

## NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting on May 8, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Russ Barrett at 6:35 pm

I. Present were commissioners Russ Barrett, Christine Barnes, Laura Hill-Eubanks, Leslie Matthews, and Ruth Ruttenberg

II. The minutes of the meeting on April 10, 2013 were approved: 5-0-0.

### III. Discussion

- a. **Friends of the Winooski Riparian Planting:** Several multi-tree plantings are taking place this spring to protect the Dog River and the floodplains. Ann Smith at Friends of the Winooski is the primary sponsor and coordinator. Christine and Russ attended today's planting at the town wellfield on 12A. It went very well - 50 Northfield Middle School kids, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Trout Unlimited, and Fish & Wildlife Dept. helped plant trees. On May 9 the Green Mountain Valley School will help plant more trees at the wellfield. Christine is planning to go to that planting as well. Pat Dimasi and the town have helped a great deal with heavy equipment. There will be another planting on May 15. Volunteers are welcome. There is also a planting scheduled at Norwich U. for May 13; this planting will be handled by a crew from the Intervale. Leslie is helping organize that planting along with Ann Smith at FOW. The Zuaro field planting is complete; Christine attended that planting.
- b. **Home Energy Challenge update:** Laura is planning another HEC energy efficiency workshop for Northfield, tentatively scheduled for the afternoon of June 8; this may have a DIY theme. She will attend a regional meeting of the coordinators of the HEC on May 15 to gather more information and strategize. The Northfield HEC may be sending out flyers in electric bills soon. Selectmen Gadbois and Denny are looking into this.
- c. **May Wildflower Walk:** NCC will hold a hike on Paine Mountain on Saturday May 18, at 9:30. Leslie will lead the hike and identify wildflowers along the way. We will meet at the Shaw Outdoor Center. Rain or shine. Everyone is welcome. Public announcement will be sent out soon.
- d. **Suggestions for an NCC outing in June:** Possibilities include birding walk. It was tentatively decided that we will do a hike in the old growth forest in Marshfield on Saturday, June 15, at 2 pm. Russ may be able to get a knowledgeable associate to lead the walk. Will probably meet in Northfield and carpool to Marshfield.
- e. **Conserving Vermont's Natural Heritage chapter 6 & 7:** Great guidebook to read as an overview of planning for conservation in VT – chapters 6 & 7 give overview of planning process.

ZA Michele Braun will join us at the June meeting to discuss the upcoming town planning process. The NCC would like to have input into the town planning and Bylaw update as it relates to conservation goals. Questions include those related to FEMA rules

and the interaction with floodplain zoning, river and stream buffer zones, forest and wildlife habitat, trees and plants used in landscaping, and other questions generated at the previous NCC meeting. We are also interested in whether there are any grants available for conservation planning such as developing Bylaws for rivers and streams corridors, and writing the Town Forest Management Plan.

NCC would like to know how to most effectively have input to the PC as the updates go forward and what the timeline will be. The NCC will consider sending one of its members to PC meetings going forward. We will also follow up on the NCC's memo on wind project sitting that was sent to the PC in February.

**VII. Other Business:**

- a. An error was made in reserving the Community Room for the NCC's normal 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 6:30 time and it was not available tonight. Another group has also reserved the room for each 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed evening of the month for this year. The NCC has now reserved the time for the remainder of 2013 but will have to share the room. Going forward we will check in early Fall (Sept) to make sure the room is reserved for the NCC for its normal time for the entire next year.
- b. Look into whether the NCC is eligible for the AVCC (Assoc. VT Conservation Commissions) grant
- c. Ruth thinks it would be a good idea to conduct a town tree inventory. This would serve to educate the public about the trees that we have in town and which of them are vulnerable to disease or pests.
- d. Ruth expressed concern that Northfield currently has no representative on the Mad River Resource Management Alliance. After discussion the Commission encouraged Ruth to volunteer for the position, which Ruth agreed to do.

**VIII. Public participation**

**IX.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Hill-Eubanks.