

DRAFT - Meeting Minutes

Brookfield Conservation Commission Meeting

January 15, 2024, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

7:00 pm Regular meeting hosted on Zoom

<https://tnc.zoom.us/j/95691402844?from=addon>

Present: Jon Binhammer, Jon Jickling, Susan Shea, Marty Allen, Sarah Shaw, Starr Strong

Jon Binhammer called meeting to order at 7:10pm.

1. Review Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Minutes of the November 2023 meeting
 - a. Jon Jickling moved to approve, seconded by Susan Shea.
4. VTFPR Recreation Trails Grant
 - a. Jon Binhammer shared this funding opportunity to see if the Commission was interested in pursuing it for 2025 in acquiring resources for planning a trail network in the Town Forest. The Commission agreed that understanding more about the grant requirements (i.e. matching requirements, trail plan documentation etc.) and other criteria would be helpful to understand in order to move forward.
 - b. Sarah Shaw suggested that the community should be engaged in providing input on a potential trail project, such as trail types and use, in order to inform any project goals. This could be done via surveys, in-person info sessions at Meeting House and mentioned at Town Meeting.
 - c. Jon Jickling volunteered to get more information by the Commission's next meeting on 2/19 to help inform next steps the Commission will take, including any potential announcement at Town Meeting Day.
5. Planning Commission Town Plan Request

- a. Jon Binhammer shared an update on the Planning Commission's work in exploring a new village center around the school to address the affordable housing crisis. The Planning Commission is seeking input from the Conservation Commission as it relates to updating natural resources information in the Town Plan. Jon Binhammer suggested that the Conservation Commission forms a subcommittee to do this work, assuming the Planning Commission is aligned with this approach.
 - b. Jon Jickling moved that the Conservation Commission propose a subcommittee to support the Planning Commission in revising the Natural Resources sections of the Town Plan, motion seconded by Marty Allen and Sarah Shaw.
 - c. Susan Shea, Marty Allen, and Jon B have volunteered to participate in the subcommittee.
6. Winter Education Programs
 - a. Galapagos talk by Starr Strong. The Commission will confirm if this program can occur at a later date.
 - b. Winter Snowshoe Walk – Allis State Park, the original location for this program, is closed due to logging until May. Jon Jickling suggested that Al Wilker's property on Ridge Road may be an option, parking would be available at the First Congregational Church. Jon Binhammer will contact Al Wilker to confirm if the Conservation Commission can host a small group for a snowshoe tentatively on February 10th, 2024 at 2pm. The program will include tree and wildlife track identification.
 - c. Other programs - Jon B suggested the Commission visit a vernal pool in April on Lavender Rd.
7. Ongoing Project Updates
 - a. Stream talk for Old Town Hall by White River Partnership
 - a. Susan Shea has been in touch with the Rudi Rudell (WRP Watershed Scientist) and Mary Russ (Executive Director) of the White River Partnership to offer a talk on flood resilience, flood plains, appropriate tree plantings/riparian buffers and more. This would be offered via an honorarium. The Old Town Hall would be open for this starting mid-late June and the planning team is open to hosting the talk. A follow-up field trip to the second

branch of the White River on Route 14 was also discussed with the White River Partnership. Susan Shea has volunteered to continue coordinating this with the White River Partnership.

- b. Tree plantings and beaver observation were also discussed as future activities.
8. Jon Binhammer moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:14pm. Next meeting is February 19, 2024 (President's Day)