6. Planning Commission.

- a. No new applications.
 - b. Karen said she would attend the next Planning Commission meeting to inform members that the Conservation Commission would be happy to be involved where appropriate in formulating the revised Town Plan.
 - c. Craig asked that a Town Plan update be included on the agendas of our future meetings until a new plan is adopted.
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7. Climate Change Talk: Craig said he would contact Jen and the Climate and Energy Committee about arranging a talk addressing practical, hands-on ways that town residents can address climate change.
 8. Shade Tree Preservation Plan: Craig said that Joe has assembled a team that will soon start meeting. Don said that he was a member of the team.
 9. EAB Update: Nothing new. Craig said that the nearest detection was in Bristol.
 10. UVM NR-4600 Update: Don reported that the students were working on a series of maps. They had met with Jean Richardson for background and guidance. Their presentation is scheduled for December 5 at UVM, probably in the Aiken Center at a time and in a room yet to be established. Craig said that we should encourage virtual access to the presentation. Matt said he would be willing to reach out to the instructor and a teaching assistant for logistical information about getting virtual access. Don said he would try to reach the students first.
 11. Spring Bird Walk Update: Craig suggested we wait to hear from Amy.
 12. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM

Next Meeting: December 12, 2023. Hybrid mode.

Submitted by Barry Estabrook