

Conservation Commission Meeting 1/14/19

Present: Mike Purcell, Ashley Bies, Pieter Van Loon, Jaime Tanner

- Revisions to last meeting minutes? – will postpone until next meeting when Ashley has a chance to look at the minutes
- HMCA – excited to collaborate with CC on tracking efforts, their biodiversity survey should be complete in March.
- Ashley was in touch with Mary Ellen who heads the biannual meeting process for the conservation commissions, the location is currently set in Guilford for the April meeting but could chat with them to see if they wanted to host in the fall instead if we still want to host a meeting on Connectivity here in April. We can wait until the February meeting to see whether we have received the grant and then decide whether we will ask Guilford to swap hosting dates.
- Ashley gave an update on wildlife road crossings so far:
- Some tracks on Barrows road and CP 40. Otter crossing on MacArthur Road. fisher crossing by campus by upper Moss Hollow Road. Some Moose activity on Grant Road in a couple of locations. A moose travelled down town hill road and crossed Rt 9 west of Marlboro North.
- Discussion on what makes a crossing a crossing – often it is just based on landscape features but we are testing these “hypotheses” with recorded observations, if we have multiple observations over multiple years worth we have greater support for these hypotheses even if there are only a few observations per year, repetitions from year to year are noteworthy.
- Halifax is in the process of incorporating a conservation commission so there might be an opportunity to collaborate on the wildlife linkage efforts soon.
- Should we consider reaching out to landowners with important large tracts of land to see if they want to take any action to help steward important crossing areas and/or important habitat?
 - Maybe to relieve pressure on one person collecting all of the tracking data we could divvy it up amongst CC members to spots close to home, contact key folks that we know might want to be involved. We might also do this for our tracking day, introduce road crossings, connectivity, go to some crossings and go over tracking and then again show folks where the crossings are and see if there are any volunteers that want to check in on particular crossings using iNaturalist.
- If anyone goes out in the near future to track, let Ashley know first so he can take that off of his places to visit.

- We should each think of an even contact folks that we think might be interested between now and our next meeting. Even the basic instructions of taking photos with something for scale and then encourage them to come to our upcoming tracking workshop.
- **Budget:** Pieter ordered a weed wrench but it has not arrived yet, our white board is housed in the Community Center. Pieter will contact Selectboard to see if we can spend our budget prior to Town Meeting and also if we can assume we have the same budget for this year that we had last year.
- We should find out when the deadline for the Marlboro Mixer is. Jaime will be writing a draft of a piece on the CC with the idea that we will wait to hear whether we received the High Meadows Fund grant first.
- Do we want to consider trying to get VTrans to pursue possible revisions of speed limits on Route 9 near wildlife crossings? Pieter said it requires evidence of high collision rates in those areas to get changes to speed limits approved. Some possible locations would be near Grant/Butterfield Rd, Hamilton road, and near Marlboro Road. Pieter will contact Selectboard to see if there is any interest in taking this on.
- Pieter volunteered to take minutes at our next meeting