



## Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg  
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### Meeting Minutes – August 9, 2016

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**Members Present:** Meg Handler, Bob Hyams, Shannon Kelly, Alison Lesure, Merrily Lovell, Bill Marks

**Members Absent:** no one

**Guests:** no one

1. **Call to order** at 7 p.m.
2. **Additions to Agenda:** Call from Mark LaBarr to Alison;
3. **Approval of Minutes from 7/26:** Discussion of Open Meeting Law compliance issues. Motion to approve minutes made by Alison. Seconded by Bill. Approved unanimously.
4. Alison reached out to Lenore and she would like the CC to contribute funds toward **Trail Maintenance** at Geprags. Bill thinks we should mow trails ourselves. Bill volunteers to do it. Bob will transport the mower. It only needs to be done about once a year. Based on Laura Lapierre's advice, perhaps we should no longer be mowing the fields, because of the wetlands. Perhaps we should still mow the field near the barn. Protection for the barn. Good for invasive control. Ideally, we should not mow until fall. We need to get estimates for the field. Alison will respond to Lenore and let her know that we will continue to mow at Geprags. Bill will also look into replacing the plank in the bridge.
5. **Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions:** Missy will always renew it for us. Bob will drop her a reminder. Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> – AVCC Summit. It is happening at Lake Morey. Registration fee should come out of the CC budget.
6. **Conservation Commission Roles and Responsibilities:** Definition of the term "management" as it pertains to Geprags. What does it mean to the CC and to the Town? Bill clarified the role: the CC will manage the park, but is ultimately subject to the oversight of the Select Board. There is a management plan in existence. First plan was made in 1992. It was revised in 1999. We have decision-making authority for park maintenance and management. The statute defines the scope of what the CC is authorized to do. We should revise the management plan for Geprags. There is a Strategic Plan developed in 2004 laying out possible areas for CC involvement. We might want to revise that as well. It might be useful to think in terms of Discretionary and Non-discretionary items. The CC has agreed upon defined roles moving forward: Chair: Shannon, Vice Chair: Merrily, Clerk and Treasurer: Meg.

7. **Geprags Management Plans:** Any plan should talk about the History, Natural History, Recreation etc. Bob suggested breaking things into management units, e.g. Upper Field, Wetlands, Woods etc. Once we identify the various places, we can work on enhancing them. For example, we might want to restore the wetland in the field. Shannon will pull things together to come up with a draft. And we can work on it at meetings, in small pieces.
8. **Mark LaBarr:** Sent email to Alison. He wanted to meet and discuss the warbler clause in the VGS agreement. Also sent update on the warblers. (They are at the park again this year.) He wanted to know more about the agreement with Vermont Gas. Wondering if the agreement still expected the Audubon to participate in warbler protection. Alison will write back to him. Shannon suggested we might want to do some wildlife surveys at Geprags. Perhaps we should look at reptiles and amphibians, for example.
9. **Geprags Park – Level of Compensation for Geprags:** Meg made a motion requesting that all easement compensation money received from VT Gas in exchange for the sale of the easement at Geprags Park be allocated to the Hinesburg Town Land Acquisition Fund. Alison seconded it. Discussion: purposes of the fund – preservation of open spaces and natural resources. 5 in favor, 1 opposed. Merrily’s Objection: Money should be put in trust specifically for Geprag’s Park.

10. **Other Business:** Summary of the PSB Hearing on August 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### 11. Nature Notes

**Next Meeting:** August 23, 2016

Meeting Adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meg