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**Town of Milton  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
Tuesday, October 28, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.  
Municipal Building Community Room**

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**MINUTES**

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

**CC Members Absent:** Jay Maurice

**Staff Present:** Jacob Hemmerick, Town Planner

**Others:** Karen Bates, ANR Watershed Planning Coordinator and Danielle Owczarski, ANR District Wetlands Ecologist

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**I. Call to Order**

Kinner called the meeting to order at 6:35

**II. Agenda Review**

Hemmerick asked that Karen Bates be added to the agenda to talk about Allen Brook water testing.

**III. Public Input**

None.

**IV. Business**

**A. Karen Bates on Allen Brook Testing for Watershed Planning**

Bates presented a map of Milton showing Allen Brook, which feeds into the Mallets Creek wetland prior to flowing into Lake Champlain. The Agency of Natural Resources is interested in monitoring this area due to the habitat composition, geomorphology and the amount of development that has occurred around the stream. This watershed extends east and south of US 7 as far as Willys Lane. The testing would have to be done every 2 weeks throughout the summer and the samples would have to be delivered to their lab in Burlington. The Commission inquired if this could be done as service hours by students. Bates said that youth involvement could work with close adult supervision. The Commission recalled that Sophie Sauvé of WNRCD mentioned that it coordinates Water Quality Testing with the Chittenden County Stream Team that is somehow tied into Milton's MS4 permitting. Bates said testing like this would feed into the community involvement section of this permitting. Hemmerick asked Bates when she would need a response. She said they gear up in April.

**B. Danielle Owczarski on Trail & Recreational Development in Wetlands**

Owczarski presented a PowerPoint presentation on what is involved to permit recreational structures in wetlands, including wetland parameters, classification, characteristics, and their regulatory jurisdiction. This feeds into the Town Forest Management Plans to place viewing platforms on the edges of Milton Swamp and Westford Bog. Owczarski stated that anything within 50 feet of any Class II wetland would require a permit, and anything on ANR's Atlas that is classified as Class II is assumed to be a wetland until a wetland specialist deems it otherwise. Many features you would expect to see in a park (boardwalks, viewing platforms, etc.) are allowed structures in wetlands, but you cannot use treated lumber, fill, cement footings, or alter the stream course. The goal is to impact the wetland as minimally as

51 possible. The Commission then discussed the platforms proposed in the Management Plan.  
52 Hemmerick further noted that Milton Pond is subject to the Shoreline Protection Act, which  
53 could require additional State review for any shoreline structures. Pease inquired about  
54 invasive removal on wetland borders and possible native plant restoration. Owczarski said  
55 that cutting is fine, but any poison should be applied through a management plan in  
56 consultation with an Agency of Natural Resources expert.  
57

#### 58 **Off Topic: Westford Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) Funding**

59 Hemmerick informed the Commission that Westford's Town Planner let him know that their  
60 Selectboard would fund a NRI proportional to their population, but not the half, as requested  
61 by Westford's Planner. The total cost was estimated to be \$5,000 by a UVM Research  
62 Office. The inventory is needed by Westford in order to be able to evaluate compliance with  
63 its Wetland Overlay Zoning District and lead a trail design reverential to the resources.  
64 From Milton's standpoint, trail development in Westford is part of the adopted Management  
65 Plan, and the NRI would be beneficial to inform design decisions and gain development  
66 approvals. Hemmerick stated that he didn't think there would be an interest in increasing  
67 the match beyond 50%; however, the \$2,500 request could still be useful to fund other  
68 planning & design work needed to release funding for physical capital projects. The  
69 Commission discussed the possibility of advancing trails in Westford with the current  
70 information available. Hemmerick advised that they turn towards other projects for the time  
71 being. Pease noted that Milton pays roughly \$2,500 in annual taxes to Westford on 83  
72 acres that is predominantly wetland; she is favorable to the Town exploring ways to reduce  
73 the assessment. She questioned if a Class I Wetland classification or "nature preserve"  
74 designation might support a reduced tax rate.  
75

