

Minutes
Forest and Parks Commission
November 3, 2025
6:00 p.m. at the Chelsea Public Library

Present: Jen Chase, Susan Elder, Kate Willard, Pete Amber and Marty Gratz (via zoom).

1. The October minutes were approved as submitted.
2. Public Comments: A member of the public sent an email about the firs at the top of the North Common wishing that deciduous trees were planted instead of evergreens. Both Susan and Jen spoke to that person about the final choice; several deciduous trees were planted, and the evergreens planted could now be decorated for the Holidays, if desired. Pete has also received many positive comments as he worked within the Commons. Marty also noted she was unable to connect with Erik Anderson about efforts in the past to create a trail on the east side of the river to the Heath Field. Kate said she worked on this project in the past and efforts stopped due to it being on private land. The new owner of the property might be contacted to see if he is open to the idea.
3. The Pollinator Garden will need deer proofing this month. Pete will cut the stakes to a point and Susan and Arthur will put up deer fencing before the snow flies. Marty spoke to Rick Ackerman about the benches. Rick said there is room available for winter storage inside the old town garage.
4. Walkable Communities. Susan attended a Zoom meeting by "Walkable Communities" concerning making down towns more accessible. Co-sponsored by AARP Vermont, Vital Communities, Bugbee Senior Center, the program is led by America Walks. The class focused on making crosswalks and downtown areas more visible, safer, and welcoming to pedestrians, especially those folks using wheelchairs. The Town of Bethel just upgraded with a similar project of colorful crosswalks, better signage and the use of flowerbeds and other structures to be more visible (safer) to downtown pedestrians.
5. Tree Grants Updates. Pete responded to Darren Schibler of the Chitt. Cty. Regional Planning Comm. with an update of work done thus far.
6. Commons work. Jen inquired about donation of funds for the upgrade of work planned for the commons. The funds will have to be run through the town coffers and will have to go out to bid in the usual process.
7. Town Forest UVT Alliance. Still no response from Sean Ogle. Kate received a letter about a trail work meeting this coming Sunday in Vershire. This meeting may help conversations about efforts to connect our Town Forest with the Riverdell trails. Kate believes this may connect with the Hemenway property. Susan and Kate will attend and report back.
8. The next meeting will be Monday, December 1, 2025 at 6:00
9. Adjourned at 6:46 p.m.