

Calais Conservation Commission Minutes 9/3/14

Present: Stephanie Kaplan, Julie Hand, Pam DeAndrea (recorder), Drew Lamb, Jennifer Whitman, Grant Orenstein

Meeting began at 7:10pm at Calais Town Office

Minutes from August 6, 2014 were amended and approved. Approved 7/28/14 minutes as amended.

Conservation fund balance: \$71,467.51

Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) for a Natural Resources Inventory: Pam and Stephanie discussed the webinar they attended for MPG applications and why it would not be worth it for Calais to apply again this year. The NRI project would not meet the criteria for the grant. The criteria includes that the need for the specific project must be specified in the town plan. Pam asked during the webinar if having the project in the draft town plan would count, but the state said that it would not count and that the town plan would have to be adopted before the grant application. The Calais Town Plan that is now being revised can't be adopted by the grant deadline. Pam will look into the watershed grant and see if the project will meet its criteria.

Natural Resources Section of the Town Plan: Drew and Stephanie discussed communications between the Conservation Commission (CC) and the Planning Commission (PC) and where the Regulatory Guidance within the Natural Resources Section stands. At this point it seems that the Planning Commission has deleted the Regulatory Guidance, although Stephanie sent our latest version that includes a Regulatory section, and the Selectboard may want it put back in. Selectboard will make final decision of whether to adopt town plan or not. Stephanie will make a list of the things that the PC deleted and send it to the rest of the CC and to the Selectboard along with our draft. Grant suggested that we garner support from friends and neighbors to attend the hearing to support the NR section.

Groundwater Mapping: John Kim, George Springston, and Marjorie Gayle have been on the ground in Calais starting the groundwater mapping project. They will be sending us a list of landowners and have us contact them for permission to include their well/property in the study. The data collected will include soil samples and well location. They will send a letter to the Conservation Commission that discusses the project.

Town Forest: Drew discussed that we could come up with goal setting for the CC for the upcoming years, which will involve management of our town forests. He would like to be the one to take on the forestry pieces of the CC's work. Stephanie suggested that the plans of action set out in the NR section of the Town Plan will drive the goals that we will set and what we each can individually take on in the next five years, and that we should all review them before the next meeting and identify projects of interest. The CC will invite Dan Singleton to review the Bliss and Chapin forest management plans. The CC should review the plans before we meet with Dan.

Roads Meeting coming up on 9/4/14: Lakes and Streams Committee got a grant with the Friends of the Winooski River to do an erosion project to improve erosion from private roads and driveways. Task will be to meet with landowners to help them with their erosion problems. Go to the meeting if you can make it.

Vermont Shoreland Legislation Meeting: Stephanie, Pam and Julie attended the presentation by the State on the new Shoreland permit rules and reported what the meeting was about to the rest of the CC. Susan Warren, who is the head of the program, and Trey Martin did not attend the meeting, which was disappointing. Calais' standards are stricter than the State's standards, so one worry is that people will think they are all set with a State permit and not realize that they have to get a town permit as well. The representatives at the State said that they would communicate with the Town on projects and to the landowners that they also need a town permit.

Fall Foliage Festival: Drew will find out when the festival is. A good hike would be to go on the trail off of Robinson Hill Road. Drew will see if Reed Charrington would like to lead the hike. We would need to get landowner permission for the hike as well.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.