

**Minutes of Albemarle County Natural Heritage Committee (NHC) Meeting  
February 4, 2021 – Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

Committee Members: Christine Putnam, Nancy Weiss, Peggy Cornett, Kate Mallek, Emily Luebke, Bruce Gatling-Austin, Leah Jung

Absent: Kennon Williams, Lonnie Murray, Michael Rodemeyer,

Other Attendees: Ruth Douglas, Rod Walker (BR Prism), Sterling Howell, Tom Olivie, Lacey Hughey

Staff: Kim Biasioli, Margaret Maliszewski, Carolyn Schaffer, Charles Rapp

There was a quorum of seven members present, and Christine called the meeting to order at 5:33.

Welcome to guests.

Emily moved approval of the agenda, Peggy seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.

Bruce moved approval of the minutes, Peggy seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.

**Q&A with Charles Rapp, Director of Planning**

- Policy Priorities – There is synergy between NHC objectives and projects in current and upcoming workplan; encourage working together to meet objectives.
  - Planning and Zoning Staff have been working on form-based code – Rio 29
  - Zoning Ordinance will be updated. Will include lighting ordinance.
  - Stream Health Initiative
  - Stormwater Facilities – FES, Engineering Dept.
  - Comprehensive Plan Update – multi-year approach
  - Solar Farms are a growing issue. Ordinance and guidelines to be developed.
  - Questions/discussion around development in Rural Areas. Density is lower in Rural Area. Clustering is better for natural resources conservation.
  - Wildlife Corridors/connecting greenspaces
  - TDR, Conservation subdivisions, zoning differentiation possible to consider with Comp Plan Update.
  - Questions/discussion about opportunities to educate landowners, provide informational materials with building permits. Starts with the planner, discussion with applicant, personal approach.
- Subcommittees and Workgroups
  - Subcommittees posing resource challenges, FOIA concerns, especially during pandemic with virtual only option for public.
  - 2 or more people doing a task assigned by the committee or the work of the committee constitute a public body. Ad hoc meeting could be fine.
  - NHC still needs clarity on this as it seems to conflict with FOIA requirements.
  - Meetings can be held; using a public link posted and minutes recorded, 3 business days prior to meeting to Carolyn.

## Follow-ups:

- Subcommittee Reports
  - Education Subcommittee: Education Subcommittee did not meet. Ideas discussed for webinar. Charlotte Humphris Plants Map project continuing; hopefully in the spring. Kim and Christine to present to Piedmont Virginia Bird Club March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - Policy Subcommittee: Policy Subcommittee did not meet.
  - Wildlife Corridors Subcommittee: No subcommittee meeting yet. Team of partners with NHC, VDOT, Wild Virginia, PEC came together to discuss Southern Albemarle project.
- Important Site Updates
  - Peggy will try to visit Tufton bald eagle site soon. No other site visits have occurred.
- Election of New Officers
  - Leah nominated Christine as the Chair, Emily seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.
  - Christine nominated Emily as Vice Chair, Leah seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.
- Workplan Review and Update
  - Key Action items prioritized. Lead committee members and action items updated.
  - Highest priorities:
    - Working in County parks, including organizing volunteers for invasives, inventories, and conservation mowing projects.
    - Education to landowners about conservation and cost share opportunities, particularly in Conservation Focus Areas.
    - Provide recommendations for Stream Health Initiative project.
    - Evaluate wildlife corridors in NW area, continue Southern Albemarle corridor project work, and working with VA Safe Wildlife Corridors Collaborative.
    - ACE Ordinance ranking update – biodiversity criteria
- Annual Report
  - **Action Item**: Committee will review and finalize report and plan to approve this at the March meeting.
- Hedgerow Report
  - NHC to organize a future trip with CUH.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30. Next meeting date is March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021.