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**Town of Milton**  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday, August 26, 2014**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Lister's Conference 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:** None

**I. Call to Order**

- ◆ Chair Kinner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- ◆ DiCesare clarified that she no longer wants to receive large file e-mails from the Town. Hemmerick confirmed that he will not send e-mails with attachments.

**II. Agenda Review**

- ◆ No changes.
- ◆ Pease noted that the *Milton Independent* did not publicize this meeting. Hemmerick reported that he e-mailed the Agenda to the *Independent's* Staff.
- ◆ The Commission discussed the September meeting schedule and concluded that they will not hold a regular meeting in September due to schedules and the additional meeting in early-October with the Recreation Commission.

**III. Public Input**

None.

**IV. Business**

**A. Commissioner Recruitment**

- ◆ The Commission discussed past recruitment efforts, and possible leads. They noted that it is hard for people to make time for public service with the obligations of busy, modern life. All agreed to continue in their recruitment efforts.

**B. Conservation Commission Budget**

- ◆ Hemmerick reported that the account balance of the Commission's \$600 annual budget (included in the Planning Budget) is \$550. \$50 has been spent on annual membership dues for the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions.
- ◆ Pease questioned if the Conservation Commission should remain a member of the Arbor Day Foundation given that they no longer provide trees. The Commission **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to ending their Arbor Day membership. DiCesare added that the Winooski Valley Conservation District is a better source for trees.
- ◆ Hemmerick asked if there were other upcoming expenses. The Commission asked about the printing costs of maps internally. Hemmerick said he would look into how much it would cost to print them on the copier, versus having a printer do them.
- ◆ On the topic of maps, the Commission asked the status of the Town Forest brochure update. Hemmerick reported that the volunteer mapper was not able to finish by this meeting, but he expects to bring a draft of the map and the associated text to the

51 Commission's October meeting.

52  
53 **C. Town Forest Bove Connector Trail Design Consultant**

54 ♦ Staff stated that Timber and Stone LLC submitted the only quote for the trail design  
55 work at \$750. The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) Grant  
56 was \$600, therefore a \$150 match is needed from the Conservation Commission's  
57 budget. The Conservation Commission discussed the merits of making the trail  
58 accessible and what constraints that might pose. Hemmerick said that it would require  
59 more maintenance to keep it smooth; however, accessibility is a factor that will make a  
60 State Recreational Trail (RTP) Grant Program application for construction more  
61 competitive. He added that the RTP Administrator mentioned during a site visit that the  
62 location would be fitting for an accessible trail given the gentle grade. The  
63 Commission's intention, as stated in the approved *Call for Quotes* was for an accessible  
64 trail design as a basis to prepare an RTP Grant Application to fund the construction.  
65 Hemmerick outlined the next steps included in the *Call for Quotes*, the goal being to  
66 have a design ready by December. The Commission asked to be included in the site  
67 visit with Timber and Stone. Public Works will also be brought in to the process.  
68 ♦ The Commission noted the consultant's mention of a possible pavilion and discussed  
69 placement and associated risk of vandalism. They concluded that a pavilion should not  
70 be included in the design at this time, but a structure could be considered at a later date.  
71 Along this vein, the Commission discussed the possibility of extending the accessible  
72 trail to a destination point at Westford or Milton Swamp as part of a later phase in the  
73 Management Plan. Hemmerick said this can be brought into the Forest Management  
74 Plan amendment discussion.  
75 ♦ Pease **MOVED** to approve hiring Timber and Stone LLC to re-design the Bove  
76 Connector Trail at the Milton Town Forest according to the process outlined in the *Call*  
77 *for Quotes* and authorize Staff to allocate \$150 of the Conservation Commission's funds  
78 to match the AVCC Grant of \$600, **SECOND** by DiCesare. Unanimously **APPROVED**.

79  
80 **D. Upcoming Events**

81 The Conservation Commission discussed availability for:

- 82 • The Milton Activities Fair at the Elementary/Middle School on September 9,
- 83 • The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association Annual Conference in Lake  
84 Morey on September 25,
- 85 • The Town Forest Summit in Barre Town on September 27, and
- 86 • The UVM Sustainable Landscapes Steward Coursework.

