

1 Essex Conservation and Trails Committee (CTC)

2 Regular Meeting Minutes

3 81 Main St. Essex Jct., VT 05452

4 March 10, 2026

5 *Draft meeting minutes prepared by Erin De Vries, submitted on March 21, 2026*

6 **Attendees:**

7 **Members present:** Ken Signerello (Chair), Bino Cummings (Vice Chair), Erin De Vries
8 (Clerk), Duane Millar Barlow, Paul Davis, Carrie Macfarlane, Morgan Kirk, Steve Dowd,
9 Sarah Salatino

10 **Staff Present:** Hans Nedde

11 **1. Call to Order 6:00 PM**

12 Chair Ken Signerello called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

13 **2. Agenda Additions/Changes**

14 Added update on Environmental Leadership Training attended by Carrie and Morgan; Moved
15 Business Item 6b up to 6a, and 6a down to 6b; Added Spring Clean-up Update after Arbor Day
16 Celebration.

17
18 Motion: Moved by Paul Davis. Seconded by Bino Cummings. Passed 7-0-0.

19 **3. Approve Agenda**

20 Approved.

21 **4. Approve Minutes**

22 **Action Item:** The minutes from the February 10, 2026 meeting were presented for approval.
23 There were no changes to the meeting minutes.

24 **Motion:** Moved by Bino Cummings. Seconded by Steve Dowd. Passed 5-0-4.

25 **5. Public to be Heard**

26 None.

27 **6. Business Items**

28 **a. Trail Caretakers Program Interviews**

- 29 a. Committee members interviewed applicants to the volunteer Trail
30 Caretakers Program. Applicants interviewed included Mike Spaeder, Michael
31 Faber, Barton Bechard, James Plouffe, Brian Cusco, Charles Masenas,
32 Michael Gordon, Denyse Triola, Cindy & John Dowman.
- 33 b. Committee members and applicants got to know each other and the trails
34 they would like to maintain as part of the Trail Caretakers Program.
- 35 c. Discussed program capacity and volunteer coordination with Hans Nedde

36 **Motion:** Erin De Vries moved to confirm the 10 members of the public
37 interviewed for the Trail Caretakers Program. Seconded by Morgan Kirk. Passed
38 8-0-0.

39 **b. Advise DRB on Development Applications**

- 40 d. 152 Old State Road
41 i. No Discussion.
- 42 e. 70 & 74 Essex Way
43 i. Discussed possible recommendations and memo to DRB on
44 September 9, 2025.
45 ii. Sharon Zukowski, recommended that any memo/recommendations
46 from the Essex CTC could be posted on the CTC webpage along
47 with the meeting minutes or DRB webpage. This would be in
48 addition to the staff report to the DRB.

49
50 **Motion:** Recommend that the Vermont Trails Standards referenced in the
51 September 9th be applied to this project. Steve Dowd motioned. Seconded by
52 Sarah Salatino. Approved 9-0.

53
54 **c. Approve Arbor Day Celebration (location, plans, and Chuck Vile Memorial)**

- 55 iii. Discussed location and type of tree for Arbor Day Celebration.
56 Decided on planting a tree in honor of Chuck Vile, recently
57 deceased former Tree Warden of Essex.
- 58 iv. Discussed who could help with tree planting - young children or
59 Essex High School students.
- 60 v. Discussed partnering with Essex Junction Arbor Day tree
61 committee to plant a tree or two with Essex Junction at the Tree
62 Farm.
- 63 vi. Hans and Ken will follow up on next steps for the exact location.
64 Sarah will work with Horsford and Ken will ensure the Town
65 Manager "accepts" the grant and tree for the Arbor Day celebration.
66 Steve will coordinate with Essex High School to bring students to

67 help with the tree planting and members of Chuck's family to the
68 celebration.

69
70 **Motion:** Motioned for the Town of Essex to celebrate Arbor Day at the
71 Tree Farm and plant a tree in honor of Chuck Vile, Town of Essex Tree
72 Warden. Sarah Salatino motioned. Seconded by Steve Dowd. Approved
73 9-0.

74
75 **d. Spring Indian Brook Clean-up**

76 vii. Paul presented potential spring clean up dates to the Committee.

77
78 **Motion:** Paul Davis motioned to set the clean up date for Saturday, May
79 16, 2026. Seconded by Bino Cummings.

80
81 **e. Tree Nursery Update**

82 viii. Steve provided an update on the tree nursery. Sarah has been a
83 great support. Harlan is spearheading the effort through the Town
84 Parks and Recreation. Harlan would like to secure funding and
85 plans for the tree nursery this year and get up and running Spring
86 2027.

87
88 **f. Tree Warden Vacancy**

89 ix. Discussed the tree warden position and what the job entails.

90 x. Hans will inquire with the Town on Tree Warden vacancy.

91
92 **g. Environmental Leadership Training (ELT)**

93 xi. Carrie and Morgan discussed what they learned from the training
94 held by Vermont Fish & Wildlife. Three training sessions per unit
95 with useful information about one and other's leadership styles.

96 xii. Morgan will send out the leadership handouts.

97 **7. Committee Announcements**

- 98
 - Steve is grateful for Ken's chairmanship!
 - Sarah signed up for the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Opening Meeting Law training. Essex CTC members can become members of VLCT
 - Erin announced that Vermont's draft Conservation Plan is open for public comments which are due March 31, 2026.

103
104 **8. Adjourn**

106 **Motion:** Motion to adjourn made by Bino Cummings. Seconded by Paul Davis.
107 Approved 9-0.

108 March 10th meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm

109 **Meeting recording:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WIJd4WhZUA>

110 **Special Meeting** scheduled for March 24, 2026 at 6pm.

111 **Next Regular Meeting** scheduled for March 14, 2026 at 6pm.