

## WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, 4/25/24 at 7:00 P.M  
Westminster West Library

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm. Present: Tatiana Schreiber (chair), Rachael Shaw (secretary), Kestrel Craig, Kathy Kingston, Sarah Waldo.
2. Adjustments to Agenda: Add Wildlife Crossings to Other Business
3. Acceptance of Minutes: 3/28/24 – Kathy moved we approve the minutes, Sarah seconded. Minutes approved by unanimous consent.
4. Communications and Public Comment:
5. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) –
  - a) Beaver Working Group/BEEC program update -Approximately 15-20 people joined the evening beaver observation on 4/21. One beaver, and wetland birds observed. The group is currently deciding how to use the grant money/Protect our Wildlife funds on beaver deceivers. Several possible locations are along the East Putney Brook area in the vicinity of Westminster West village.
  - b) Natural Resources section of Town Plan– schedule work meeting – postponed until the Planning Commission is reformed as an official commission.
  - c) Other programs/projects – follow up –
    1. Ephemeral walk- The walk will take place at the Hidden Springs sugarbush. Meet at the Westminster West School at 1 pm on Sunday 4/28.
    2. riparian buffer project- Sarah and Tatiana will meet with Vic Baisley at SEVCA on Monday 4/29 at 9 am to scope out the site as an option.
  - d) Church planting update - Tatiana, Kathy, Rachael and Andrea Capron (local resident volunteer) planted the plants we got from Fedco- (Serviceberries, Nanking Cherry, Chokeberry, Spicebush) Kathy will pick up the remaining plants from the Natural Resources

Conservation District – NRCD- 2 nanny berries, 2 winter berries, 1 mountain ash on Saturday May 4, and we will organize another planting work day. The elderberry plants will be available in June. A mistake was made with the Fedco plants – 4 serviceberries were ordered instead of 6. We will substitute two additional plants from NRCD if available, or two more elderberries from Gino Palmeri. Rachael will work on an article about the planting for the Gazette. Sarah offered to help with watering.

e) ANR initiative – any follow up from last discussion - Tatiana forwarded a link to a YouTube video of testimony of 3 members of the Ag Working Group of the Vt Conservation Strategy Initiative and urged everyone to listen to it in case we wish to better understand some critiques of the plan. (Hearing held before Ag committee of the VT House of Rep).

f) Town Forest management/scheduling walk – Reviewed our understanding of our role as a CC with respect to town owned lands, and confirmed that our role is advisory. Awaiting more information from the Town on the acreage and locations of town-owned forests. Sarah will stop in on Monday at the Town Hall and look at maps to pinpoint town forest locations. Scheduled a Commission Field Trip in the Town Forest for Monday June 17 (morning).

g) Green Up Day update : all the publicity has been done (Gazette, Front Porch Forum, posters) and bags are available at WW Library, No. Westminster Community Center, Town Hall, and Sarah will bring over bags for the Westminster Center School kids/staff on Monday. Rachael will ask the WW Library to advertise Green Up Day on the sandwich board. Sarah will ask the Westminster Town Hall to do the same.

## 6. New Business:

a) New member interest – size of commission (VT regs state that the size is 3-9 members). According to Alex of the Association of VT Conservation Commissions, commissions can decide individually how many members they would like to have. Based on new member interest, Tatiana will invite interested party to our next two meetings. Tatiana will ask the Selectboard to table their approval of application until meetings have been attended. Add appointing a vice-chair to the agenda.

b) Approve mission statement for website –

Mission statement: The Westminster Conservation Commission was established in 2011 to build awareness, educate, and provide guidance to the Town and its residents with regard to our appreciation and stewardship of Westminster's environment. The Commission works to highlight the aesthetics, recreational opportunities and ecological values of our natural world, as well as its vulnerabilities.

Kestrel moved we approve the mission statement as written, Kathy seconded. Approved with unanimous consent.

c) Budget for Conservation Commission –tabled this discussion

7. Other Business:

Wildlife Crossings: tabled this, add to agenda for June, because Kathy will be away in May.

8. Date of Next Meeting: May 23rd 7 PM (Place TBD)

9. Adjournment. Sarah moved we adjourn, Kathy seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Minutes respectfully submitted by  
Rachael Shaw, secretary