

RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday May 9, 2023

7:30 PM

Attending:

- Commissioners:
 - o Bob
 - o Max
 - o Ibit
 - o Judy

- Members of the Public:
 - o Bob Galvin
 - o Gary Bressor
 - o Jean Bressor
 - o Ed Wells

Agenda:

Please note that times are approximate.

7:30 p.m. Public introductions and comments

7:35 Appoint minutes taker and approve April minutes

- **Minute Taker: Max Krieger**
- Edits from Ibit on April Minutes:
 - o Edit green up day section (Ibit talked about it)
- Approved unanimously with Ibit's edit

7:45 Additions, amendments to agenda

- Last minute addition of reserve fund application
 - o **Application:** Pay \$250 to have Sue Morse give a talk on ecology & wildlife habitat re: the ACF

Motion:

“The Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC) enthusiastically recommends approval of the proposal from the Friends of the Forest dated June 7, 2023, requesting \$250 in Conservation Reserve Funds to support an educational talk by wildlife specialist Sue Morse and regarding the ecology and wildlife habitat of the Andrews Community Forest,

June 7, 2023, to sunset June 7, 2024.

In doing so RCC recognizes responsiveness to CRF priorities as recognized in the proposal, including responsiveness to the natural resource planning goals of the Town Plan, providing appropriate public access to a natural resource and recreational area, promoting for the safety of threatened resources, providing for areas for wildlife to thrive, and preserving wildlife territorial linkages.”

- Unanimous Yes – Approved

7:50 Review applicants for Conservation Commission seats and consider re-appointing Caitlin Littlefield as one of the two RCC representatives on the Andrews Community Forest Committee (ACFC)

- **Motion:** approve Caitlin Littlefield as the ACFC rep from RCC
- Unanimous Yes – Approved
- Candidates for RCC:
 - o Ibit (for reappointment)
 - o Jeanette Malone
 - o Alison Lane Anand (served on the commission in the past)(there is one alternate position left)
 - Bob Galvin is interested and will likely submit a letter of interest

8:10 Gary Bressor on bike/pedestrian route from village to Riverview Commons

- Gary & Jean are both on the Town Committee working on a bike/ped connection to Route 117 from the village (connecting the park and ride and the dwellings on that side of Town to the village)
- Proposed concept:
 - o Make the route not just a route, but a meandering park with narrow and wide areas (with wide areas having branching paths)
- One likely path would be to stay on the north side of Rt. 2
- The issue is lots of wetland, private land in the way
- However there is a wide right of way owned by the road that could be utilized + the area in the landowner’s mandatory 30’ setback
 - o The Town could negotiate with the landowners (and perhaps have a zoning change) to allow folks to count the area as their setback & for density calculations, but the ROW could be used for water/sewer & the rec path
- General Support from the RCC

8:35 Discuss ACF points – does Master Plan and public engagement process bind ACFC to all trails all multi-use commitment? And is RCC ok with phased-in trails?

- o In general, RCC doesn’t think the public engagement process is binding in and of itself

- The public engagement process is to help the ACFC figure out what the public is asking for and help guide their decisions (which are voted on and approved by the
- From the RCC's recollection, there was no commitment to have all of the trails be multi-use
- RCC is generally in support of the phased-in trails with a general timeline for implementation as part of the process from an ecological & practical perspective

8:45 Discuss Keith Osborne river resiliency and share grant opportunity

- There is \$14,750,000 in ARPA Funds for the State that can be used on river, wetlands, and watershed management and improvement projects
- Do we have any ideas for how these funds could be used in Richmond?
- Can we do the River assessment quickly & then ask the Town to utilize these funds?
- The River study can also be funded by the RCC
 - Ask the Town to put in the Conservation Reserve Fund application? (or another entity?)
 - The river study would likely be \$30-40k or more so using another source of funds would be helpful
- Judy will discuss with Keith Osborne
- Individual commissioners will research available funds & the process to access them
- General RCC support to utilize these funds if possible

8:55 Bird/Forestry walk at Andrews Community Forest (ACF), May 20th 9 a.m. update

- Dan couldn't make it but RCC members can publicize on FPF and elsewhere
- A few RCC members may attend if possible

9:05 Green Up review

- Big thanks to Ibit for publicizing and organizing! Seemed like a good success
- 1.7 tons of trash and a truck-load of tires picked up! Great success
- Ibit is doing follow-up with the community about filling in any roads that weren't covered
- The coverage map is available in the Town Hall to review
- Goals for next year:
 - Better track the # of participants
 - Better track the roads covered
 - Better coordination with the App

9:15 Letter of support from RCC for Invasives Day – Paquette request – review draft letter

- Letter to be circulated next meeting (not yet written)

9:20 Matters arising

- Idea: get the Huntington & Richmond conservation commissions together?
 - o Could add Bolton & Hinesburg?
 - o To discuss next meeting

- Fern signs → follow up for next year
 - o Maybe make a general sign for all areas?

9:18 Adjourned

Minutes (formal or informal) are due at the town offices 5 days after any public meeting. Please send RCC chair a draft within 5 days from this meeting (by 5/14/2023).