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**Town of Milton
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

June 24, 2014

6:30 p.m.

Community Room of the Municipal Building

MINUTES

CC Members Present: Judith Kinner, Chair; Bonnie Pease; and Laurie DiCesare

CC Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Jacob Hemmerick, Town Planner

Others: Sophie Sauvé, Winooski Natural Resource Conservation District Manager

I. Call to Order

Chair Kinner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Agenda Review

No changes.

III. Public Input

None.

IV. Business

A. Winooski Natural Resource Conservation District (WNRCD) Visit

Sophie Sauvé, Winooski Natural Resource Conservation District Manager, introduced the organization and their activities to Milton's Commission. She highlighted the history, structure, funding, fundraising, coverage area, staff, board composition, and programmatic areas of the District. Of note were the following points:

- Although Milton is within the Winooski *and* LaMoille watersheds, the conservation districts often follow political boundaries and Milton is entirely within the WNRCD.
- The District relies heavily on fundraising, a significant portion of which comes from the annual, spring tree and trout sale. This wouldn't be possible without the help of volunteers. Hemmerick questioned if Milton Pond would be suitable habitat for trout stocking.
- The District has 1 full-time and 2 part-time staff members with donated office space in Williston and Berlin.
- Milton Resident Lawrence Rowley is a member of the Board.
- There are four program areas: Agriculture, Forestry, Watershed Management, and Urban Conservation.
- Agricultural Programs: They annually offer nutrient management planning through UVM's Extension for 6-10 small farmers. This program increases average maximum yields by 23%. They also rent a field aerator.
- Forestry: They rent skid bridges for logging operation stream crossings (\$100 per month) to reduce erosion.

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- Watershed: They support riparian buffer plantings on private land to prevent erosion and land loss. They install culverts that improve aquatic organism and fish passage. They undertake invasive species clearance.
 - Urban Conservation: They coordinate water testing as requested by Depts. of Public Works as part of MS4 Permitting through Stream Team Program. Sauv  said that it's typically for impaired streams. The Commission was interested in testing Arrowhead Lake and Milton Pond. Hemmerick said he would find out which water bodies have been identified as impaired in Milton. Sauv  said that if Milton wants any streams to be tested, that the CC should make the request to the Department of Public Works for their March MS4 permitting paperwork. The District also has a Rain Garden adopters program as well as grants to install a rain garden, which favor public installations. The Commission was favorable to exploring the possibility of a public rain garden. Sauv  said more information is available at www.letitrainvt.org.

60 The Commission thanked Sauv  for her visit.

61 **B. Action Item Follow-Up**

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- Hemmerick reported that he informed the *Independent* of July and September's meeting cancellations and update the Town's online events calendar accordingly.
 - Staff investigated HUD and AARP funding given for trail work done in Fairfax and found that this funding was made available through the Northwest Regional Planning Commission. Milton is part of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, and therefore is not eligible.
 - Hemmerick said that he updated the Conservation Commission webpage to state "Milton Town Forest" instead of "Municipal Forest". Pease noted that the drop down menu only shows Agenda and Minutes, but does not include the CC's page. Hemmerick said that he cannot change this architecture, but if users click where it says "Conservation Commission", it will go to the CC's page. He said he would add links from the events and agendas and minutes pages to the Commission main page ensure that there is a navigable loop.
 - Kinner wasn't able to set up a meeting to discuss Eagle Mountain way-finding with Lake Champlain Land Trust (LCLT) on June 30th, as was tentatively proposed. The Commission was in favor of a site visit. Hemmerick asked if there was an MOU between the Town and LCLT about who is responsible for what at Eagle Mountain. The Commission thought this was written into the conservation easement language. Hemmerick volunteered to reach out to Chris Boget of LCLT to see if he could obtain any existing shared management language and set up a visit to talk about better trail marking and mapping.
 - Hemmerick reported that he forwarded the mapping data and proposed additions to Chris Hoffmeister, who has volunteered to produce a draft map of the Town Forest by August.
 - To follow-up on a Town Forest planning approval inquiry from last meeting, Hemmerick shared that the Town Forest last underwent Site Plan review for the Westford Road parking lot. He stated that the Zoning Regulations require Site Plan review for the addition of anything requiring a permit at a non-residential use, which would include bridges, viewing platforms, bike racks, etc. DiCesare brought up concerns raised in an e-mail concerning the installation of a replacement footbridge in Bombardier Park that was not built to accommodate users with reduced abilities. Staff offered the background that this was a donated, volunteer, youth project and is probably not subject to ADA since it doesn't provide access to an otherwise inaccessible area. DiCesare expressed a desire