#### 76 **C. Staff Update**

##### 77 **Upcoming Meetings:**

##### 78 **♦ 11/7, Site Visit at Eagle Mountain for Way-Finding Site Visit at 1:00 p.m.**

79 Hemmerick presented a draft map of Eagle Mountain for the 11/7 Site Visit. The  
80 Commission's goal at this meeting will be to ground truth the map, discuss how to blaze  
81 (mark) the trails, discuss any other signage needs or changes, and consider any edits  
82 that should be made before printing. The secondary goal is to get a weather resistant  
83 map up on both kiosks. Hemmerick said that the Executive Director of the Lake  
84 Champlain Trust, Chris Boget, will also be joining the Commission on this site visit.  
85 Hemmerick explained that there is a management directive to reduce color printing, so  
86 the map was designed to be legible in black and white and color, but he suggested  
87 laminating color copies that people could use and then return to the kiosks, when done  
88 (in order to reduce color production). The Commission had some initial observations but  
89 plans to discuss this more on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Kinner then mentioned a conversation with Craig  
90 Iverson, who is interested in sugaring the area, who told her that the Hoyts own both  
91 exclusive hunting and sugaring rights that are non-transferable; given this, she  
92 questioned if the Management Plan could legally allow hunting. Hemmerick confirmed  
93 that the Hoyts own exclusive hunting rights, but this would only apply to the southern  
94 parcel of Eagle Mountain. The Commission noted this is where most of the trails are,  
95 and they were tentatively favorable to clarifying where the public may and may not hunt.  
96

##### 97 **♦ 11/17, Annual joint meeting with the Selectboard.**

98 Kinner plans to touch base with Chair Adams ahead of time to see if there is any  
99 preparation they should do. The Commission plans discuss: recent activities, plans for  
100 next year, and funding. The Commission wants to learn more about ways to access  
101 funds for physical capital improvements of at least \$5,000 without having funding  
sources for the planning and design work, presumably necessary to get to the

102 construction phase. They noted that many of their projects are smaller in scale.  
103 Hemmerick said he would look into any other funding sources to lay the ground work for  
104 competitive grant applications and Capital Improvement Plan funding

105 ♦ **11/25, Regular Meeting of the CC at 6:30 p.m.**

106 ♦ **12/16, Special Meeting of the CC at 6:30 p.m. – 12/23 meeting cancelled.**

107 ♦ **1/10, Site Visit to Westford Bog at Town Forest from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

108 ♦ **1/27, Regular Meeting of the CC at 6:30 p.m.**

109 ♦ **2/14, Winterfest Snowshoe 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

110 ***Follow-up Items from 8/27 for Discussion:***

111 ♦ **Eagle Mountain Cold Spring Road Association Dump Site**

112 Kinner said there are not many cedars available to shield the view of the garbage at the site,  
113 and noted Iverson is now sugaring this corner. Kinner said that the land is now considered  
114 no man's land, since neither the Town nor the Road Association assumes ownership.

115 Hemmerick explained that the tax records show this as Cold Spring Road Association land.

116 Kinner said that the titles seem to indicate that it is still owned by the Hoyts and was  
117 inadvertently not transferred with the rest of Eagle Mountain to the Town. Hemmerick

118 suggested leveraging Green Up day to remove some the garbage. The Commission was  
119 favorable to a surface clean-up followed by a thorough "brushing in" to shield the garbage  
120 from view.

121 ♦ **Possible New Member**

122 Hemmerick informed the Commission that Dan Garrity has applied for appointment by the  
123 Selectboard. Dan is a former member of the Commission. He also added that Jay Maurice  
124 had a commitment on this night that was set up prior to appointment.

125 ♦ **Eagle Mountain Plan Adoption Clarification**

126 Hemmerick clarified that the LIA Eagle Mountain Management Plan was the official  
127 Management Plan adopted by the Selectboard, verified by their Minutes.

128 ♦ **Trail Register Installation & Monitoring**

129 Hemmerick informed the Commission that the Trail Registers built by Selectman Gifford  
130 have now been installed with sign-in sheets. The Commissioners reviewed the sign in sheet  
131 format. DiCesare suggested that there be an area for comments or observations on the  
132 sheet. Staff will add this to the next set of sheets once the current sheets are used up.

133 Hemmerick asked that the Commissioners pull the sheets whenever they pass a register, so  
134 they can begin tracking disclosed visitation and collect volunteer contact information given.

135 Pease was disappointed that the placement of the kiosks was not consistent with the  
136 Commission's recommendation and asked if this had been communicated. Hemmerick said  
137 it was communicated.

138 ♦ **Winter Movie Screening**

139 The Commission briefly discussed the possibility of a screening of the movie *Play Again*, on  
140 the benefits of outdoor play; but there was concern about some of the costs for a public  
141 showing. Hemmerick said he would look into it.

