

RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION**Meeting notes, Tuesday March 12, 2024****7:30 PM****Agenda:**

Please note that times are approximate.

Meeting Start: 7:35 p.m.

Committee members attending – Alison Anand, Kit Emery, Bob Galvin, Bob Low, Jeanette Malone, Judy Rosovsky, Ibit Wright

Members of the public attending – Lisa Miller, Kate Nolan, Sam Pratt, Dean Slocumb, Trevian Stanger

Introductions around the table.

Minutes taker / Minutes:

- Minutes: Bob Low
- Motion to approve the February minutes – motion passes.

Public Comments:

- Dan : Wishes to discuss the Keyon Road Gravel Pit Landslide.

Additions, amendments to agenda:

- None.

Keyon road landslide:

- Judy: Discusses her visit, speaking of work being done, ledges, channel dug, cut trees, other damage, hard to ascertain cause.
- Kit: Agrees cause not clear, confirms trees cut down.
- Trevian: Indicates sand pit too close to road – no buffer.
- Judy: Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC) responsibility to respond not clear; need still to talk with landowner.
- Kit: Town needs to address road issue, Contact Pete Gosselin.
- Trevian: Discusses similar issue at Little River State Park.
- Judy: Unclear what tree cutting may have contributed.
- Dan: Pete Gosselin knows landowner – discusses tree removal to improve road sunlight for lesser road maintenance.
- Judy: Will talk with Pete Gosselin.
- Dan: Another Keyon Road Upgrade issue – encroachment on his pond, landslide, impact on wildlife; due to increased road height, backfill rock in pond.

- 43 ▪ Judy: RCC does not have statutory authority though can bring to Selectboard (SB)
- 44 attention.
- 45 ▪ Judy: Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF) might be available to protect the pond /
- 46 wildlife habitat.
- 47 ▪ Bob Low: First step is for Pete Gosselin and SB to review; RCC should express
- 48 concern.

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50 Cochran Road:

- 51 ▪ Background: Speedbump work and the need to provide amphibian crossing safety.
- 52 ▪ Bob G: Discusses opportunity for joint effort.
- 53 ▪ Lisa: Discusses merits of tunnels; issues developing with Contractor that will cause
- 54 delay, is ready to bring up amphibian crossing at SB.
- 55 ▪ Judy: Discusses tunnel work in Monkton.
- 56 ▪ Jeanette: Confirms pioneering work in Monkton; discussions with Jim Andrews.
- 57 ▪ Lisa: Indicates topic to come up at 3/26 SB meeting; Bob G. will try to attend.
- 58 ▪ Trevian: Discusses work with box culverts.
- 59 ▪ Jeannette: Indicates goal of getting amphibian crossing data this spring.

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61 Updates and Events:

- 62 ▪ Green Mountain Audubon: Judy: discusses recent flood damage.
- 63 ▪ Andrews Community Forest Committee update: tabled.
- 64 ▪ Judy indicates that Ethan Tapper is off to Graduate School – a big local loss; Ethan
- 65 writing a book: How to love a Forest.
- 66 ▪ Willis Hill Update:
 - 67 • Judy: Reviews history of the problem, has discussed situation with Friends of
 - 68 Winooski, repair cost currently under investigation.
 - 69 • Trevian: Discusses having joined a group to discuss situation - RLT and
 - 70 Engineers; I-89 impact.
 - 71 • Judy: Discusses upstream impacts from development, Jericho Road trail.
 - 72 • Jeanette: Discusses role for RCC – expression of concern, funding such as for
 - 73 tree plantings, wildlife restoration.

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75 Vermont Conservation Strategy Initiative:

- 76 ▪ Judy: Introduces the 30:30 plan: 30% conserved lands by 2030; indicates Brad Elliot
- 77 estimates current conserved lands at ca 21%; speaks of a Richmond landowner who
- 78 has expressed interest in conserving a substantial parcel of land – RCC / CRF could
- 79 have \$\$\$\$; RCC should be pro-active in identifying high priority conserved areas
- 80 such as wildlife corridors.
- 81 ▪ Bob L: Has GIS maps.
- 82 ▪ Bob G: RCC should be pro-active.
- 83 ▪ Judy: Suggests a subcommittee.
- 84 ▪ Bob L: Discusses issue of RCC itself purchasing land.
- 85 ▪ Judy: RCC can and has supported land purchases, e.g. Andrews Community Forest.
- 86 ▪ Ibit: Encourages Richmond to embrace 30:30; likes idea of subcommittee.
- 87 ▪ Judy: suggests a “summit meeting” of interested parties / committees such as the
- 88 Cochran’s meeting several years ago.