95 for the CC to be consulted on projects like these and offered Colchester's Conservation
96 Commission's role in Development Review as a way of being involved. Hemmerick said
97 that the donation was authorized by the Selectboard and had Public Works staff
98 mentorship. He added that he thought an advisory role in development review for the
99 Conservation Commission had to be enabled by statute, but would follow-up. Kinner said
100 that the Commission wouldn't have time for Development Review. Pease mentioned that
101 there is no sign for the handicapped parking designated on the site plan. Hemmerick
102 suggested that this be added as part of the accessible trail design project. Pease
103 requested that the Selectboard's draft Minutes be mailed to all the Boards and
104 Commissions again in order to remain in the loop. Hemmerick said he would make this
105 request.

- 106 • In response to an inquiry about who is in charge of the Eagle Mountain trailhead land off
107 Cold Springs Road, Staff found that the Lister's card shows that it is an inactive parcel
108 associated with the Cold Springs Road Association. The Commission is interested in
109 cleaning the site up, and Kinner thought the dump site might be on the Town's parcel
110 and not on the parcel in question. She offered to measure from the road center line to
111 the dump site to determine which property it is on. Hemmerick said he would provide
112 her with a mapping measurement from the road center line to the parcel boundary.
- 113 • Hemmerick stated that added DiCesare's vegetable bag crochet instructions to the CC
114 website with a photo, the aim being to reduce plastic bag use at the grocery store.
- 115 • Hemmerick mentioned the updates to the Open Meeting Law. Pease highlighted the in-
116 person quorum and electronic quorum provisions.
- 117 • Hemmerick mentioned that he included a Powerpoint on agricultural easements in their
118 packets (for their information) and noted that the Vermont Land Trust's spring brochure
119 highlighted two sites in Milton.
- 120 • Hemmerick requested input on the Town Forest signage that the Manager would like
121 replaced to change "Bove Property" to "Town Forest". The Commission discussed the
122 Town Forest welcome/rule sign. They were agreed to change the format to make it
123 consistent with Bombardier Park's signage, and they discussed the merits of requiring
124 pets be kept on leashes and if there is any regulatory backup for this. Hemmerick said
125 that unless it's in the management plan, then there's no basis for the rule since the
126 Town's Dog Ordinance does not require dogs to be leashed in public places. He added
127 that even if it's in the management plan, if it's not in an Ordinance, then there is no
128 mechanism for enforcement or penalty. DiCesare was in favor of keeping the leash
129 language to reduce conflicts and preserve the resource. Pease and Kinner were in favor
130 of "Keep Pets in Sight and Under Control. Pet Owners Must Clean Up After Pets."
131 They also were favorable to adding "Carry Out What You Carry In." Hemmerick said he
132 would return the edits to the Management Fellow for ordering.
- 133 • Pease was thankful to Public Works for clearing the Pond's spillway while she was away
134 in Ireland, and Hemmerick asked her about the mulch. Pease informed the Commission
135 that the mulch was not put beyond the puncheons on the problem trail, but was instead
136 spread around the kiosk and some trees. Although it wasn't what was intended, she
137 mentioned that not having mulch on the problem trail will help the AVCC grant-funded
138 consultant see unmitigated trail conditions. Pease said the aesthetic improvements are
139 nice and a picnic table would be a good addition for the people she sees lunching in the
140 parking lot.
- 141 • Hemmerick encouraged the Commission to put a placeholder on November 1 for the
142 Association of Vermont Conservation Commissioner's Annual Summit Meeting.

143 **C. Commissioner Recruitment**

144 Kinner reported that she has some leads and will reach out to a former member Dan Garrity.
145 Hemmerick passed along a recruitment sign for the Town Forest kiosk to Pease. Pease
146 requested that it state "must be a registered voter of the Town". Hemmerick said he could
147 update it.
148

149 **D. Quotes for AVCC Grant-funded Trail Design**

150 The Commission discussed the proposal prepared by Staff. They were concerned about some
151 of the more intense uses listed and requested changes that move away from vehicular
152 references. They encouraged staff to move this forward in hopes to have some quotes by the
153 August meeting.
154

