

NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the meeting: January 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Laura Hill-Eubanks at 6:32 pm.

I. ROLL CALL: Present: J. Pecor, R. Ruttenberg, N. Miller, L. Hill-Eubanks, C. Barnes, L. Matthews.
Absent: D. Wallace, R. Barrett

II. SET/ADJUST AGENDA: Added Town Report

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Nathan Stumpff and Dan Kinney, *Catamount Solar*, presenting.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Minutes of the meeting of December 9, 2015 were approved 6-0-0.

V. DISCUSSION:

a. Catamount Solar: D. Kinney, N. Stumpff

“Solar up, Northfield!” Catamount Solar is based out of Randolph, 34 Pleasant St. The “Solarize VT” program has designated Catamount as an “installer of choice”. Catamount is seeking communities interested in being part of the initiative to provide solar as an alternative energy in VT. The more community members who buy in, the more the price drops.

Catamount is seeking both businesses and private homes for a Northfield initiative. Federal tax credits still apply. Twenty-five or thirty buyers are needed at a minimum (depending on their level of buy-in, there may be more or fewer needed). If enough people are interested, an RFP may be an expected business practice.

Northfield Electric is considered to be a strong possibility for participation in this project. Catamount Solar could do up to four business systems in town, requiring 1 acre of land and 600 panels.

Jane Pecor will be the NCC contact for continuing dialogue.

b. Eagle Scout Project: Nathan Ranker

Nathan continues his work on interpretive signage and mapping for the Town Forest. He will do a maximum of two signs. Norwich professor Collin O’Neil will be helping. Laura signed a document stating that she received the “Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project” document.

Nathan will need to attend a Selectboard meeting to brief them on his project. The Town Manager has already approved the use of grant funds. Pam Knox will confirm with the Town Manager that the project may go forward.

c. Town Forest Grant for Bridges: Ruth Ruttenberg

The Norwich Honors Civil Engineering Club is drafting part of the grant. Laura has completed the section required for the Regional Planning Commission. Ruth will send out a draft in mid-January for

NCC review/editing. Organizations involved in completing the project may be Norwich engineers and VYCC (VT Youth Conservation Corps).

Grant awards will be announced July 1, 2016.

d. Land Conservation Strategies: Laura Hills-Eubanks

Four properties are being considered for further conservation status in Northfield. Discussion ensued re properties and strategies for moving forward with conservation in Northfield.

e. Dog River: Christine Barnes

Christine reported on the Friends of the Winooski grant, "Building a Flood Resistant Northfield". The grant will bring to Northfield a river flume, a teaching device which allows students and townspeople to program various stress conditions on the model, and see the results as they might be on an identified river. The project also involves Norwich University students, and students and staff from Northfield MHS. Grant funds will allow for a community gathering near the Water St. area which incurred so much damage in the flood, at the approximate time of the 5th anniversary of the flood. Reflections from Northfield residents on the events of August 2011 from Hurricane Irene will be written and shared with the community.

Friends of the Winooski Director Ann Smith will be present at the February 10th NCC meeting to discuss technical proposed engineering changes to the river to reduce the flooding dangers in the future.

d. Town Report: Leslie Matthews

By Friday, January 15, NCC Commissioners should send Leslie notes re any projects they might have worked on in the past year. Leslie will draft our section of the Town Report. Christine asked whether the results of the survey, based on Town Forest knowledge and use, completed by town residents back in April 2015, could be published in the report. Alternatively, Commissioners proposed that these results be made ready and available at Town Meeting for people to pick up at that time. Leslie agreed to complete the data for Town Meeting.

Finally, Commissioners discussed the small stipend of \$400 requested by Friends of the Winooski, which has never been funded by Northfield residents. We discussed strategies to better inform everyone of the work this organization has done, and continues to do, for our town. Christine will draft a paragraph for FPF to be released in the weeks/days before Town Meeting to help people understand the importance of the Friends' work on our behalf.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn seconded and approved 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Christine Barnes
Northfield Conservation Commission

These minutes are subject to change and approval at the next meeting, but are substantially correct.