NEWBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

NEWBURY, VERMONT

7:00 pm Baldwin Library Wells River, Vt.

# AGENDA

November 11, 2014 - DRAFT Minutes

Members Present: Mike Thomas Jim Hill Stephanie Taylor Amy Norton

Visitors: Alice Allen, Ryegate Carol Stoll, Newbury

Mary Childs, White River Natural Resource Conservation District

Mike announced the fundraising campaign kickoff sponsored by the Cross Vermont Trail Association on November 22nd. The association is trying to raise money for a new foot and bicycle bridge across the Winooski River and extend the CVT from Montpelier into East Montpelier.

Stephanie informed the group about a discussion at the October meeting in Littleton of the Riverbend Subcommittee, Connecticut River Joint Commission. At that meeting Newbury resident and former subcommittee member, Scott Labun, told committee members about an approved and partially completed manure pit on the Gladstone farm located in the Connecticut River floodplain and the efforts of adjacent landowners and the town zoning administrator, Cher Monteith, to determine the town’s regulatory authority over the structure. Several state and federal agencies have been contacted regarding their jurisdiction. Scott presented the committee members with a memorandum of understanding between the VT Agency of Natural Resources and the VT Department of Agriculture, which delegates permitting authority of agriculture structures to the latter department. The MOU also states that if the structure is in the floodplain, the applicant and the Dept. of Agriculture must notify the town zoning administrator. At that meeting the committee members decided to write to the Dept. of Agriculture to express their concern that the terms of the MOU were not being followed and ask that the Dept. take greater care in identifying, reviewing and permitting agricultural structures in the floodplain.

Mary Childs spoke about the requirements for manure spreading and storage in Vermont and distributed a pamphlet, “Vermont Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Program” (April 2006.)

She also mentioned that the Gladstone Farm is categorized as a large farm, with 1200-1400 cows and that the Dept. of Agriculture must take soil samples every 3-5 years to ensure that manure loading rates are appropriate. Each farm must also have a nutrient management plan in effect.

The group agreed to draft a letter from NCC to Mr. Gladstone to express concern about agricultural structures in the floodplain and reports from Newbury residents (who contacted the VT Dept. of Agriculture) of chemical drift from overapplication of herbicide on the pumpkin fields adjacent to the Connecticut River.

Mike said that he would contact Scott Labun to obtain a brief timeline of the steps he has taken and the contacts made by the Newbury Zoning Administrator, as well as a list of agency persons involved in both the manure pit and the herbicide spraying concerns.

Stephanie agreed to send a draft letter to all of the participants at the meeting. It will be finalized at the December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM.

Next Meeting December 9th 7:00pm Baldwin Library Wells River, Vt.