

## Norwich Conservation Commission Draft Minutes 2/19/2019

Commissioners in attendance: Craig Layne, Mary Sellman, Chris Rimmer, Brie Swenson, Dave Hubbard, Lynnwood Andrews, Norm Miller

Trails Committee present: George Clarke, Brian Riordan, Doug Hardy, Cathy Redpath, Liz Russell, Gerry Plummer, Peter Griggs, Byron Haynes

Appalachian Trail Conference: Matt Stevens

US Forest Service: Holly Knox

Upper Valley Land Trust: Jason Berard

Other Public: Peter Silberman, Nancy LaRowe, Cody Williams, Sarah Reeves, Stephen Flanders, Peg Merrens, Linda Cook

Called to order at 7:04pm

### Public Comment

- Nancy LaRowe – representing Upper Valley Network for Climate Action. Citizens action committee to address climate change. Articles 34-36. Description of their petition read aloud and submitted to the NCC.
- Doug Hardy – Trails Committee has been soliciting opinions for the ATC project. Offered to provide their findings to anyone by contacting him at norwichtrails @gmail.com

### ATC Presentation

Matt Stevens presented the ATC crossings project. Presented Holly Knox (US Forest Service). Introduced Jason Berard (UVLT). Offered to present what they have been discussing with Trails and the community with to the ConsCom. Graphic showed the sanctioned and rogue trails crossing inside of the AT corridor within Norwich. They will be working with the Trails Committee to identify which trails are the most important to the public and which will be kept or brushed in and lose ATC maintenance. Holly outlined what the Forest Service considers a trail and what is a “herd path” and why this is coming up at this time. There were two maps presented: one by Doug Hardy that showed the Trails Comm. Preferred routes in the AT corridor and across. The next was Jason Berard’s which outlined the shape files of UVLT conserved properties. Matt mentioned that an overlay of both maps together would be helpful going forward. Doug Hardy encouraged everyone to read 12 page document he sent around. Holly said that due to public feedback, they have removed the AT crossing warning signs. They will be conducting a ground survey with Doug Hardy in May. Peter Silberfarb asked about a timeline. Matt said that they would take their time, and revisit after their May survey. Brian Riordan spoke about the MTB trail crossings – he is working with Holly to concentrate the crossings down to one in Norwich. Cody Williams made a comment to the Forest Service requesting more signage in the ATC corridor about allowed usage. Peter Griggs made a comment supporting the ATC and Forest Service’s work, calling for respect and compromise.

## Conservation Trust Fund Guidelines

Review of the original purpose and intent of the Conservation Designated Fund. The Virginia Close bequest was intended for the purchase or protection of a publicly accessed piece of land. Courtney Dragiff brought up the fact that protocol was not followed and Commissioners were not made aware of Article 36. Dave Hubbard brought up the many ways we have used this fund to purchase and protect land. Lynnwood is supporting Article 36, calling it 'nonbinding'. Sarah Reeves presented the Special Places/Open Spaces. Peg Merrens voiced regret for signing the warrant article, saying that she was not told where the money was coming from. Courtney moved that we publicly support 34 and 35, but do not support 36 in its current form. The fund was not set up to finance surveys. Language for this public statement will be drafted by Courtney and sent to committee. Vote: Yea – Craig, Mary, Chris, Courtney, Dave. Nay – Lynnwood, Norm. Courtney suggested that we update the Conservation Fund document, updating for climate change, etc. Public statement will

## Enhanced Energy Commission

Lynnwood says that they are asking questions about solar farms on prime ag land – should they push for not using as much prime ag land as they will use non-prime. Also, using carbon sequestration practices.

UVLT's ConsComm Annual Meeting is March 19<sup>th</sup> – 6pm at Hypertherm.

Adjourned at 9:12pm