87 Kinner and Pease were not available for the Activities Fair, and DiCesare said she would  
88 look into rescheduling another obligation. No members were available to attend the  
89 Recreation Conference. Kinner was tentatively interested in the Town Forest Summit;  
90 pre-registration ends September 19th. Hemmerick stated that he intends to attend the  
91 Recreation and Town Forest Summit and would be happy to lead a carpool if there are  
92 any changes in availability. Hemmerick said the Stewardship Course is something the  
93 Commission can explore independently.

94  
95 **E. Fall/Winter Upcoming Programming**

96 The Commission **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to the following programs/activities:

97 ♦ Pease will lead a site visit for the Commission to Westford Bog (at the Town Forest) on  
98 Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. to noon, for those that are interested.

99 ♦Pease and Kinner will lead a Snowshoe Hike on **Saturday, February 14, 2014 from**  
100 **9:30 a.m. to noon** at the Bove Property as part of Winterfest. The Commission will  
101 determine the details of the walk at a later date.  
102

#### 103 **F. Way-finding at Eagle Mountain Natural Area**

- 104 ♦ Hemmerick went over a Memo (included in the Commission's packets) summarizing  
105 activities related to Eagle Mountain way-finding and the interests of Lake Champlain  
106 Land Trust (LCLT), a Conservation Easement holder on the land. All actions of the  
107 Town must be consistent with this Easement.
- 108 ♦ *With* In regards to mapping, Boget of LCLT asked the Commission to forward  
109 recommended edits to the "blue arrow" map produced by LCLT. The Commission  
110 discussed the map and its elements. The CC is supportive of using this map for  
111 LCLT's directional and interpretive podcast walk; however, they concluded that the  
112 most accessible format for this would be to have the numbered podcast stops shown  
113 on a map/brochure with corresponding numbered entries in the brochure in order to  
114 make the content less technologically dependent. They, therefore, recommended that  
115 the LCLT "blue arrow" map be made into a stand-alone directional podcast/interpretive  
116 tour brochure. They further concluded that the directional signs installed by LCLT at  
117 Eagle Mountain should denote that they are way-finding signage specifically for the  
118 interpretive podcast walk; the CC found that they may confuse visitors, and requested  
119 that LCLT consult with them in the future prior to installing signage or blazing trails.
- 120 ♦ *With* In regards to confusion over which management plan is the duly adopted Management  
121 Plan (1998 or 2000), Kinner produced a letter noting that the 2000 LIA Report is the  
122 official Management Plan, duly adopted by the Selectboard on October 30, 2000. Staff  
123 will pull the Resolution or Minutes of that meeting and add it to Planning's records.
- 124 ♦ Hemmerick stated that the LIA Report is formatted as an assessment with  
125 recommendations, but is not formatted like a typical Management Plan, which could  
126 make it hard to work from. The Commission replied that a 14 year-old plan may be in  
127 need of an update; however, with the current management planning demands for the  
128 Town Forest, there will be no time to address this in the near future.
- 129 ♦ The CC is open to re-examining the trail configuration as a component of management  
130 planning, but they were not in favor of waiting for a trail consultant's advice (as  
131 recommended by LCLT) prior to moving forward on a general purpose map that  
132 corresponds to navigable trail markings. They found that adequate way-finding is  
133 needed for the interim. The Commission, therefore, **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to  
134 the Town producing a draft map prior to a site visit on Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00  
135 p.m. (to examine the existing trail markings at Eagle Mountain) for discussion and  
136 revisions. The Commission said that they would like to seek input map from LCLT  
137 prior to finalization. The Commission asked that Staff update LCLT on this discussion.  
138

