

**Minutes of Albemarle County Natural Heritage Committee (NHC) Meeting  
May 21, 2020 – Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

Committee Members: Christine Putnam, Emily Luebke, Nancy Weiss, Lonnie Murray, Peggy Cornett, Michael Rodemeyer, Kennon Williams

Absent: N/A

Other Attendees: Kate Mallek, Sean Tubbs (PEC), Liz Palmer, Rod and Maggie Walker (Blue Ridge PRISM)

Staff: Kim Biasioli, Margaret Maliscewski, Carolyn Shaffer

There was a quorum of seven members present, and Christine called the meeting to order at 5:33. Visitors were welcomed. Introduction of Kim Biasioli, new Natural Resources Manager.

Lonnie moved approval of the minutes of the February 2020 meeting, and Michael seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7:0.

**Resolution:**

Christine read the resolution adopting procedures for public meetings under section 6 of Albemarle County's Ordinance to ensure the continuity of government during the COVID-19 disaster. Michael moved approval of the resolution, and Peggy seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7:0.

**2019 Annual Report:**

The group reviewed the updated goals for 2020 and made minor revisions. Discussion of prioritization of goals and workplan. Discussion on involvement in Comprehensive Planning effort, need for greenspace areas (Conservation Zones) dedicated in the Rural Area. Sean Tubbs (PEC) offered collaboration/mapping of wildlife crossings with PEC; supported involvement in comprehensive planning and possible improvements to zoning in Rural Areas. Lonnie moved to approve the Annual Report and Peggy seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7:0.

**Follow-ups:**

- Plant list for site plans update – Kim will coordinate feedback from NHC and other reviewers. Kim to send most current list with edits to the group.
- Biscuit Run – Nancy would still like to meet with Parks staff re: volunteers. Kim will facilitate a meeting.
- Lighting – discussion of uplighting, glass buildings, and impacts to wildlife.
- Turf fields – Christine and Emily met with several members of the Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee to formulate a letter to the BOS.
- County Website: Kim gave an update on the timeline and format of the new county website. The NHC information will be archived. After development of the website is complete, NHC will have opportunities to provide resources to the website.
- Important Site Visits and Updates:
  - Emily visited N. Fork of Rivanna (eagle nest present) and Ragged Mountain Natural Area (eagle nest present) – new site not on list.
  - Peggy visited Old Trail. Grove of dead ash trees along the river. Discussion of ash species declining, especially *F. nigra*. Possibility of identifying key sites for protection,

working with Parks and area tree stewards. VDOF cost share program and other public money may be available.

- Some difficulty in visiting sites, meeting with landowners due to the pandemic. Letters and phone calls to make landowner connections are still possible.

**New Business:**

- Discussion of prioritized workplan – June Meeting will be dedicated to reviewing the BWG founding principles, BAP goals, and starting a NHC prioritized workplan.
- Climate Action Plan: there will be a BOS work session in June and Kim will attend, provide an update.
- Christine talked about education goals of the BAP and how to accomplish them, tie into prioritized workplan.
- New avenues for education/outreach – Kim discussed Amail, social media options with communications specialist. NHC may submit resources or highlights to these outlets through Kim.

**Other Matters:**

- Emily acknowledged, thanked, and welcomed guests listening. Requested to ask them if they want to speak.
- Rod Walker, Blue Ridge Prism offered to collaborate on identifying projects in the County.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00. Next meeting date is June 18th.