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## Rockingham Conservation Commission

MONDAY, September 14th, 2015

### **Minutes** (draft 9-15-15)

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM. Present: Mike Ghia, Tom Herson, Peter Bergstrom, Alan Fowler, Fred Bennett, Paul Wilson. Absent: Guy Payne, Devin Smith, and Rick Holloway. Guests: Amy Howlett, Renee Vondle.
2. Approve Minutes of July Meeting. Moved: Mike, Second: Fred, no discussion. Passed.  
Alteration to the agenda: none.
3. Website updates (Fred and Alan): Fred will set up a bulletin board on the draft web site so we can review it and make comments. **Fred will send RCC members a link in an email.** Mail Chimp—Mike used this recently, but not all members got it; he encouraged those who did not get it to look for it.
4. Trail Connection possibilities between Bald Hill and Rockingham. Windmill Hill Pinnacle Assoc. wants us to organize a meeting in Saxtons River to discuss. **Mike will consult with them on a weekday evening in October at Main Street Arts, starting at 7:00.**
5. Cell tower: Mike asked if the Saxtons River Trustees had approved the Verizon cell tower at the Warner Center; he has not heard. Peter mentioned that local cell tower access roads are now surfaced with large rock that is not ideal for hiking (based on the roads to towers at Minards Pond and on Fall Mountain) so we may want to ask for a more walkable surface. **Mike will ask the Saxtons River Trustees about both issues.**
5. Town Plan Revision (2016) and Rockingham Conservation Commission contributions to it--Mike sent some material to the Planning Commission that may be used about local rivers. Renee said the Planning Commission has a draft of the flood resilience section but the natural resources section is weak; they want RCC to revise it and they will edit it. She said we should highlight Herricks Cove and other biodiversity hot spots, wetlands and vernal pools, and include water resources other than flood resilience and storm water. They need a draft by January at the latest. Renee will make sure Chuck Wise sends Mike the outline of the natural resources section. Peter, Mike, and Fred said they could do some writing, Paul said he could review some sections, Renee said she could help with organization and Tom said he may be able to help. **We agreed that those people, chaired by Peter, will meet before our next RCC meeting on Oct. 12 to assign writing tasks,**

● Page 2

probably on Sept. 28. **Mike will contact Kate McCarthy, Vermont Natural Resources Commission, for any advice.**

6. Herrick's Cove and CT River

Source-to-the-Sea Sept 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> ; Guy has organized these for the RCC but he is away; David Deen asked Tom to help with removing large items in Springfield, which he will do, but there were no other volunteers.

7. Natural Resources

High Meadows Flood Resiliency Grant Follow-up: Peter reported that a riparian landowner workshop is planned for **Sat 10/17, about 10-3, in Grafton (indoor portion) and Cambridgeport (field portion)**. Peter will put details on Mail Chimp and the RCC Facebook page once he gets them.

Update on Stream and Water Body Naming Project –Peter showed the new names map, now on display on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Town Hall, and explained where some of the recently changed names came from, including Sokoki Falls. Peter will ask the Westminster and Springfield selectboards and SR trustees for approval of names in their boundaries, and also ask Rockingham to approve the list with names that have changed since their hearing on June 2. He will also ask CRJC if they want to weigh in on the Great Falls name. **He will send the latest naming proposals with these minutes, to be posted on the RCC web site, along with the new map of all the names.**

Silvio Conte NWR: US FWS is asking for public comments on potential expansion areas along the CT River and its tributaries. **Paul will share a link to the maps with RCC members and check if any proposed areas are in Rockingham.**

Recycling and Organic Waste: **That committee will organize a library presentation on this in October or later. Alan will share details.**

7. Energy Committee

PACE—Property Assessed Clean Energy—funds (with loans) energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements for low income property owners. Energy Committee has met to discuss this. This would have to be approved at Town Meeting to go forward in Rockingham; it's much simpler now than in the past. Now processed by Efficiency Vermont which is working with 15 VT towns. We agreed to defer action until Guy is present, for possible recommendation to the Selectboard to put on the Town Meeting ballot in 2016.

State Solar Siting Task Force: Mike reported that this group is holding public hearings around the state. One topic is the extent to which the PSB considers town plans in reviewing solar projects; they do not consider town zoning or maps. Mike discussed some of the possible impacts on agricultural land from solar arrays. The task force is supposed to draft legislation to be introduced in the next session.

8. Announcements of Events of relevance to the RCC Mission-all.

**Tom mentioned the CRJC is sponsoring a workshop in Springfield on Sat Sept 26 on septic systems.** For details see [http://www.crjc.org/event/septic-system-maintenance-workshop/?instance\\_id=837](http://www.crjc.org/event/septic-system-maintenance-workshop/?instance_id=837)

9. Confirm Next Meeting **NEXT MEETING Monday, October. 12<sup>th</sup> Columbus Day**

Adjourned Alan moved Fred seconded, passed at 9:00 PM. Minutes prepared and submitted by Peter Bergstrom, RCC secretary.