#### 139 **G. Town Forest Management Plan & Phase II Westford Update**

- 140 ♦ Hemmerick summarized the Memo included in the packet detailing cooperative  
141 discussions with Westford Planning related to the Town Forest Management Plan's  
142 proposed viewing platforms and trails in Westford and Milton as part of Phase II.  
143 Westford supports further environmental study to ensure compliance with their  
144 regulations. The Commission found merit in Westford's recommendation. Hemmerick  
145 said he looked into the cost of study with UVM, and the estimate was \$5,000 for a full  
146 assessment. DiCesare cautioned that any contract should require, closely monitor and  
147 favor field work over in-office research. Westford's Town Planner is in the process of  
148 advancing a request to the Westford Selectboard that half of the study be paid by the  
149 Town of Westford in FY16. Pease **MOVED** to pursue funding for \$2,500 to match

150 Westford's budget proposal, **SECOND** by DiCesare. Unanimously **APPROVED**.  
151 Hemmerick will explore possible funding sources with Town Management.

- 152 ♦ Because several projects are now out of sequence in the approved Town Forest Plan  
153 and some proposed uses included in the phasing raise stewardship challenges, the  
154 Commission consented to reopen the Plan at their June meeting -- to prepare  
155 amendments for the Selectboard's consideration in 2015. Primitive camping, for  
156 instance, was a use the Commission, Planning, Police, Fire and Recreation all had  
157 considerable concerns about. Hemmerick proposed a work plan for amendment which  
158 the Commission tentatively agreed to. The Commission **UNANIMOUSLY**  
159 **CONSENTED** to begin the process by doing a line-by-line review of the current plan as  
160 an assessment of what has been done, what is fine, and what needs work.  
161 ♦ Staff included Hinesburg's Town Forest Management Plan in the Commission's packet  
162 as an example of a well-formatted Management Plan. The Hinesburg Plan raised  
163 questions that the Commission found would make for a good learning exchange.  
164 Therefore, the Commission **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** that Staff reach out to  
165 Hinesburg's Town Forest Committee to schedule a site visit to Hinesburg Town Forest  
166 on Sunday, October 19th (afternoon).

167  
168 **H. October 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting Recreation Commission**

169 The Commission stated that they would like to:

- 170 • Discuss wetlands in Bombardier Park;  
171 • Talk about the possibility of including a youth, group campsite at Bombardier;  
172 and  
173 • Exchange an update on each commission's activities.

174  
175 **I. Staff Update & Trail Registers**

176 Hemmerick summarized the written update included in the Commissioner's packets. He  
177 inquired where the Commissioners would like the Trail Registers, purchased by Public  
178 Works and built by Selectboard Member John Gifford, to be placed. They concluded  
179 that they would like the registers to be placed back from the parking lots in order to avoid  
180 vandalism. They **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to the following locations:

- 181 • Eagle Mountain: Henry Road (just into the woods)  
182 • Eagle Mountain: Cold Spring Road (back into the woods)  
183 • Town Forest Parking: at the entrance to the woods ¼ mile into the Bove  
184 Connector Trail.  
185 • Town Forest Carriage House Parking: on a post by the culvert in Pease's Land  
186 Trust field.

187 The Commission also recommended that one be held for replacement, and thought that  
188 the LaMoille Riverwalk might also be a good place to track user-ship and cull potential  
189 trail volunteers.

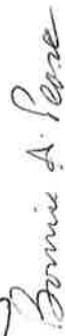
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191 **J. Natural Area Management Concerns**

192 Pease raised a concern about "JJ's Shack" on the Pond's Edge in the Town Forest.  
193 This is a dilapidated shelter constructed of wood. She noted that it is an eyesore,  
194 liability, attracts refuse, and does not get use. Pease **MOVED** that the Commission  
195 forward a recommendation to the Town to remove the shack by hauling it out on the ice  
196 this winter, **SECONDED** by DiCesare. Unanimously **APPROVED**.



**SIGN-IN SHEET FOR CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING**

DATE: AUGUST 26, 2014

NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Judy Kinner		n/a
Bonnie Pease		n/a
Laurie DiCesare		n/a
JACOB HEMMERICK, STAFF		n/a

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.