

The Commission scheduled this workshop as a strategic planning session in order to broaden the Commission's role as a resource for the community.

Chairman Sam Demeritt called the meeting to order at 6:43. Other members in attendance were Celia Abrams, Cheryl Smith, Deb Kimball, Kristen Lamb and Raelene Shippee-Rice who was seated for Noel Carlson. Guest was Charlene Andersen, resident, and facilitator for the strategic planning session. Chair Demeritt handed the floor to Andersen.

A brief discussion was held to define the purposes of a Vision Statement and a Mission Statement. It was decided that the latter states the purpose of an agency and the former states how the purpose is to be carried out. We have been tasked at this meeting to brainstorm the answers to several questions in order, then to rank the items in each question individually to be used for a collective accounting. When all results are determined then the Mission and Vision statements can be drafted.

The questions to be addressed at this January 28 meeting were as follows:

- What does the community ask us to do (including RSA 36-A)?
- What do we do well?
- What do we need to work on?
- What are the hopes for the future and conservation?
- What are the biggest challenges?

In the next hour and a half over a dozen items were generated for each of the five questions. They include the following:

What the Community Ask Us To Do

review wetland permits

investigate alleged wetland and land violations/complaints

help put land in conservation

endorse and support natural/historic resources

inventories of all easements

review major subdivision plans

maintain collaborations with land conservation and land use boards

inventory of prime and other wetlands

monitor river water quality

monitor easements

public education and outreach

recommend programs to protect natural resources

provide advice and guidance to community (land use, boards, etc.)

answer resident questions regarding natural resources and wildlife

stay current via professional development (workshops, conferences, etc.)
help landowners find funding sources
identify high conservation quality natural resources (4 Generals' Greenway)
custodians of conservation fund

What We Do Well

river water quality monitoring
defend challenges and correcting misconceptions regarding natural resource protection
work with landowners who want to put land in conservation
monitor easements
road clean up (2 miles)
newsletter articles
education programs
well rounded expertise on commission
work with planning board on best ways to conserve natural resources available to public
partial funding on projects
connected to regional groups
maintain important active memberships
professional development
being visible

Biggest Challenges

Funding sources for easements
time
people power
uninformed public
misinformation about overall conservation and easements
lack of understanding on value of conservation on public health and town budget
limited avenues on outreach and to inform the public
partnering with school and recreation department
no defined mission and value to help encourage volunteers
no public poster of information/infographic through town
one email address (Town NCC address)

What We Need to Work On

wetlands inventory
defining a plan

- mapping 4 Generals' Greenway
- conservation priorities
- communicating with boards
- collaboration with boards on shared vision
- review and prioritize sections in Master Plan
- offer more walks and talks
- better outreach and transparency
- improve website
- trail development
- create maps for public access lands
- booklet on NCC at public library
- NCC structure (duties, roles, expectations, agenda)
- communication with neighboring towns

Hopes for Future and Conservation

- town forest
- bond for big projects
- partner with others for key lands
- more public & community engagement in favor of conservation (decision making, meetings, votes, etc.)
- NCC master plan
- boards solicit advice ahead of and during decision making
- improve alternative funding sources
- accessibility to tax maps
- identify land carrying capacity
- help assure carrying capacity is observed
- identify and map 4 Generals' Greenway
- move forward on lands
- permanent protection of high conservation quality natural resources (aquifers, ag soils, etc.)
- best municipal practices with conservation in mind (pesticide use, invasives, salt use, etc.)

(Kimball left at 8:08.)

Andersen will type up these five lists and send them out to us. Our homework is to rank items in "What we need to work on" and "Hopes for Future and Conservation", from #1 (highest ranking) to the highest number (lowest ranking). Also to answer are the following two additional questions: "What do we hope to achieve as a result of this strategic planning process?" and "How can those challenges be addressed?" Homework is due to Andersen by

Sunday, February 2, so the results can be summarized prior to the next workshop meeting scheduled for February 4.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30. The motion was made by Mooney, seconded by Smith and all six votes were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Mooney, Secretary.

These minutes were accepted as corrected at the meeting held on February 10, 2014. Corrections have been made.