

Town of Huntington — Huntington Conservation Commission (HCC) Meeting



Thursday, 8 October 2015—7:00 pm

Town Office - downstairs
 ** APPROVED ** MINUTES

RECEIVED *[Signature]*
 DATE November 16,
 2015

<p>Agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and approve the September minutes, review minutes • Public Comment • Town Forest <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update from the October 5 Selectboard Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resources: Vermont Land Trust (Rebecca) and/or Land for Public Trust (Jenna) ▪ Next steps 2. Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Association trail/access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from October 5 Selectboard Meeting • Next steps 3. Catamount Trail Easement in Town Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from October 5 Selectboard Meeting • Next steps • HCC Work Plan and Priorities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stormwater Grant – Update (Darlene) 2. Special places tour – Mushroom Walk, Forest City Trail, Sunday, Oct. 18, 1:30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Next steps – Description, promotion – FPF, flyer, Times-Ink (doesn't work in schedule) 3. Review Work Plan – updates/revisions? • Other outstanding agenda items, business or updates • ECOS Project <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. - Wildlife corridor map status – Roman 2. - Possible contract to do some field verification? • Adjourn • Next Meeting : Thursday, Nov 12
<p>Members present:</p>	<p>Sheri Lynn (Co-Chair), JB Bryan, Darlene Palola, Roman Livak Called in: Rebecca Ryan (Co-Chair) Absent: Jenna Whitson</p>
<p>Staff/Officials present</p>	<p>Terry Ryan, HCC Clerk</p>
<p>Others present</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Call to order</p>	<p>Sheri Lynn called the meeting to order at 19:04</p>
<p>Approval of Minutes (10 September 2015) - MOTION</p>	<p><u>MOTION:</u> Livak moved and Palola seconded to approve the draft minutes of 10 September 2015, as submitted. Passed unanimously.</p>

Public Comment	None
Agenda	Discussion
<p data-bbox="123 222 302 285">Topic: Town Forest</p> <p data-bbox="123 1146 228 1178">ACTION</p>	<p data-bbox="318 222 1511 600">Lynn read aloud an email from Jenna Whitson describing her contact with Caitlin Roger of the Trust for Public Land (TPL), and their concepts of conservation easements, and Town acquisition of more usable property than then current Town Forest (TF). TPL supported these ideas and may be able to help with grant funds. Lynn also shared that Ryan had contacted the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) on these topics. The Commission discussed this at some length. Livak observed that easements supervised by the VLT may have a maintenance cost associated with that, and expressed his lack of support for incurring such costs. Several Commission members expressed concern that if the current TF were sold, how to ensure that the funds acquired would go toward a new TF and not get lost into general funds. Livak (who is also on the Selectboard (SB)) suggested a Reserve Fund could be established when and if the TF is sold, with it stipulated what those funds could be used for. The SB has not made a decision about selling the TF so further discussion was tabled.</p> <p data-bbox="318 642 1520 852">Lynn briefed the Commission on the status of the Camels Hump Nordic Skiers Association (CHNSA) and Catamount Trail Association (CTA) ski trail easements in the TF. The SB agreed to proceed with both at their 5 Oct 2015 meeting. The CTA easement is finalization is underway, with CTA paying any further legal costs. CHNSA is not in a position to pay legal costs (per HCC Clerk Terry Ryan, who is also the Secretary of CHNSA) and customarily does letter agreements with landowners annually. The HCC agreed that in the case of CHNSA that this would be adequate.</p> <p data-bbox="318 894 1511 1167">Ryan restarted the TF discussion noting that at the 5 October SB meeting, Aaron Worthley was vocal in opposing selling the current TF. She suggested inviting him to the next HCC meeting to discuss. Lynn noted that the SB Chair, Dori Barton, had indicated that the HCC may need to hold a Public Hearing if the sale of the TF looks to become a real possibility, and get community input. The Commission discussed this at some length, and did not support asking Mr. Worthley to the next meeting, and that it is too soon to start any action toward a Public Hearing. Livak noted that the process of how the Town might sell the TF is unclear, and took an action to investigate what the procedures are for the Town to sell real property such as the TF.</p> <p data-bbox="318 1209 1511 1346">Lynn then described to the Commission some information from the TPL that a substantial property owned by Timbervest, called the Cobb Brook Forest, is up for sale and would be a good replacement town forest. The asking price is \$1,335,000. It is 890 acres in the Fountains prospectus, though the TPL discussion was to 680 acres.</p> <div data-bbox="334 1356 748 1892"> </div>

<p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>ACTION</p>	<p>Lynn noted that the TPL may have funding sources to aid in acquiring this property, and suggesting inviting representatives for the TPL and VLT to come to the next HCC meeting to discuss this. She then took an action to invite them.</p> <p>Bryan asked if it might be possible to get a “right of first refusal” for the Cobb Brook sale; no one was sure. Whitson was assigned an action to investigate Timbervest’s timeframe for the sale, as the Town and HCC would need time to figure out possibilities.</p> <p>Lynn noted that Remo Pizzagalli, who is the potential buyer of the TF, would be interested in the HCC deliberations and developments, and took an action to ensure he is “in the loop” and send the meeting minutes to him.</p> <p>Rebecca Ryan had called in while driving, and signed off at this point as she was losing cel service.</p>
<p>Topic: HCC Work Plan and Priorities</p>	<p><u>Stormwater Grant</u> – Palola reported that the SB approved the Friends of the Winooski Grant for the design work on the Town Garage stormwater problem. Grant award is expected in November with design done March-April 2016. Livak noted it would be good to have the design work in hand in time for next year’s Town budget. Palola noted that perhaps an educational trip to the site with some explanations of stormwater management would be a good HCC project.</p> <p><u>Special places tour</u> – Bryan will lead a Mushroom Walk on the Forest City Trail, Sunday, Oct. 18, 1:30, about two hours. Meeting at Burroughs trailhead. Bryan expressed some concern about liability if someone eats a mushroom and has a bad reaction; Commission consensus was this ought not to be an issue so long as he is clear that whatever edibles he points out are ‘<i>probably</i>’ OK. Ryan and Lynn to promulgate via FPF and flyer/posters.</p>
<p>Topic: ECOS Project</p>	<p>Livak showed the Commission a large map showing potential wildlife transit corridors in Huntington. The Commission discussed community engagement for anecdotal observation, map with pins, grease pencil etc. Lynn expressed some concern about the term ‘verification’, especially if the corridors might one day be used in decision-making for culverts, signage, etc. Commission agreed to informal observations for now, perhaps to be used to guide formal study in the future, and to look into what resources may exist online or elsewhere, for reporting wild life sightings along the corridors.</p>
<p>Topic: Budget</p>	<p>Lynn noted that the budget was submitted as part of the 10 September draft minutes.</p>
<p>Topic: Other</p>	<p>Lynn noted that the TF Management Plan is 10 years old and should be updated by the County Forester.</p> <p>Emerald Ash Borers were brought, up but tabled until March.</p>
<p>Adjourn MOTION</p>	<p><u>MOTION:</u> Livak moved and Bryan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 20:40. Passed unanimously.</p>
	<p>12 November 2015 – Next Meeting date 10 Oct 2015 – Draft/unapproved minutes sent to Town Clerk for website posting 12 Nov 2015 – Final/approved minutes approved 16 Nov 2015 – Approved minutes sent to Town Clerk for recording & website posting</p>