155 **E. Recreation Trail Grant Program (RTP) Administrator 6/12 Visit**

156 Kinner summarized the meeting of June 12. She was pleased that the Town Manager was able
157 to attend, as well as the Town Planner from Westford, Melissa Manka. The group did the
158 parking lot to the pond link loop and back. The State's RTP Administrator, Sherry Winnie, was
159 there primarily to see the work completed during the last round (the parking lot), and had a lot of
160 great feedback. She thought that an accessible design for the Bove Connector trail might make
161 for a competitive application. The Manager was favorable to preparing an application for
162 Selectboard approval in the fall, requesting the maximum amount of \$20,000. The Commission
163 was favorable to pursuing this money to fund a trail design solution for the Bove Connector
164 Trail. There was also discussion about a possible pavilion to host picnickers, programs and
165 multi-generational visits, a recommendation by the Administrator. The Commission thought that
166 this would be best located close to the road and should be considered as part of the
167 Management Plan. Hemmerick also mentioned that he is working with Melissa Manka, the
168 Westford Town Planner, to see if the trails and structures proposed as part of Phase II are
169 possible under their Zoning Regulations.
170

171 **F. Town Forest Management Plan Phase II: Primitive Camping Inquiry**

172 On the Commission's behalf, Hemmerick put out an inquiry to the Association of Vermont
173 Conservation Commissioner's ListServe and Town staff concerning the management of
174 primitive camping sites proposed in Phase II of the Town Forest's Management Plan. Feedback
175 from Town Staff and other AVCC Listserve members highlighted the discouraging challenges
176 that come along with primitive camping. The State's RTP Administrator advised against it,
177 unless there's a dedicated staff person to oversee it on a day-to-day basis. Hemmerick said
178 that he has done a lot of primitive camping, which tends to be very remote -- not within cooler
179 carrying distance of parking lot. The Commission stated that the primitive campsites were the
180 result of a desire from local troops to have a group camping place. They asked if the sites were
181 still part of the Bombardier Plans included in preferred alternatives for the PW facilities that the
182 Selectboard adopted last year. Hemmerick said he hasn't heard anything lately about group
183 camping in Bombardier, nor has Recreation. The Commission was more favorable to a group
184 camping area being in Bombardier Park, where it would be easier for a Town staff to oversee
185 according to a distinct policy. The Commission discussed other more intense uses included in
186 the plan, such as horseback riding and mountain biking. They agreed that some of them aren't
187 compatible on shared pedestrian paths and need some more consideration. The Commission
188 was favorable to begin work on some proposed amendments to the Management Plan at next
189 month's meeting for later Recreation Commission and Selectboard consideration.
190

191 **G. Programming**

192 **i. Arrowhead Lake Paddle on 6/21**

193

194 Laurie reported a successful program with one Milton resident and other participants from as far
195 as Barre. She was concerned about a water quality issue that someone on shore shared with
196 her.

197

198 **ii. Town Employee/Volunteer Municipal Forest Hike on 6/28 from 10-noon**

199 Hemmerick reported that four had accepted the invitation, four had tentatively accepted, and
200 five declined. Kinner said that she would like to send the invitation to the Selectboard.

201

202 **V. Proposed Agenda Items for August 26, 2014**

203 All Commissioners are available and plan to review the AVCC quote and discuss possible
204 Management Plan amendments.

205

206 **VII. Approval of Minutes of May 20, 2014**

207 Pease MOVED to approve as presented, SECONDED by DiCesare. Unanimously
208 APPROVED.

209

210 **VIII. Adjourn**

211 DiCesare MOVED to adjourn at 9:27, SECONDED by Pease. Unanimously APPROVED.

212

213 **Submitted by**

214

215 *Judith Kinner* Date *August 26, 2014*

216 **Judith Kinner, Chair**

217

SIGN-IN SHEET FOR CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: JUNE 24, 2014

NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Judy Kinner	<i>Judith Kinner</i>	n/a
Bonnie Pease	<i>Bonnie A. Pease</i>	n/a
Laurie DiCesare	<i>Laurie DiCesare</i>	n/a
<i>Utros Hemmerick</i>	<i>Utros</i>	<i>STAFF</i>
<i>SOPHIE SAUVÉ</i>	<i>Sauvé</i>	<i>sophie@winooskinrd.org</i>

Please leave your e-mail address to receive e-updates as a "Friend of the Conservation Commission". We'll update you on volunteer opportunities, programs, and relevant conservation news.