

Conservation Commission Minutes

March 23, 2015

Approved April 27, 2015

Present: Farley Brown; Secretary, June Cook; Chair, Joe Houston; Treasurer, Diane Morgan; Leah Szafranski; Elinor Osborn

Welcome: Leah was welcomed as a new member of the commission.

Minutes: Minutes from January 26, 2015, meeting were approved as presented. Notes from February 23, 2015, were acknowledged. The February meeting lacked a quorum, no actions were taken. Discussion centered on information relative to events and schedule for town plan rewrite.

Black River Project Update: Joe reported Steve (Wright) was having problems contacting Fish & Wildlife regarding Little Hosmer area infestation of knotweed.

Farley reported the Trees for Streams Planting on April 22 was moved to April 25 at 8:30 a.m., rain or shine. Question of ground being frozen; some areas may be, but others, not. Fifteen (15) people is a goal for the work party to plant 150 trees. She spoke to Anne Ingerson about volunteers. The spillover date is April 26.

Since the Academy is not in session, fewer students may be around to help unless coming on their own. Front Porch Forum and school bulletin will be used to notify community, along with press releases to Gazette and Chronicle. Farley will also try contacting CA science teacher with possibility of community credit can be given for students' planting trees.

Leah felt one person could plant about 4 trees an hour, allowing time for instruction. The trees are 18 inches to 48 inches in height. Varieties include balsam fir, white pine, chokecherry, hazel nut. Plans are to plant shrubs along the bank and white pine on outer boundary. Leah will flag places and stressed importance of getting trees into the ground as soon as possible.

Diane will take charge of getting snacks and cider for work party.

Joe will provide tools and monitor parking. People may park at town garage as long as doors aren't blocked at town garage or fire station.

Farley indicated the Trees for Streams planting on the Association of Conservation Commission website has attracted attention, and she has received comments. Others are curious as to what Craftsbury is doing.

Conservation Fund: Discussion centered on conservation fund, if in existence. Tote bags and tee-shirts were sold in the past. June will check with Yvette to decipher conservation funds. She reported Susie (Houston) suggested the potential of using Good Neighbor Fund to establish a special conservation fund for future projects. Susie made the suggestion at March 11 selectboard meeting.

Town Plan: The Conservation Commission is responsible for the Natural Heritage section which is one of the longest in the Town Plan. The question of how to condense was discussed. It should be an inventory of the community and can be a narrative. The key part is Objectives and Goals. The commission working with other organization was important as an objective and that people of all ages were working on the watershed issues.

Joe – working on Conservation Commission and Introduction sections

Farley – working of Geology and Groundwater, Watersheds; Wetlands

Diane – working on Forestland and The Use Value Appraisal Program.

Conservation of both forest/ag land and current-use value program were discussed. Diane raised the concern that waterfalls and degradation was not addressed. Inventory of preserved land versus conserved land would be part of natural heritage and how many acres are conserved/preserved in each category. Conserved land allows logging, sugaring, and forestry practices; preserved land is a hands-off approach.

Leah --Significant Natural Communities and Species. Elinor reported she has lists. They will be working together on this section.

Steve – Wildlife Habitat

Elinor – Invasive Species

June – State Lands

Voted 5-0 (June abstained) to reimburse June \$10 for laminating sign and logo.

Voted 6-0 to renew membership in the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions and send \$50 for renewal. The Association is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

The commission will meet on April 27, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. The Trees for Streams Work Party will be held on April 25, 2015 at 8:30 a.m., rain or shine. April 26 will be a spillover date.

Respectfully submitted,

June Pichel Cook, Secretary