



## Town of Stowe Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes March 11, 2024

Conservation  
Commission

A regular meeting of the Conservation Commission was held on Monday March 11, 2024, at 5:30 pm in the Memorial Room of the Stowe Town Office.

Members in Attendance: Jacquie Mauer, Kay Barrett, Catherine Gott, Seb Sweatman, Phillip Branton, Colleen McGovern, and Zach Lewis.

Staff in Attendance: Sarah McShane

Others in Attendance: Mark Leach, Kate Tilgner, Grady Vigneau (STP), Carolyn Lawrence (STP), Dean Percy (Stowe Snowmobile Club), Rick Dwyer (FPR), Mark Tetreault (VAST)

**Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair C.Gott at approximately 5:30 PM.

**Public Comments & Adjustments to the Agenda** – No public comments.

**Review of Meeting Minutes** - On a motion by P.Branton, seconded by S.Sweatman, the meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

### **Sterling Forest Management Plan**

Commission members met with various stakeholders including Stowe Snowmobile Club, VAST, STP, and FPR. C.Lawrence and G.Vigneau of STP began by providing an overview of mountain bike use in Sterling. She explained that future trail network improvements/expansions may consider connections between Lauren's Loop and Peak-A-View and possibly connect Lauren's Loop with the Eight Bridges Trail. She added that their vision for Sterling is to keep it quiet and remote. She agreed to provide a conceptual drawing illustrating possible future trail connections. Dean Percy representing the Stowe Snow Mobile Club discussed some of the maintenance issues he has observed. He explained there is one spot on Papa's Trail where the stream has entirely relocated and is no longer running below the bridge. He is currently assessing needed maintenance items and working with VAST. Members discussed several areas along Maple Run with culverts beginning to fail. D.Percy added that he has not observed parking issues and many snow mobile users park elsewhere and snowmobile into Sterling.

Members then reviewed and discussed the draft survey questions intended to obtain stakeholder feedback. Members offered various revisions. K.Barrett will revise the questions based on Commission discussion. S.McShane will check with the Energy Committee regarding which survey platform they used. At the next meeting the Commission will finalize the survey questions and decide how to distribute the survey.

### **Request for Letter of Support - Bouchard Farm Lot 5**

S.McShane explained that Stowe Land Trust is requesting a letter of support from the Commission to acquire a conservation easement on Lot 5 owned by Paul Percy off Brook Road. Members were provided information. P.Branton motioned to support the request, seconded by C.McGovern. The motion passed. C.Gott signed the letter on behalf of the Commission.

### **Quiet Path Bridge Relocation**

S.McShane provided an update regarding the Quiet Path bridge. She explained the Selectboard recently agreed to temporarily relocate portions of the Quiet Path and install a temporary bridge further upstream. The bridge received damage during the December storm and is no longer safe in its current condition. The location of the temporary bridge minimizes the length of path relocation and impacts to the abutting agricultural use. S.McShane reported the relocation is currently temporary but could become permanent if approved by the Selectboard.

**Project Updates**

Members briefly discussed the Bear Aware Initiative and Green Up Day. The April 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting will be canceled so members can enjoy eclipse gatherings.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on March 25th.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20 PM

Submitted by,

Sarah McShane