

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Public Presentation of Natural Resources Inventory-May 3, 2018

Minutes Approved on-

Present: Valerie Germain, John Baybutt, Joseph MacGregor, and Thomas James

Guests: Jeffry Littleton- Moosewood Ecological

Co-Chair Valerie Germain called the Public Presentation of the Natural Resources Inventory to order at 6:39 p.m. Including the Conservation Commissioners, there were thirteen people in attendance. Valerie Germain introduced the Commissioners and Jeffry Littleton of Moosewood Ecological to those in attendance. Valerie Germain and John Baybutt introduced the process and purpose of the NRI. The Maps will be available for the public to view at the Town Hall.

In addition to the nine maps, the NRI will include a report with a narrative summary of the areas of focus and quantified data. The report will include recommendations for conservation focuses and suggestions for moving forward. Jeffry shared each of the maps that were created for the NRI with those in attendance and highlighted features of each of the maps. The following maps were focused on with greater depth:

- Groundwater Resources Map: the areas of the map with high yield aquifers with clean water that could be potential sites for Town water in the future were noted.
- Agricultural Resources Map: the data included shows the richness of the soils occurring naturally. It was noted that soils in some areas may have more nutrients and yield better growth than the map indicates if for example someone has worked the land. This information can inform the Town of the soils that are significant for farming and forestry growth.
- Conservation Lands Map: the map shows parcels in current use and conservation. This information can help to inform Boards of areas that should be considered for conservation.

Jeffry made the following suggestions:

- The NRI should be incorporated into the Master Plan and utilized in Town planning by the Town Boards
- A detailed conservation plan should be developed
- Initiate and support land protection effects
- Develop innovative land use techniques for zoning
- Active outreach to land owners and educate the community of the Town resources

The Public Presentation was opened to the public for questions and comments. Many of the questions focused on the importance of the groundwater resources map. Jeffry noted that the map can help inform the Town Boards in making decisions that may impact the protection of the aquifers. The map shows an area that could be a site for a Town well if the need were to arise. It is important that the area is protected from anything that may damage the groundwater resource.

The public also asked about the impact of gravel removal. Jeffry stated that gravel removal has the potential of affecting the aquifer if an area is over extracted; the main impact that occurs is disruption of the wildlife habitat.

Jeffry and those in attendance were thanked for coming to the Public Presentation. Time was given for the public to view the maps closely.

There being no other business at hand, the Public Presentation was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Karen Belcher
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary