

STRAFFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

June 26, 2018

MINUTES

Present at the Morrill Education Building at 7 p.m. were commission members: Steve Faccio, Kate Root, Micki Colbeck, Mike Hebb, Chuck Sherman, Jared Jenisch, and Steve Willbanks, Chair.

- **Furnace Flats:** Mike has proposed the creation of a turnaround near the top before the beginning of the Town's trail to the top of Whitcomb Hill. The residents of the road have had recent vandalism and are reluctant to do anything that will increase traffic. Mike noted that a dead-end road with no place to turn around if someone takes it by accident is unusual; and that a turnaround can be created within the Town's 50-foot right away without trespassing. The residents are concerned it might amount to a parking lot; they want to reduce traffic on the road to improve their quality of living. The Selectboard has received a letter from the residents' attorney and has asked that work on the turnaround be suspended while they look into the matter.
- **The Ashley Property:** On Saturday July 7th at 4:00 pm there will be a tour of the Manning for the SCC.
- **Strafford resources and protected areas mapping:** Micki shared the current version of the map of Strafford she has developed, with layers for the various protected areas and areas of concern in the town that the SCC has collectively brainstormed. These layers will be used to limit sectors of land that might be given over to solar power; a minimum of 45 acres must be reserved for alternative energy infrastructure. Micki will continue to work on the map.
- **Trails:** The Town Forest orchid display is the most extensive yet. Turnout was good this year for the National Trail Day hike across Strafford. Mike noted the concentration of sundews on Town Forest trail.
- **Wetlands:** The first wetland visit of the year was conducted; eight people visited the Ordway Road wetland, owned by Sharon Lee. A rare sedge was found, among many other species.
- **The V2VT:** There was continuing discussion of the feasibility of a Village to Village Trail. VELCO doesn't object to the use of their power line corridor if landowner's also grant position. This version of the trail would leave the Ompompanoosuc/Justin Morrill Highway near the upper village and ascend a hill before descending back to the river

plain before connecting to an existing trail behind Huntington Farm that extends to Rte. 132 near the Catholic chapel. This trail would be easier to create, but would have the disadvantage of not accommodating bikers, and perhaps getting less use due to low visibility and a less direct route.

The next meeting will be July 24, 2018.