

## WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, 6/27/24 at 7:00 P.M  
Westminster West Library and Zoom  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87899663985>

1. Call to Order: hybrid meeting called to order at 7:10 Present: Tatiana Schreiber (chair), Rachael Shaw (secretary), Kestrel Craig, Kathy Kingston, Jim Calchera, Sarah Waldo
2. Adjustments to Agenda: move section 6b. to between sections 4 and 5.
3. Acceptance of Minutes: 5/23/24 – Minutes read. Tatiana moved we accept the minutes, Kestrel seconded. Minutes accepted by a majority vote.
4. Communications and Public Comment:
  - a) Comments from potential new member(s) - none
5. (Formerly 6b) Mission/Values of Westminster CC - Tatiana read our WCC mission statement. Statewide, Vermont Conservation Commissions have an advisory role, not jurisdiction over policy. Discussion focused on the meaning of conservation for each member. Opinions varied, but there was clear consensus that protecting habitat for wildlife was a shared value. This will be an ongoing discussion, which the CC will come back to periodically.
6. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) –
  - a) Beaver Working Group/BEEC program update – deceiver got put in north of the Wright Way culvert, it needs a few adjustments which will be completed soon. BWG will be meeting soon, there will likely be more funds for education and outreach in the coming year. More details to follow.
  - b) Natural Resources section of TP – Kathy will follow up with Matt Conklin. They (planning commission) intend to convene a first meeting, but it hasn't happened yet. Act 171 (Wildlife Corridor Connectivity) requires that attention to wildlife corridors be incorporated into the town plan.
  - c) Church Planting –The 4 Serviceberries have some kind of fungal or bacterial issue, and one Nanking Cherry hasn't leafed out yet. We will let them go for this season and see what happens, potentially

replacing them next spring. All the other plants are doing well. There were a total of 28 plants put in. The watering schedule is set for the next month (rain, Sarah, Tatiana, Rachael).

d) Budget for Conservation Commission – report back from research - Tatiana spoke with Alex from the Vermont Association of CC's. They haven't finished compiling the results of their survey, but \$1000 is a typical budget. Depends on the population size, land area, tax base, municipal budget, acres of town land overseen, etc. Towns of comparable size are Weathersfield (\$1100), Berlin (\$2000). Sarah will research the process for presenting a budget to the town, select board etc. Add budget creation to next months agenda.

e) Other programs/projects – follow up –

1. riparian buffer project- Cory Ross thought that the lawn section on the East side of the SEVCA building might be able to be converted to some plantings, and that the parking lot could be converted to permeable surfacing. Cory said he'll put together a proposal for Vic Baisley at SEVCA and cc Sarah/WCC. Tatiana commented that doing the project there might be particularly valuable because of it's visibility and potential educational role.

2. Biodiversity Inventory- no further update. Postpone to next meeting

f) ANR initiative – any follow up from last discussion -Tatiana got an email from Margo Ghia saying that the VHCB (Vermont Housing and Conservation Board) has finished a report from the outreach committee discussions. Tatiana will forward.

g) Town Forest management/planning/follow up from field trip – postpone discussion.

h) Communication with other CCs – sending representative? - postpone discussion.

7. New Business:

a) New open meeting law compliance -“Advisory body” means a public body that does not have supervision, control, or jurisdiction over legislative, quasi-judicial, tax, or budgetary matters. As an advisory body, our understanding is that the WCC is exempt from the new requirements

(hybrid meetings, recordings required). However, all are welcome to attend our meetings either in person or via Zoom (by request) and agendas and minutes are posted to the town website.

8. Other Business: none
9. Date of Next Meeting: July 25th, Westminster Institute
10. Adjournment at 8:35 pm. Kestrel made a motion to adjourn, Kathy seconded. All were in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted by  
Rachael Shaw, secretary