



## Minutes

Conservation Commission Meeting  
10:15 a.m. Saturday, March 14th, 2026

### **Present**

*Chris Steel(Remote), Chair*  
*Jane Hoffman, Treasurer*  
*Emma Palumbo, Clerk*  
*Peter Watkinson, Member*  
*Will Marlier, Member*  
*JoAnn Hanowski, Member*  
*Betsy Youngman, Member*  
*Liza Kiesler, Member*

### **Absent**

*Erika Karp, Member*  
*Emily Cayer, Advisor*

### **Members of the Public**

*Arlene Averill*

1.) 10:18am - **Meeting Commences**

2.) Emma Palumbo: **Review & Approve Minutes** of the Meeting on January 10th, 2025

*a.) Progress on Actions*

Liza will post to Front Porch Forum, linking the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) on the websites of the Greensboro Conservation Commission (GCC) and the Greensboro Land Trust (GLT).

Chris will organize a summit with conservation leaders from local organizations, scheduled for this summer.

### 3.) Jane Hoffman: **Treasurer's Report**

Jane reported no additional expenses or changes since the last meeting.

### 4.) JoAnn Hanowski: **Town Plan- GCC Contribution**

JoAnn made a motion to accept the most recent draft of the Natural Resources Chapter of the Town Plan for submission to the Planning Commission. Peter seconded, and all members present approved. The planning commission will meet with the conservation commission in the coming months to review the chapter.

Following a meeting Chris, JoAnn and Betsy had with Jens Hilke (VT Fish and Wildlife) and Jared Nunnery (Orleans County Forester) to review the GCC contribution to the Town Plan, Chris and JoAnn have arranged for Kent Hansen (Chair of the GPC) to meet with Jens Hilke to discuss the Conservation aspects of the Town Plan. JoAnn invited commission members to attend and will send a Teams link. She will also notify Kent and Jens of any additional attendees.

JoAnn shared that Christine Armstrong suggested hosting a Passing Lands event in Greensboro this summer, sponsored by the Vermont Woodlands Association and Vermont Coverts. Members expressed support for endorsing the event to help publicize it, but agreed hosting responsibilities should remain with the sponsoring organizations or the planning commission.

### 5.) Chris Steel: **Natural Resources Inventory Update**

Chris reported that the first round of fieldwork for the NRI has been completed and that a second round of fieldwork is planned for 2026 largely funded by the GLT. Chris then made the following motion: "The GCC should appropriate \$500 to the GLT to support funding of ongoing fieldwork of the NRI." Will seconded, and all members present approved. The fieldwork is being recorded in a series of private landowner reports that are being summarized in a public appendix to the NRI. Chris then advised there would likely be a further phase of work in 2027 to update the main document with references to the fieldwork appendix, the new Vermont wetland delineation regulations and conservation mapping arising from the statewide VT conservation design work.

### 6.) Will Marlier: **Invasives Program**

Will updated the commission on the Invasives Program. He shared that Smith's Grocery declined the stem injection pilot due to customer concerns but is open to mechanical hand-pulling at the site. Will suggested contacting Pollinator Free Greensboro to adopt and manage the site mechanically. Members agreed.

Will received a quote of \$1,000 from Abraham Ames for the invasive site at Highland Lodge and plans to obtain a second estimate from Sam Perron of Northwoods. Will requested feedback from the commission on organizing an educational public event on invasive species. Members recommended hosting a panel of experts outside a traditional meeting would be the best way to engage the public. Will plans to invite Stephanie Smith (Deputy Director, VT Dept of Agriculture), Noah Hoffman (Invasive Species Coordinator, VT Dept of Forests and Parks), and Rick Morrill/Dawn Morgan (Northeast Forest Conservation Services, Greensboro) to speak at a summer event.

In public comment, Arlene Averell raised concerns about the GCC's use of herbicides for invasive species management. Will and Liza clarified concerns and explained why the commission has chosen to include herbicide as a tool for invasive management, noting that early detection and rapid response is the best practice to deal with invasives. Will also shared the GCC plans to determine the best tool to deal with each site as the GCC inventories them. Arlene thanked the commission for our work overall and commented that she felt that the reason that similar concerns were being expressed by other members of the public is that they may not fully understand the knowledge journey the GCC had been on over the last couple of years.

#### 7.) Will Marlier: **Bee App Update**

Will has connected with Saul Costa to begin posting events through the Bee App. He is still awaiting a response from Jed Feffer regarding the volunteer list.

#### 8.) Chris Steel: **Commission Term Renewals**

Peter and Will are up for term renewals this year. Chris proposed establishing a standardized renewal process. The commission agreed to the following process: prior to the September meeting, the GCC will post a public notice inviting interested community members to apply. Candidates for renewal, along with any additional applications for membership, will be considered in Executive Session at the September meeting at the same time as the annual election of Officers. The GCC will make a recommendation to the Selectboard on candidates for the renewals/vacant positions following the September meeting.

## 9.) NeighborWood Watch Program

### *a.) AVCC Tiny Grants*

In Emily's absence, Jane provided some information about the AVCC Tiny Grants program and will reach out to Emily to ensure the grant for the NeighborWood Watch program is submitted before the April 11th deadline.

## 10.) Emma Palumbo: **Butterfly Atlas Event**

Emma reported that the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) is completing its second Butterfly Atlas and has identified Greensboro as a priority area.

VCE would like to co-host a late-summer event to inventory butterflies, with support from the GCC for outreach and logistics. Members suggested late July or August as the optimal timing. Emma will coordinate with Dana Williams (VCE) to finalize the date.

## 11.) Liza Kiesler: **Greensboro Bend Pollinator Bed Plans and Budget**

Liza provided an update on the Greensboro Bend Pollinator Bed. She has identified a potential new source for plugs, plans to order supplemental seeds, and will use plugs from her own garden if necessary. Liza will schedule a volunteer planting day in May to which Chris will also invite Mike Kiernan of beethechange.earth who kindly donated \$500 to the bed preparation costs in 2025.

## 12.) Jane Hoffman & Liza Keisler: **Summer Speaker Program**

### *a.) Bats*

Emily and Jane have scheduled the Bats program for Sunday, August 30, from 3:00–5:00 PM at the Highland Center for the Arts. Alyssa Bennett, Small Mammal Specialist with Vermont Fish & Wildlife, will present, and plans to place acoustic boxes around town.

### *b.) Northern Peatlands with Charlie Reninertsen*

Liza shared she would like to drop Northern Peatlands from her obligations. Peter volunteered to take it on and will follow up with Keisha and Liza to organize the event.

## 13.) **Schedule Next Meeting & Other Business**

Chris asked for volunteers to promote the iNaturalist project for Greensboro. Emma and Betsy volunteered to take it on and will coordinate with Will to plan potential events like a Bio Blitz.

Will noted that the UVM Forestry Club could provide volunteers for future GCC events.

The next meeting is **May 16th, 2026 at 10:15 am** at the Greensboro Free Library.

14.) 12:21pm - **Adjourn**