

Calais Conservation Commission Minutes 12/15/14 DRAFT

Present: Stephanie Kaplan, Julie Hand, Pam DeAndrea (recorder), Drew Lamb, Grant Orenstein, Jan Brough, Neal Maker

Meeting began at 7:45 pm at Maple Corner Community Center

Minutes from November, 2014 were discussed, revised and approved.

Conservation fund balance: \$76,494.99

Riparian area along Kingsbury Branch: Stephanie discussed that a Calais resident was concerned about the spreading of manure on the fields along the Kingsbury Branch at Pete's Greens. Stephanie suggested to the landowner to come to a Conservation Commission meeting and discuss it with us. Pam will contact Ann Smith of Friends of the Winooski to find out if Pete's Greens is still in a restoration program/buffer agreement with the Winooski Conservation District.

Forest Plans: We went over the various forestry plans done for the Bliss and Chapin Forests in the past. Russ Barrett did plans for both forests in 2003. The Conservation Commission also wrote a plan for the Bliss Forest in 2004. Emily Potter wrote two plans in 2013: one for Bliss and one for Chapin. Drew did some revisions to Emily's 2013 Bliss Forest Plan. The consensus of the group was that the 2004 Bliss Forest Plan is a much more comprehensive document in its detail and information about the forest, but the 2013 plan contains the updated data. It would be nice to have some kind of combination of both, but not sure it is really worth the effort to produce such a document. Drew, Neal, and Jan will meet and go through both documents to see how, if at all, they want to combine the two plans and then present their ideas to the rest of the commission. We will put aside revising the Chapin Forest Plan for now and focus on the Bliss Plan.

Town Plan: Stephanie discussed the finalization of the Town Plan. The plan is finalized but it did not include all those revisions to the Natural Resources Section that were agreed upon between members of the Conservation Commission (CC), a representative of the Planning Commission (PC) and two members of the Selectboard. The Selectboard can make changes to the final document if they wish. They would need to hold a public hearing on such changes. That will provide them with a chance to put agreed changes back into the plan if they wanted to do so. Stephanie will send the agreed-upon Natural Resources Section to the Selectboard. Grant will check to see if the finalized plan contains language agreed upon in communication with the PC regarding groundwater resources.

Groundwater Mapping: The Geologists are very happy with the work they have done and data that they have collected thus far for the groundwater mapping project. They may be out in the spring again to do more and would like to try to get property access from one large landowner on the western side of town.

NRI Grant: Stephanie wrote a grant for \$5,000 to go towards the Natural Resource Inventory. The grant is a Watershed Grant with the Vermont DEC and the money will be used to conduct a wetlands inventory as part of a larger natural resources inventory. We solicited Matt Peters, an ecologist from Woodbury, to help us with the grant proposal and budget. The project will involve viewing aerial photos

and field checking the presence of wetlands. These grants are very competitive. Therefore, we need to be prepared for not getting it. We will find out in February if we got the grant. Stephanie will find out from Denise if the money for the NRI can come right out of the budget or if it would need to be approved at town meeting.

Town Report: Pam will write up the summary for the Town Report and Stephanie will find out when it needs to be in.

Next meeting Wednesday January, 14, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.