

## **RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION (RCC)**

### **MINUTES April 8, 2025**

**7:30PM**

**Present:** Jeanette, Judy, Kit, Bob L, Sam, Ibit

**Public Introductions:** None present

**Appoint Minutes Taker:** Kit Emery

**Approve additions and amendments:** Motion to approve March minutes once Jeanette includes motions.

**February minutes:** Approved

**Amendments:** Added Johnny Brook Rd and Pollinator project.

- Discussion on open meeting laws that need to be reserved for time, sensitive or emergency minutes.

#### **Agenda:**

Please note the times are approximate.

#### **Updates:**

##### **Update From ACFC (Sam)**

- Sam said the ACFC extended the length of the next two meetings to two and a half hours just solely to work on that management plan. We are shooting for that June date, so we'll see how much we can get done in the next two sessions.
- Sam indicated the plan is basically to take these next two sessions and see how far we can make it. We have been making a lot of progress; there's a lot of good ideas and a lot of what we're working through. We'll basically take the draft, and send it along to the selectboard first as a check in.
- The MP would then get shipped off to the RCC and the trails committee, to give folks a chance to weigh in before it's done.
- Sam indicated working together on the MP has been a staggered approach. He explained that not everyone was unified in the beginning to do their edits at the same time. There's a bunch of different versions of the MP and this presents consistent confusion over what's the current version.

- Sam indicated the two biggest conflicting pieces are the recreation and wildlife sections of the MP, and how they are currently at odds with one another.
- Sam also mentioned an additional conflict, is putting trails below the powerline or above the powerlines or “vast” trail.
- Sam said, if there’s going to be a trail free zone or dog free zone trail that will draw the line at the vast trail because that will allow for potential connectivity to the vast trail.
- Sam indicated the question they (ACFC) posed to the selectboard was very vague and confusing. Selectboard asked what are you asking from us? If you didn’t vote on anything.
- Bobs opinion as he put it, “he cannot imagine there will be a digestible MP draft by June. Take advantage of the notion we’re a work in progress”. He suggested 3 major points for the next ACFC agenda:
  1. What is it we’re going to say to the selectboard? Bobs comment is, we’re giving you a report and part of that is we have resolved the issue. This is the key issue with regard to where trails might or might not be.
  2. Who is going to do that?
  3. What do we need to do between now and June?
- Jeanette voiced her concerns about sending mixed messages before we complete the MP.
- Jeanette mentioned selectboard wants other committees to weigh in on the MP and questions how will this happen in such a short timeline? The draft will be read by May 22nd. That does not allow enough time for our committee to give input. She recommended that RCC be given the draft version for our main meeting so we can dedicate time to our input. She also asked Sam, will you advocate this to the ACFC?
- Judy agreed with Bob to communicate with the selectboard and identify the problems first and be more articulate in what you’re asking for.
- Bob emphasized that the ACFC must provide rationale, by giving a concise background at the start, which rationalizes what the MP wants for goals, action items and objectives.

### **Climate Change Action (Judy)**

- Judy spoke to the Richmond selectboard concerning the CCA project. Judy pointed out the program would be useful to the town of Richmond, but we have not found a coordinator for the project to help coordinate the efforts with the people involved. She asked if they knew any one and they responded they would give themselves to their next meeting to see if they could find somebody.

- Bob said, ask Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux what she wanted this local group to do.
- Sam mentioned they want 20 hours/month. Below is a summary of the description in a letter she wrote to Sam:
  - Sandy Wilmot, the point person for the Underhill CCA project has four committee members that represented existing town commissions, in planning, energy and conservation. They reviewed draft documents, attended monthly meetings, read material, edited documents and took minutes etc. (Sam will send the letter from Sandy Wilmot to the committee members with additional information).
- Bob, bottom-line we need to Ask Lesley-Ann what she explicitly needs from us and determine how much time is involved in this project.
- RCC sent her a list of what we what to get out of this report.

### **Jericho Road Update-Plan Field Trip**

- Jeanette suggested, it might be worthwhile inviting someone from wetlands to participate in a field trip with RCC to assess the condition of the Old Jericho Road to determine if it's possible to restore the area and what we need to know. We may need to get a wetlands/riparian permit to proceed with restoration.
- Bob says any restorative efforts would have to have an ANR review according to state law. FEMA money has already been assigned, and Josh still thinks we're going to get the money. Bob reiterated what Daniel said about not trying to restore this area because it will only be washed out again. Some of us on the RCC agree with this wholeheartedly.
- Jeanette mentioned hearing comments from Pete about restoring this old class road and questioned is this happening eminently? Has FEMA money been approved?
- Judy will send Josh and Callie a note for an update as to what is going on with the old class road, local engineers? Are UVM students involved etc.?
- Jeanette voiced concern about the possibility of topsoil/fill being brought in and could be loaded with invasives.
- Judy will send a draft out for everyone to look at. Judy and Josh question is there anything we can do to make it more resilient?
- Bob has concerns about the possibility of having to restore gullies and landslides to ensure resiliency.
- The question came up about building a bridge across the brook but why? If you don't have a trail.

### **Johnny Brook Road Update**

- Judy will investigate and update us.

### **Richmond Save Our Salamanders Activity Report (Jeanette)**

- Jeanette gave an update on the salamanders crossing, we all agreed that it is working well coordinating with everyone to meet at their perspective sites via text messaging. We have a good buddy system making it easier to communicate.
- Jeanette, the bigger crossing nights are yet to come and earth day looks like it will be ideal.
- Jeanette reported motorists seem like they are slowing down may be due to Jims's radio interview.
- Jeanette talked about FPF postings before a big night.
- RCC talked about possibilities of adding or designating other areas, i.e. the curve near ACF which is on the map. Jeanette recommended we tell volunteers to cover that spot at our own risk North Branch does not want to include it in their data set.
- Jeanette mentioned snowdrift to create a wall to funnel these critters through.
- Judy mentioned other places to look at would be Williams Hill and Hillview.
- Katie is still collecting our data and doing a good job.

### **Update on Green Up Day (Ibit)**

- Ibit talked with Susanne Parent to pick up posters and they will need to be hung. Ibit would like help hanging both Judy and I offered to help. Ibit will send a list as to where to hang them.
- Susanne had not found the map that usually is up on the 1st floor of the town hall. The map will give a visual and indicate all the areas where people will be cleaning up.
- Ibit posted the first green up day by email the other day and will post one message a week and we can take turns posting messages.
- Ibit will need help with follow up after that day. We have 600 bags in the foyer and more in the office.

### **Pollinator Pathways (Jeanette)**

- Jeanette describes it's a nationwide program and it's been building up since 2016. She announced there will be a presentation this Saturday April 12th in the Huntington library at 2:00.
- Jeanette would like to start this program in Richmond and network with Huntington and wants to know what others think about this. Jeanettes thought, is to start in our own backyards.
- Jeanette to start up another presentation in our Richmond library after Saturday's presentation in Huntington. The hope would be to walk away from the workshop with an understanding of what they can do in their own back yard.
- Go to the VTInvasive.org site that has photographs of the 12 most common types of pollinators. Jeanette would like to see if the library would let us make photocopies and laminate them and allow Richmond residence to take it out.
- Everyone liked this idea.

### **Adjourn 9:35 PM**