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90 Old Jericho Road:

- 91 ▪ Jeanette: Has contacted trails committee (TC); has sent TC Forest and Parks
- 92 template, State DEC Permit Navigator for assessing and responding to flood
- 93 damage to capture recovery funds (previously circulated to RCC); expresses RCC
- 94 interest in helping / collaborating; Jericho Road Trail damage extensive: no longer
- 95 decent access to bridge that needs repair, need ed is a holistic approach.
- 96 ▪ Judy: Speaks of cost of a very complicated project; suggests a meeting of
- 97 stakeholders.
- 98 ▪ Lisa: Suggests discussing with Josh Arnason regarding how best to proceed
- 99 organizationally.

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101 Green-Up Day:

- 102 ▪ Ibit: Confirms she will be organizing communications; is seeking to have a coverage
- 103 map available, will keep checking on availability of State app, will confirm at April
- 104 RCC meeting.
- 105 ▪ Bob G: Agrees to work on follow-up.

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107 Save our Salamanders:

- 108 ▪ Jeanette: Indicates waiting for updated training materials / Zoom from North Branch
- 109 Nature Center; looking at scheduling a training session the week of 3/25; does not
- 110 think climate change will advance the season; punch list to get things running
- 111 includes identifying hot spots, personal safety, data collection format and forms,
- 112 scribe assignment , species identification, parking / meeting logistics, data upload,
- 113 writing up a plan taking advantage of Huntington experience. A core group of
- 114 trainers is being assembled, RCC members should contact her about joining.
- 115 ▪ Ibit: Asks what is the time commitment.
- 116 ▪ Jeanette: Could be as many as 12 events; looking for volunteer commitments of up
- 117 to a few of those, 1-3 hours each; project is a group effort; timing is to match heavy
- 118 vehicular traffic – evenings.
- 119 ▪ Lisa: Indicates timing is good in terms of matching with speed bump work. Asks if
- 120 there should there be police coverage – shift goes to 11PM.
- 121 ▪ Judy: Indicates best perhaps to alert the police.
- 122 ▪ Jeanette: Reminds all of Richmond's past involvement, describing the State Atlas –
- 123 Richmond at this point has only one site mapped – seeks to expand to currently
- 124 targeted locations.
- 125 ▪ Bob G: Speaks of personal experiences at hotspots and the extent of roadkill.
- 126 ▪ Judy: Suggests an awareness campaign.
- 127 ▪ Kate: Indicates North Branch is now scheduling a 3/28 Zoom session.
- 128 ▪ Jeanette: Will look at a past Zoom to see if that can be used in terms of a 3/25 local
- 129 rollout.

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131 Vermont Master Naturalist (MN) Program:

- 132 ▪ Ibit: Has discussed with Cecilia Danks. Cecilia interested in bringing Program back
- 133 to Richmond, is talking with Huntington – Richmond residents could join in, indicates

- 134 Ibit and she plan to talk in fall about how Richmond people applying, wants to know
135 if Richmond has possible projects that could be posted at the VMN Alumni network.
136 ▪ Judy: Reviews past RCC involvement and CRF funding, noting the absence to date
137 of an outcomes assessment - the need for accountability.
138 ▪ Ibit: Will follow up with Cecilia re outcomes report.
139 ▪ Kit: Reviewed her past involvement.
140 ▪ Ibit: Asks about the salamander study as a MN project?
141 ▪ Jeanette: Thinks maybe next year.

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143 CRF:

- 144 ▪ Judy: Reminds RCC of the major increase in funding approved at Town Meeting;
145 indicated concern that support is less (70% down from 74% previous year); the need
146 for big projects such as Winooski River study, Gary Bressor's Route-2 path;
147 indicates she has contacted Friends of Winooski.
148 ▪ Bob L: Reminds that Dan Schmidt knows a Board member and was to contact.
149 ▪ Judy: Indicates discussions with Denise Barnard (Recreation Committee) about
150 RCC / CRF and recreation.
151 ▪ Judy and others discuss the issue of projects on private lands.
152 ▪ Trevian: Notes the lack of public communication about CRF excepting Front Porch
153 Forum. Notes trail information Huntington Horseshoe trail.
154 ▪ General agreement: there need to be much more visibility.

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156 Meeting adjourned: 9:35