

APPROVED
Calais Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 2, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Via Zoom (see below)

Present at the meeting:

Members: Larry, Neal, Julie, Tracy, Stephanie, Mark

Guests: Scott Bassage and Charlotte Hanna,

1. Agenda revisions or additions
 - Stephanie suggested that, time allowing, we should add time to discuss the DRB meeting with the folks involved with the Connor subdivision
2. Approve minutes
 - Larry requests:
 - i. section 5, paragraph 3, change to “will require getting access to private property.” Two paragraphs below to, “Stephanie asked Larry...” from the cedar swamp southward through the heart of the forest, to the area around Bliss Pond and a long wide corridor on the southwest side where two vernal pools are located.” change to
 - ii. Paragraph beginning, “Neal stated that access will decide the next steps” change from categorically should be “survey of people in town.” Delete this sentence. “we need to explore options for access”
 - iii. “Things that need to be done” unsure of number 3 and where it came from. Delete it.
 - iv. “Bill Davis” paragraph. Access through Morse’s back when they owned the farm (not the sugar shack). Northeast side of the town forest. Second sentence “The response was that it might have been through the morse farm on the ne side of the forest, or in the west across stanley morse’s farm to county road. At that point Bill Davis spoke up...”
 - Stephanie suggested that in the future minutes review and clarification be done and sent as proposed revisions ahead of time.
 - Larry agreed to send revisions to minutes to Julie to incorporate..
 - Members voted to approve minutes with Larry’s revisions.
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3. Tree law and shade tree plan and ordinance
 - Question of whether to define Hazard Tree
 - Stephanie reviewed a few other towns’ tree ordinances
 - Hazardous tree discussion
 - i. Neal: arborists assess hazardous trees based on probability of danger.
 - ii. Neal uses assessment tools that are widely accepted to

- determine what is or is not a hazardous tree.
- iii. Discussion of the Tree Warden's role in advising whether or not a tree is a hazard tree and whether a person can be required to consult the tree warden.
- iv. Section 8. Hazardous trees. Suggestion to clarify that Tree Warden will advise if a tree is hazardous when requested to do so by a landowner or the road crew.
- v. Section 9. "Tree Warden service costs should not be." Change it to "shall not be"
- vi. Section 5. Other places to change "should" to "shall" Tree Planting "Relevant stakeholders" paragraph change all "should" to "shall."
- vii. Section 6. Neal will review to see what could be clarified. Consideration of the first sentence, "Provisions" and whether they "should" or "shall" be made.

4. Bliss Pond Town Forest

- Plan to contact the county forester with the goal of discussing if Neal and Larry's proposal for the forest is feasible. Larry had a conversation already with Eric Sorenson.
- It was agreed that Larry and Neal would invite Eric Sorenson and the county forester to meet with them and then perhaps ask them to come to a Conservation Commission meeting.
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5. Protecting forest blocks

- Suggestion by Stephanie to review town plan and state law to consider making a proposal for the town for what could be done through zoning to protect forest blocks and connecting habitat.
- Suggestion from Scott that the conservation fund be used to leverage funds for purchasing this land. Concern that there are not enough funds to do so with all the available land but that it could potentially be used.
- Eric Sorenson already has mapped the town's forest blocks and connecting habitat and they're attached to the town plan. He might have suggestions on how to protect some of them.
- Larry shared that he brought up this topic with the Vermont Association of Conservation Commissions. No town, with the possible exception of Ripton, has done anything about developing regulations to protect forest blocks to implement Act 171.
- Larry issues that came up concerning the common land on the connection to Connor. Question was asked by the DRB chair during the DRB meeting about what they should be asking people to do with land (protected forest block land?). Need for a public campaign to

encourage people to protect.

- Stephanie: Is there a role for the Conservation Commission with the DRB to explain to applicants why these blocks of land are important?
- Educating the DRB that it is in the state law and in the town plan, to protect connectivity and forest blocks, or is it appropriate for the Conservation Commission to take part in a DRB meeting about any particular subdivision.
- Stephanie planned to talk to a member of the DRB about forest block preservation and whether the Conservation Commission and DRB should meet to discuss what is the best way for the Conservation Commission to support the DRB going forward.

6. Executive session about real estate matter

- Motion to go into executive session made and unanimously approved.
- The Commission returned from executive session. There were no actions taken during executive session to vote on.

7. Other business

- None

8. Public comment

- None

9. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.