

## RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday July 11, 2017

Town Center Meeting Room, 203 Bridge Street, 7:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Judy Rosovsky, Mary Houle, Bob Low, Kristin Nelson, Elizabeth (Ibit) Wright, Jacob Davignon, Rick Barrett

Guests: Guy Roberts, Jon Kart

**7:30** Minutes

Rick Barrett was appointed as Minutes Taker.  
Minutes for June 13 were approved.

**7:45** Public comments

None

**7:40** Additions, amendments to agenda

- Correspondence from Geoff Urbanik to Judy Rosovsky

**7:45** Guy Robert: The Committee voted to recommend that the SB appoint Guy Roberts as an alternate member of the Conservation Committee.

6 in favor

0 against

0 abstentions

**7:45** Jon Kart – Riparian Reforestation Project: opened a discussion concerning erosion along the banks of the Winooski River, in particular, as it flows by Volunteers' Green.

- What other Commissions and Organizations might be interested in abating erosion along the Winooski's banks? Are there any such bodies which should be briefed, if not actually involved in developing a proposal? Some examples may include: the Trails Committee, the Recreation Committee, the Community Sports Organizations, the Town Planner, the Richmond Land Trust, Friends of the Winooski. All with an eye to making a proposal to the Richmond Selectboard.
- Which group should take the lead on the project, or is an inter-organizational team needed?

- A buffer, with new and additional plantings of native flora, will most likely be considered as a best practice.
- Sandy Fary's science class (at CHMS) would love to be involved in both planting trees and monitoring tree growth and survival, should a project be approved.
- Who can we consult with for advice (e.g., Intervale Conservation Nursery, DEC, Fish & Wildlife, Friends of the Winooski)?
- Which tree species would be best for this area (a sample list follows below) and what other materials and equipment would be needed?
- Do we need to purchase all the trees from a nursery supplier or can we grow some trees ourselves (and it is worth doing so)?
- Could this project be eligible for Conservation Reserve Fund funding?
- Organize a site visit now?

#### **Trees typically found in Silver Maple-Ostrich Fern Floodplain Forests**

- Silver maple
- American elm (maybe skip this one because of Dutch elm disease unless there is a resistant variety)
- Slippery elm (not as susceptible to Dutch elm disease)
- Hackberry
- White ash (fear of emerald ash borer might prompt us to skip this one...but I hate to give in to fear)
- Butternut (butternut canker is a problem but perhaps there is a resistant variety)
- Black cherry

**These floodplain species already found along the Rivershore will seed themselves in**  
(whether we like it or not)

- Cottonwood
- Boxelder
- Black willow

**Additional species to consider**

- Basswood (not typically considered a floodplain species but it grows well in Richmond's floodplains)
- Shagbark hickory (currently found in warmer sites closer to Lake Champlain, but with global warming...maybe?)
- Sycamore (there's a fabulous sycamore behind the motorcycle shop in Jonesville, one of the biggest in the state)

### **Additional Discussion**

- Plantings do not seem to gain back shoreline; rather they preserve what's already there.
- The shoreline, up river, is fairly protected by its ownership by private land owners and non-profits.
- Flora also serves as a natural filtration system; in addition to its ability to stabilize banks.

### **8:15 Updates**

- Geoff Urbanik will see what he can do to establish an email address for the Conservation Committee ; so that we can establish a Facebook Page and facilitate communication with the community.
- Geoff Urbanik suggests that the Conservation Committee offer a model of what a Town Forest Management Committee would look like, what its mission would be and propose potential members.
- The Conservation Committee would consider recommending a small additional grant, for the purchase of the Andrews Tract, if Bob Heiser's fund raising should fall a little short.
- Bob Heiser is also investigating the possibility of supplemental funding for a parking area. A seasonal gravel parking lot would most likely suffice.
- Huntington will be discussing a contribution for replacement of the dam on Gillette Pond, at 08:15 on Thursday, 06/13/17.
- Gillette Pond faired well during the latest rains. It just over-flowed; without any impact on the culvert. Since there was no debris in the pond, it was a non-event.
- CCRPC: The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) held a meeting to consider water quality issues, in the Winooski Water Shed. Bob Low and Judy Rosovsky were in attendance, with quite a number of other attendees, including Richmond's Town Planner Clare Rock and SB member Bard Hill. Bob and Judy have a number of materials and maps, which discuss managing spills, run-off, phosphate intrusion and such. Bob believes that it would be wise to measure current levels of pollutants/contaminants in the Winooski and set up a monitoring program, prior to implementing any measures.

- Further to Town Forest/Andrews Tract: Judy and Bob hiked the property line with representatives from the VLT and Wright Preston. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation - Mike Snyder and other personnel made a separate visit. They observed that is a beautiful tract, except for a portion which was clear cut. Those assembled discussed some potential management problems:
  - Not all of the existing trails and logging roads are within the parcel to be purchased. Perhaps the Andrews Family will grant an easement.
  - VAST policies seem to exclude use by cyclists during the winter. There could be a conflict between VAST and winter cyclists' needs.
  - Richmond Mountain Trails (?) seems to be interested in creating a mountain bike trail from David Sunshine's down to the Preston Reserve and over to Cochran's.
  - Cycling can have an adverse impact on the kind of re-forestation activities, which support logging. It can also adversely impact hunting.
  
- Jim Shallow is assessing the bird habitat.

**09:15** Matters Arising:

- Would there ever be a time when it would be appropriate for the Conscomm to be the lead on a project; make its own application to the Selectboard ? This is a question to be taken up with the SB at a later date.
- Mary Houle would like to see some incentives to abate invasive species, like wild parsnip.

**9:30** Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn was received and passed.