

Draft Minutes for Meeting of Norwich Conservation Commission

Tuesday, 15 December 2020, 7 pm

Commissioners Present: Lynnwood Andrews, Chris Rimmer, David Hubbard, Sage McGinley-Smith, Norm Miller, Cody Williams, Craig Layne

Public Present: Peg Merrens, Eric Miller, B. Swenson

Commencement 7:05 pm

There were no opening public comments.

P. Merrens from the UVLT updated the commission on Woody Adams Conservation Forest Project fundraising. Efforts this month are soliciting donations from usual Norwich UVLT donors and others likely to give “leadership-level” and “combined family” gifts. C. Layne updated the commission on the draft of a proposed comprehensive management plan to compliment a conservation easement on the project parcels. He showed the draft and distributed it to commissioners for them to prepare comments to be discussed at a future meeting.

L. Andrews discussed a mowing plan for the Milt Frye Nature Area meadow. A late October annual mowing schedule is desirable. She and B. Swenson will discuss the feasibility of that timing, the mower type options, the mowing pattern options, the blade height options, and the ability to have additional invasive plant brush-hogging with the Department of Public Works. The neighbor with adjoining meadow will also be consulted to see if they would like to be on the same mowing protocol.

N. Miller discussed the McLain Nature Center and Meeting House he would like to establish at the juncture of New Boston and Blood Brooks. The site has an interesting stream-revealed glacial record, potential use by native peoples, a small remnant floodplain forest, a diverse flora, fruiting American chestnut, signs of wildlife use, and a small 85-yr old house with potential to be used by a variety of civic groups. B. Swenson spoke in support of the project. Norm will provide a written description of the project to commissioners to facilitate discussion of project merits at a future meeting.

C. Rimmer updated the commission about the Arnold Conservation Project. The fundraising is almost complete and there is a plan to finish reaching the target. The Vermont Land Trust will close on the conservation easement soon.

D. Hubbard reported on the Trails Subcommittee activities. The Ballard Trail has a new bridge, there is some concern about one of the Brown Schoolhouse Trail pullout area concrete blocks falling into Charles Brown Brook, and there is still some confusion about who can authorize town-account purchases of supplies at Fogg’s Hardware.

What was learned from the Open Meeting Law training was discussed. Discussions through any medium among a quorum of NCC (5) or Trails Subcommittee (2) members about actionable topics for those groups requires the opportunity for public participation via warned meetings and posted minutes.

L. Andrews moved approval of the October Minutes as written, N. Miller 2nd, no further discussion, approved unanimously.

Adjournment 8:37 pm

Minutes compiled by C. Layne