142 ♦ **Quorum Question**

143 To follow up on a question of what constitutes a quorum, Hemmerick said the Town Clerk  
144 located the 1994 Resolution creating the Commission and there is, indeed, a five member  
145 membership. Cushing and Hemmerick are not sure if there has been any subsequent  
146 amendment changing the composition. Hemmerick said he would suggest that the Town

147 Manager propose an Administrative Code Amendment to specify the number of members  
148 on the Commission specifically within their Section of the Code. This means that a quorum  
149 and majority constitutes three, even when there are vacant seats.

150

151 **Other Updates**

152 **♦ Capital Project funding**

153 Hemmerick relayed that there is \$41,000 programmed for trail improvements in FY15  
154 that can carry over so long as there are projects that speak to it. He asked if there are  
155 any trail projects that the Commission is interested in prioritizing and if it would be  
156 possible to find matching funds in such a short time. The Commission was favorable to  
157 extending the scope of the multi-use, accessible Town Forest trail from the Westford Rd.  
158 Parking Lot all the way to a viewing platform proposed on Milton swamp. Hemmerick  
159 said he would try to find some funding for Timber & Stone LLC to add this segment to  
160 their design and use this as a basis for RTP or LCWF Funding. The Commission also  
161 said that the LaMoille Riverwalk is in need of some improvements, such as kiosks and  
162 bridge work. Hemmerick inquired if they would be favorable to have a trail professional  
163 do an evaluation of all three natural areas and the existing trail infrastructure in order to  
164 identify improvements or head-off future problems as a basis for prioritizing projects.  
165 Kinner questioned if this is needed. Hemmerick said he would look into the funding  
166 sources to see what strings are attached and if anything can be put together this fiscal  
167 year; however, in order to find matching funds and do the leg-work necessary to be a  
168 successful grant applicant, it might be that projects will have to be planned for FY16 or  
169 beyond.

170 **Recommendation for Future Agenda Items**

- 171 • Review Draft Eagle Mountain Map for Fact Finding & Trail Blazing Plan
- 172 • Finalize Town Forest Map and Brochure
- 173 • Discuss Printing Options for Maps & Brochures
- 174 • Discuss Existing Management Plan Elements to Consider for Amendment Proposal
- 175 • Discuss Any New Elements for Town Forest Management Plan
  - 176 ○ i.e. Natural Play Area
- 177 • Strategic Planning for 2015
- 178 • Begin Preparing for Vermont's Recreational Trails Program Grant Application
- 179 • Discuss Details for Town Forest Snowshoe in February
- 180 • Discuss Greenup Day
- 181 • Student Volunteer Projects for Next Spring/Summer

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183 **D. Bove Connector Trail Design Meeting Re-Cap**

184 The CC **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to table this.

185 **E. Hinesburg Town Forest Site Visit Re-Cap**

186 The CC **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to table this.

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188 **F. Town Forest Map Review**

189 Pease re-capped trail revisions and blazing changes discussed at last meeting. The  
190 Commissioners are working on their Town Forest Brochure narrative content. Kinner  
191 submitted revisions to her section. Pease inquired if a map could be done for the Town  
192 Forest in a similar format to the one presented for Eagle Mountain. Hemmerick said he  
193 could do this.

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**G. Status Analysis of Town Forest Management Plan**

The CC **UNANIMOUSLY CONSENTED** to table this.

**VII. Approval of Minutes of October 8, 2014, October 14, 2014, and October 19, 2014.**

The Commission determined that with a membership of five and no actions taken, that there was no quorum on October 14<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> and therefore no need to have Minutes. DiCesare **MOVED** to table the Minutes of October 8<sup>th</sup>, **SECOND** by Pease. Unanimously **APPROVED**.

**VIII. Adjourn**

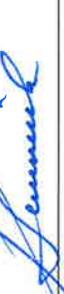
DiCesare **MOVED** to adjourn at 9:45 p.m., **SECONDED** by Pease. Unanimously **APPROVED**.

**Submitted by**

Judith S. Kinner Date 11/25/14  
Judith Kinner, Chair /jmh

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

DATE: OCT 28, 2014

NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS OR E-MAIL ADDRESS
Judy Kinner, Commissioner		<u>jkinner@miltonvt.org</u>
Bonnie Pease, Commissioner		<u>bpease@miltonvt.org</u>
Laurie DiCesare, Commissioner		<u>ldicesare@miltonvt.org</u>
Jay Maurice, Commissioner		<u>jmaurice@miltonvt.org</u>
Jacob Hemmerick, Staff		<u>jhemmerick@town.milton.vt.us</u>
Kam S Betas		Kam. Betas@state.vt.us
Danielle Owizarski		danielle.owizarski@state.vt.us

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