

RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Richmond, VT

MINUTES OF MEETING, January 12, 2016

Members present: Judy Rosovsky, Elizabeth Wright, Jacob Davignon, Bob Low, Alison Anand
Guest and former member: Brad Elliot

The meeting began at 7:30 p.m. The minutes of the November meeting were read and approved.

Bob Low gave an update about the Gillett Pond project.

1. The pond is about to be used.
2. The Richmond Land Trust friends are going to meet to finalize plans for the dam in preparation for the Land Trust meeting on Thursday Feb. 4.

Fern issue:

Ian Stokes wrote a letter about suggested tasks to protect the ferns. A letter was drafted to store owners about overharvesting of ferns. It was sent to the Bolton Conservation Commission, Richmond Conservation Commission, and the Trails Committee. Jake and Judy will follow up on the fern issue and contact Ian Stokes. Bob Low will be writing a new objective for the Natural Resource section of the new Town Plan for the protection of the ostrich fern population.

John Kart wrote a section on invasive species for the draft of the new Town Plan.

Old Creamery update:

The Richmond-Huntington Times Ink had an article about Richmond seeking a grant for redevelopment of the Richmond Creamery. The current developer plans to combine 70,000 sq. ft. of commercial space with apartments or condominiums spread among 8 buildings. Bob Low mentioned that if we do inexpensive housing, everyone's taxes go up. Brad suggested that the housing issue needs to be addressed along with conservation.

Bob mentioned that Deb Brighton has done tax studies of towns in the Northeast. It could be helpful to compare categories of municipal expenses with other communities. Some topics are:

1. How open land reduces taxes
2. How vacation homes reduce taxes
3. How population increases raises taxes
4. How commercial development raises taxes

Bob will present a flip chart available on the website.

Lightning meetings are coming up for the Town Plan. There is an inventory with posted maps and a series of observations for the planning workshops on the website. Bob asked each of us members to look at the 4 bins on the Natural and Working lands and come up with objectives pertaining to each category. The Conservation Commission will explore with Claire a brief presentation of its work regarding the Natural Resource section of the Town Plan before the January 20th meeting which includes townspeople. Bob suggested a display in the library on a rotating basis.

Some members offered their personal goals: 1. a well organized river cleanup. Perhaps the Onion River Race could coordinate with cleanup; 2. Invasives, ferns.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully, Alison Anand