

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Monday, August 24, 2020

12:00 – 1:30 PM

Join by Web <https://middlebury.zoom.us/j/91880153974>

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Password If prompted, enter this six-digit number: 429149

MINUTES

**(Approved at September 21, 2020 meeting)**

**Attending: Jeff Howarth, Andrew L’Roc, Molly Anderson, Judy Wiger-Grohs, Carol Harden, Chris Brooks, Amy Sheldon**

1. Call to Order
2. Citizen Comments- None
3. Approval of minutes
  - [July 27, 2020](#)  
Motion to approve: M. Anderson, Second: J. Wiger-Grohs, passed unanimously
4. Commission updates
  - Welcome new Conservation Commissioners
    - Chris Brooks- lives in East Middlebury, taught at Green Mountain College, now at Rubenstein School at UVM. Background in Environmental Law. Land Use and Water Quality interests. He is also newly appointed to the MALT board, and still figuring out his role as Town liaison.
    - Carol Harden- lives in Middlebury, retired physical geography professor, geomorphology and human impacts, mountainous water and watersheds.
    - Other brief introductions from Commission Members
  - Staff updates

J. Howarth met with Jen Murray. Discussed the following.

Arrowwood sent new wetlands shapefile (GIS layer) with cover letter to Jen but no detailed report. Jen Murray emailed J. Howarth the shapefile and he will make file available. He will also put together a [web map](#) to help people compare new layer with advisory layer (earlier layer) if they don't have a GIS - first impression is that there's both overlap and differences, but unclear about methods and field verification.

Conservation Commission would like to get Arrowwood representative to attend next meeting (in September)- J. Howarth will contact them and ask that they present about wetlands map and other work (upland and connectivity mapping) and take questions- may be opportunity to help define scope for remaining work.

College Solar Farm on South Street- town and commission haven't received any updates about progress.

J. Howarth asked Jen about status from Energy Committee work. Would like to put together a preferred solar siting map and would like numbers from town regarding goal amounts for town to produce.

A. L'Roe volunteered to get the Regional energy production numbers, we may need to contact Energy Committee to get current/new production

J. Howarth would like to present the Conservation Plan to the Planning Commission in October, may take Planning Commission a couple meetings to look at/digest.

- Commission member updates

J. Wiger-Grohs indicated an opportunity for Cons. Commission to work with MALT and Tree Committee- there is a series of grants being made available from Forest Service for Ash Tree management. The Tree Committee is putting together a grant application, primarily for tree planting. Middlebury doesn't currently have an inventory of roadside (Ash) trees, which might also be a good project, though would have to work with Dept of Public Works. J. Wiger-Grohs will keep Cons Comm. apprised of the grant application as it develops.

A. Sheldon is still working on available lands information for conservation.

5. Conservation Plan - discussion of draft sections

J. Howarth- introduced the draft Conservation Plan and asked for feedback.

C. Harden: who is the audience? J. Howarth: Planning Commission, Selectboard, Public, especially citizens interested in conservation issues. Discussion of goals and responsibilities, principles, and background section. Discussion of conservation

priorities: lowlands, forests, working lands (agriculture and energy), and aquifer. Commissioners supported general approach. M. Anderson thinks language in working lands section could be strengthened in a number of ways. A. L'Roe has started Wildlife outline. J. Howarth will follow up with Commissioners individually before the next meeting to encourage contributions.

6. Set Next Agenda & Meeting Date

**Next meeting set for Monday, September 21st at noon**

M. Anderson motioned to adjourn, A. Sheldon seconded, approved unanimously by those present