



Town of Monkton  
Town Forest Committee

P.O. Box 12  
Monkton, VT. 05469-0012

Presentation Notes

September 03, 2019, 6:30 pm

This was a Planning Commission meeting; the official minutes from this meeting come from the Planning Commission. These notes are provided for the Town Forest Committee members unable to attend this special informative meeting.

Guest speaker Monica Przyperhart, Vermont Fish and Wildlife, ANR  
Topic: Forest Fragmentation

Presentation on implementing Act 171  
Land use to address forest fragmentation

Act 171 - maintain and improve blocks and habitat connectors  
Without data, how do we impose on landowners? - PC member question

Observed: town planning process - drafting of the new town plan  
Looking for approval as current Monkton Town Plan is expired; PC would like to add some of what is learned now  
Monica - Monkton has a lot of pieces in place, be sure rest is included. For example, the riparian corridors

Act 171 - big bill. Mostly forests, but has land use planning  
Town and regional plans need to indicate those areas that are important as forest blocks and habitat connectors  
Plan for land development in those areas to minimize forest fragmentation and promote the health, viability, and ecological function of forests  
ANR guidance document  
[https://anr.vermont.gov/Planning/Forest\\_Blocks\\_And\\_Habitat\\_Connectors](https://anr.vermont.gov/Planning/Forest_Blocks_And_Habitat_Connectors)

Fragmentation isn't about the amount, but the pattern of forests. Need to connect in meaningful ways and not have "splotches" everywhere.

BioFinder Tool - mappings with layers to show various ecosystems and land features  
<https://anr.vermont.gov/maps/biofinder/>

Town Plan > Select Board > Planning Commission > DRB  
Monkton is a complicated place, according to Monica's experience, based on data sets

Walked through some BioFinder illustrations -  
General data set. Vermont conservation design.

Those identified by the state as priorities to thrive, even as climate changes  
Green highest priority  
Monkton in better ecological shape than surrounding towns

How to help

- Support working forests and their use as such
- Sub data

Areas of natural cover - forest / habitat blocks min 20 acres no roads or development  
Bigger forest means more species, if a singular block  
Interior forest layer prioritizes forest big blocks

Goal: maintain large forest blocks. How?

- Keep development to edges
- Limits to driveway length
- Encourage estate planning, building envelopes, clearing standards
- Adopt or evaluate subdivision regulations
- Consider a conservation, forest, or overlay district

Connectivity blocks layer

Could be a little more fragmented, but important as a connector

Physical landscape diversity blocks

- Change in climate
- Hard to predict where species will move
- Slope and aspect, rock, promotes diversity, allows for physical landscape diversity
- Keep it in mind to try to include when evaluating forest and connectivity blocks

Use local data and local knowledge!!!

Consider community values!!

Simplify! Keep it simple in the town plan

Surface waters and riparian areas

Maintain and enhance vegetation along streams and rivers

Maintain and enhance crossing structures

Upgrade culverts and bridges to vagrants standards with bank and at grade bottom

- Can be used by all kinds of creatures

Wildlife road crossings

Curb cut standards, overlay district, encourage landowners to maintain vegetation, encourage land conservation,...

Community values mapping

Survey, challenge is that you'll get a list but how do they overlap?

Or are they valued in different locations  
If you want an event, Monica can help facilitate that

What towns have done this well? Hard to say because the landscape varies  
Maybe Shrewsbury, Hartford  
But neither is quite like Monkton in terms of the complexity of the BioFinder data