

Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission
Meeting December 8, 2020
Approved

Members present: Craig Heindel- Chair, Jen Cirillo, Ron DeBellis, Amy Dohner, Jadziah DeRosia, Krista Hoffsis, and Karen Pettersen

Members absent: Dennis Armell

Guests: Arabella Holzapfel, Chair LURUC, Cindy Schultz, Tom Aldrich, Deanna and Charlie Shapiro, Brian and Jason Gebo and Matt Leonard

Craig opened the Zoom meeting at 7:04 p.m.

The November 10, 2020 meeting notes were moved to be accepted as presented.

A. Land Use Regulation Update Committee – Conservation 25 District at Shellhouse Mountain

1. Craig said the Planning Commission is the entity by law that updates the Zoning Regulations, including the Zoning District Map. The Town Plan shows Planning Areas, which are different than zoning districts. The Planning Commission contacted the Addison County Regional Planning Commission to provide assistance with developing the updated zoning regulations and maps. The ACRPC used the Planning Areas in the Town Plan for the basis of the Conservation 25 District at Shellhouse Mountain. The Planning Area has been shown in public documents since 2014. Craig reviewed the general uses in the Conservation 25 District.
2. Jen brought up a map, which Craig had emailed to interested parties, on everyone's screen. The map shows a green area that represents the existing Conservation 25 District, and the red line shows Craig's approximation of the proposed Conservation 25 District. Craig explained the difference between the Town Plan and the Zoning Regulations maps.
3. Brian Gebo wanted to know how the change in the line would affect what is allowed on their property. Brian said that David's (Brian's dad) house is within the new Conservation 25 District.
4. Charlie Shapiro, also, thought that the proposed Conservation 25 District would include part of his house.
5. Cindy Shultz said that they don't have a contiguous forest due to recent logging and clearing, and yet their entire property is within the proposed Conservation 25 District.
6. Arabella Holzapfel explained that the Planning Commission will be holding the first hearing on the proposed Land Use Regulations (former Zoning Regulations) on Wednesday Dec. 16th. She, also, explained the approval process including the public hearings held by the Planning Commission and the Selectboard.
7. Karen explained that logged areas aren't considered contiguous forest blocks, which is the basis of the proposed Conservation 25 District.
Karen will contact Jens about the proposed Conservation District.

B. Town Forest

1. Craig and Pam have been getting requests for directions to the Town Forest. Craig explained that motor vehicles aren't allowed in the Town Forest except snow mobiles on the approved snow mobile trail. It's requested that dogs be on a leash. Hunting is allowed in the Town Forest. We manage the Forest for wildlife, which is the reason we aren't planning wide and improved trails.
2. Amy suggested a sign at the entrance explaining our purpose. Jen thought TAM (Trails around Middlebury) signs are an example of a good sign.
3. Matt Leonard, who lives on the east side of Shellhouse Mountain, said he hunts within the Forest and the Forest is used by many animals. He asked if there would be anytime when hunting would be managed within the Forest. Craig didn't think so, but asked Matt to contact us if he thinks that hunting is becoming dangerous because there are too many people. Jen asked if we could prohibit Bobcat hunting in the Forest.
4. Matt said that for safety purposes a paper map is needed, because there is no cell coverage in the Forest. Craig would like to have maps available in a box at the entrance like at Geprags Park in Hinesburg.
5. Matt said the 2010 Town Forest Management Plan posted on the Town's website was pretty comprehensive. He found it helpful.
6. Jen would like to update the Town Forest Management Plan. When the UVM Natural Resources class starts up we could utilize the students to determine how people use our Town Forest.

C. FCC Brochure

1. Jen showed us the edited brochure, which impressed everyone.
2. *Karen will send Jen a map from the Town Plan to include in the brochure.*

D. Emerald Ash Borer

1. John Bull, Reilly LaBerge, Cliff Mix and Joe Nelson met and will be attempting a tree by tree inventory of the big and dangerous ash trees to be removed, and, also, the highly prized ash trees on private property, which could be saved.
2. *Karen to email Joe concerning the ash trees that have been removed along Bay Road west of the Lewis Creek access road.*
3. Craig reminded us of the recent Tree Warden Law, which allows trees within Town road r-o-ws to be cut down by abutting landowners without input from Town officials unless the Town has an adopted Shade Tree Plan.

E. Bear Presentation

1. There will be a virtual talk on Understanding and Living with Vermont Black Bears on January 14th at 7:00 pm.
2. *Jen will make a flyer to post.* We weren't sure if we have to provide close captioning for the hearing impaired. Jen will contact the Town to find out if they have the capability to include close captioning. She will open up the meeting 15 to 30 minutes before the meeting starts to explain to people how to use Zoom to those new to Zoom.
3. *Amy will do the advertising.*

F. Future workshops

1. Judy Dow is interested in conducting a presentation in the New Year. She is doing Land Acknowledging workshops. Craig said he'd like more emphasis on history of the Abenaki in the Champlain Valley.

2. Jadziah said Matt Harrison is interested in doing a presentation on fisheries or underwater archeology.

G. Webpage

1. Krista talked with Betsey and has added some new items and will maintain the site.

H. New Business

1. Amy asked if there were any updates regarding Dennis. *Craig will contact him again.*
2. Jadziah's new last name is DeRosia.

No other business was discussed and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm. The next scheduled meeting will be January 12, 2021, and we will meet using Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Pettersen, Secretary