

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD VERMONT  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Minutes of January 17, 2024**

1. Roll Call: David, Jeremy, Ruth, Debbie, Russ
2. Minutes of the December 6, 2023 and January 8, 2024 meetings were approved on a motion by Ruth, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jeremy. Unanimous.
3. Discussion:
  - A. Town Forest Stewardship Committee
    - Colin Bright has resigned from TFSC. Send names of anyone interested to Jeremy.
    - Andrew applied for a trails grant for the new accessible trail at NU Shaw Center and made the cut to advance to round two.
    - Funding is needed for an engineering assessment for Slate Avenue/Lybrand trail.
    - Goals for 2024 for this group include updating the Town Forest Stewardship plan, deciding how Cheney field should be managed, boundary marking of Dustin's Pasture portion of town forest and examining the maple lease on this property, creating an e-bike usage policy and updating the town forest map to show areas that are off limits for camping and FTX training.
  - B. Joint TFSC/NCC Meeting:
    - Discuss at next meeting, perhaps hold this in March
    - Jeremy shared idea to host a community event; a watch party for the April solar eclipse, in Cheney field, sponsored by NCC/TFSC/VOREC grant?
  - C. Report of the High School Trails Working Group
    - The working group of Mo, David and Jeremy met with Judy Knapp and came away with 4 key concepts:

The trails need to be inventoried to determine the needs. Initial trail clearing by hand is needed. A plan to mobilize chain saws and other equipment is needed. A celebration at the end is important and could be the October X-C meet being held on the school trails.

Judy will contact NU engineering to potentially help. Also, perhaps NU Community service and X-C team could be asked to help. The YES-year end school program could support work on the trails. Trails are on VOREC town-wide map. Idea to have VYCC host a "game of logging" training in conjunction with trail work needs. A community day for trail work could be organized.

D. Draft Zoning Regulations and Protections for Town Forest

- The public hearing for the zoning regulations change is set for February 13<sup>th</sup>. The NCC will ask to be on the agenda and present the points made in the memo that was sent to the Select Board. Members should attend if possible. \*\*\*Interesting note: a zoning map from 2011 showed the town forest zoned for recreation.

4. Updates

- A. VOREC grant: The group is completing work with the consultant shortly on the wayfinding plan including mapping and updating of on-line trail databases like Trail finder. The next grant awards will be announced in March and we are hoping to be successful in obtaining funding to complete the signage. A question regarding including signage for school trails came up.
- B. Tree Planting Grant. The trees were planted last Fall. Nigel hopefully closed out the grant.
- C. Watershed Grant Opportunities. David and Russ attended the CVRPC presentation on water quality projects and dam removals. The regional planning commission could apply and administer grants for NCC & the town of Northfield. Project opportunities are listed on the draft of the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan, currently in the comment period before adoption. Debbie moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by David, that NCC create a working group to evaluate potential water quality projects listed in the tactical basin plan and other resources. Unanimous. The working group consists of David, Russ and Ruth, with Debbie as an alternate.
5. Scheduling: regular meeting of January 24<sup>th</sup> is cancelled. Next meeting is February 28<sup>th</sup>.
6. Adjournment: Ruth moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Debbie to adjourn at 7:10.

Respectfully,  
Deborah Zuaro