

Champlain Valley Conservation Partnership Meeting
Wednesday, October 23, 2019; 2:30 PM
Champlain Room, City of South Burlington City Hall

Attendees: Ashley Parker, SB Project Manager; Dean Pierce, Shelburne Director of Planning & Zoning ; Don Rendall, Shelburne Natural Resources & Conservation Committee; Dave Crawford, South Burlington Natural Resources Committee; Melinda Scott, Williston Conservation Planner; Alex Weinhagen, Hinesburg Director of Planning & Zoning; Sarah Dopp, President South Burlington Land Trust; Sarah Gentry Tischler, St. George Selectboard (Phone); Holly Rees, Director of Recreation & Parks, South Burlington; Laura Farrell, Northern Addison County (RCP)

Absent: Melanie Needle, Senior Planner, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission; Gail Albert, Shelburne Natural Resources & Conservation Committee; Lisa Kingsbury, UVM Planning Services; Kevin Dorn, City Manager, City of South Burlington; Bob Hyams, Hinesburg Conservation Commission; Kate Kelly, Hinesburg Conservation Commission; Jens Hilke, Conservation Planning Biologist, VT Fish & Wildlife Department

Meeting began at 2:35 PM.

Welcome and Round of introductions.

Changes or additions to Agenda –

Since there was not an update regarding the UVM NR206 project, the group replaced agenda item #5 with a presentation/discussion related to a local regional conservation partnership, led by Laura Farrell.

Alex also asked to add a discussion related to the upcoming budget sessions and the Master Naturalists. This was added after agenda item #7.

Consideration of Minutes from Previous Meeting –

The minutes from the September 25th meeting were reviewed. There was one spelling and one grammatical correction suggested. The changes were made and the minutes were approved as amended.

Partner News/Updates –

Shelburne indicated that they are still working on drafting a potential policy related to human-wildlife interactions (as a result of their beaver issue).

Williston has a community member engaged in developing a trail and some mapping for it. There will be signage talking about native and invasive plants.

South Burlington has been working with Audubon Vermont on habitat management at Wheeler and Underwood to support shrubland bird species that have been identified at those properties. Hinesburg noted that they have also been working with Audubon to actively manage similar habitat, and Williston has also had the same positive experience.

Hinesburg noted that it is budget season and the partnership might want to think about any upcoming needs for funding (i.e.: the Master Naturalist Program). As noted above, this was added to the agenda after agenda item #7.

Laura Farrell: Local Regional Conservation Partnership –

Laura Farrell joined the partnership's meeting to learn more about our partnership and the work we are hoping to embark on. She is from Northern Addison County, and is a wildlife biologist and interested in landscape conservation.

She is with the Monkton Agricultural Commission and started working with Towns around them to start examining everybody's capacity and efforts. Their initial group has started looking at maps and resources. She has started to gather steering committee members together. She is mainly interested in our group and how we formed.

Laura noted that Bill Labich, with the Highstead Foundation, is coming up our way next year. She would be happy to connect our partnership with him. The Foundation has monthly phone calls for partnerships to connect.

It was suggested that the two groups consider having members attend each other's meetings to share information. There may be an opportunity to look at mapping as a collaborative project with the southern partnership. Addison County Regional Planning has been very active in their organizing. There are some land trusts in their area. They are also looking at creating a Town Forest, and are looking for funding to do that project. They have had some trouble getting community interest when there are no paid staff, and this would be an additional volunteer-based meeting. They are interested in making sure the public is informed before major changes occur.

Ashley indicated that she would share the partnership's agreement with Laura.

Mapping Project –

Melinda led this discussion for Melanie. The map viewer was ready for everyone to begin using it and updating the data. The yellow layer is the parcel layer with attributes needing to be completed. Melinda ran through the attribute fields and what data the group is supposed to enter.

The delete function still was not working. The instructions for the group are viewable on the map viewer. Ashley did say she would send the Vermont Data Standards around to the municipal partners so that everyone had the same standards to work with when updating the data.

A question came up about whether the group needs to check the purple layer at all. Are there any differences in the purple layers that would affect our review of the map? Ashley said that she would check with Melanie.

The group ended the discussion by deciding that a deadline is needed for everyone to get their data updates completed. Ashley would ask Melanie how much time she would need to review all of the data updates and have a revised map for the partnership by the beginning of the New Year. Ashley will send around a deadline for the municipal partners after hearing back from Melanie.

Ewing Event Recap –

Ashley reported that the event was successful. The group discussed the idea of leveraging existing/ongoing partner events and start a list of opportunities for the partnership to support and create a plan for 2020.

Ashley noted that she would send event photos to the municipal partners to share with their communities, as well as write up a short blurb. She will also connect with one of the volunteers to see if he would mind sharing his group photos.

Budget Planning Discussion –

There had been some concern that the upcoming Budget season needed to include funding from each municipality for the Master Naturalist class that the group had been asked to support. Ashley found an email from Alecia Daniel confirming that the class the partnership will be involved with is slated to start Fall 2021, so this budget cycle does not need to include additional funding for that program. As a recap – the ask from the program was a match of \$5,000, with \$1,000 brought by each municipal partner.

In general, the group thought we should have more conversations to discuss potential monetary needs for the upcoming year. Ideas that were generated by this discussion included: grants, website/branding needs, restoration projects, CCRPC's time, promotional needs, etc. Ashley indicated that she would connect with CCRPC to discuss whether or not the CCRPC would be able to continue to operate as is with the existing resources.

The next meeting will be: November 20th, 2:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned.