



## **Waterbury Conservation Commission**

### **Minutes**

#### **October 10, 2023 Meeting**

In Attendance Marty Johansen, Amy Marshall-Carney, Stacey Lambert, Billy Vigdor

Absent: Kelsey Applegate and Meg Baldor

Public: None

The meeting was convened at 6:05 pm. NO QUORUM was present, no official action was taken. Regardless, the Commissioners had the following discussion.

#### **Strategic Planning**

The discussion of strategic priorities continued the discussion from the June 2023 meeting. Amy facilitated the discussion. Attached hereto is the annotated presentation slides from the meeting.

The Commission discussed Select Board (from Roger Clapp) suggestions of Commission four inter-related priorities for the Commission as well as ongoing projects that were identified in the parking lot section of the agenda. The Select Board suggested projects were:

- (1) Integrate the Community Values Mapping data – e.g. Forest Resources map attached to the Municipal Plan - onto the Town maps.
- (2) Examine the ecological, functional and habitat values of the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor and the Worcester Range.
- (3) Update existing data, analysis, reports and assessments to support development and conservation decision making in and around the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor and Worcester Range.
- (4) Develop and propose language updates to the Unified Development Bylaws - Section: Identification and regulation of areas needing conservation protection.

Billy provided an overview of the importance of the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor and the status of the updates to the Waterbury Unified Development Bylaws. As explained at the meeting, these four projects will position the Commission to make science based recommendations to the Select Board and Planning Commission regarding conservation of land along Route 100 and along the Worcester Range.

The group discussed a concern that we may take on more than we can handle. In that regard, there was a consensus that an initial step would involve scoping each project to determine the resources that would be required to complete the tasks. It was also noted that tasks two and three are closely related, depending on the state of the existing science. Further, the first three projects will inform the basis for the Commission's recommendation on Unified Development Bylaws language regarding conservation.

The Commission discussed the fact that the Commissioners may not have the requisite scientific background but that a key aspect of projects two and three were to marshal the existing scientific resources and rely on them or ask the Select Board for funds to update the science.

Additionally, the Commission may need to be flexible to address time sensitive projects that arise during the year. That is, these projects may form the bulk of the Commission work but from time to time, new,



time sensitive projects may emerge that the group wishes to assess. The group also considered engagement with other Town bodies, such as the Development Review Board. It is anticipated that these projects would need to be concluded, conservatively, during April or May but that timing is dependent upon the progress made by the Planning Commission in the Phase 2 updates to the Unified Development Bylaws. The expectation is that April or May would be the earliest this work would be due.

It was generally understood that the plan would cover calendar one year, through December 2024.

If these are officially accepted as projects, the group members volunteered to take on lead and sub-committee roles. Amy agreed to lead projects 1-3. Marty agreed to support Amy in projects 1 and 2. Billy agreed to lead project 4 and Stacey agreed to support that effort. Billy agreed to provide some background to Stacey and to update Kelsey and Meg.

### **Commission Membership and Commitment**

The group acknowledged that without the capacity to perform Commission work outside of the regular meetings, the ability to achieve our goals is limited. The Commission is therefore looking for members who are “willing to work” outside of meetings. Further, it was noted that the Commission has not adopted standards and expectations for Commissioners (subject matter expertise, such as wildlife biology) and time commitment). There was a general sense that specific scientific expertise was desired and welcome, but not required. The group agreed of general standards that we would expect of Commissioners. Significantly, the Commission wants to encourage and invite diverse candidates to join us. Drafts will be circulated and posted. Several Commissioners indicated they were aware of friends who may be interested in joining.

### **Website**

The Commission has a draft website in the works. But the Commission has not developed the website and there are costs involved. The group will recommend to the entire Commission to stop the effort and not renew the hosting agreement.

### **Adjournment**

Marty moved and Stacey seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Billy Vigdor  
October 12, 2023