

DRAFT – CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
April 23, 2018
Craftsbury Town Hall

PRESENT: Farley Brown, June Cook, Susie Houston, Diane Morgan, Elinor Osborn, Steve Wright

ABSENT: John Brodhead, Joe Houston, Carol Maroni, Emily Thompson

Treasurer Diane Morgan called meeting to order.

MINUTES: February 26, 2018 minutes approved.

TREASURER’S REPORT: None

AVCC MEMBERSHIP: Moved, seconded, and voted to authorize expenditure of \$50 from Conservation Commission account for membership in the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions and to maintain membership each year. Diane will follow up with Joe to forward AVCC notice and materials. Farley reported she receives notices from AVCC and will forward information to entire commission.

KNOTWEED UPDATE: Elinor reported on three possible methods to control: (1) Smothering – Cut now in Spring, let regrow a bit, smother in June; use very thick layers of cover material. (2) Cut and Inject: Use chemical; most effective in September when nutrients drawn into roots; plant has to be mature and large. (3) Cutting – Not effective.

Smothering: Has to be done in the Spring; have to constantly police edges and pull new growth; smother with newspapers, cardboard, and rocks on top; disposal of stems; cover is unsightly; not good on steep banks. Limited success.

Cut and Inject: Rodeo/glyphosate (approved for riparian areas); has to be done in September; time consuming as stems must be counted to avoid overuse of chemical within one area; time consuming to cut stems, fill syringes, inject, and keep track of what’s been injected; disposal of stems; need licensed applicator on site but volunteers may help with process. EPA says glyphosate is unlikely to cause cancer. If not doing foliar spraying, chemical isn’t airborne. A measured amount of chemical is used, binds with the soil, doesn’t migrate from roots, and has short half life.

Cutting: Must be done constantly all summer and for years. If in a lawn, can be mowed short; disposal of stems. Least effective and most time consuming.

Knotweed Education: Disseminate information about knotweed and advertise demo project. Knotweed crowds out native plants creating a monoculture; has no value to wildlife except honey bees that gather nectar; bees need nectar all summer long, not only in short period of knotweed blossoms; not good in preventing stream bank soil

erosion; roots don't hold soil and break off easily, growing new plants downstream; spreads by very deep roots, as deep as 6 feet, not by seed. Impossible to dig without deep excavation. Devalues land.

Elinor reported on two legislative mandates in Great Britain-- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, and Environmental Protection Act, 1990. It is an offence to plant or cause the species to grow in the wild. Allowing Japanese knotweed to spread from landowner's property could make you liable to third party litigation and/or civil prosecution. Not disposing of knotweed in keeping with EPA Code Practice of 2006 could result in spreading knotweed and breaking the law. Also, one cannot sell property there if it has knotweed on it.

Elinor spoke with Steve Marckres, Road Foreman, and he had no problem to wait until September to cut knotweed in Mill Village. Place identified as being in front of and across the road from Beryl Sweatt's. There is a gap in the knotweed where road crew had pushed dirt over the bank.

Elinor spoke with Marcus Bradley, consulting forester, in Waitsfield. Foliar spraying was planned but not done. General society there decided against herbicide use.

Meeting with Jon Kart of DEC. John, Elinor, and June met with Kart and discussed project in which he was involved in Richmond. Separate notes to be attached.

Goal of Knotweed Control Demonstration Project is to show the easiest and quickest way to control knotweed. Signage needed. Suggested location: TH19 where Mill Village Rd. meets Carolyn Ryan's driveway, across from Little Hosmer outlet. Farley reported she has spoken to Beryl who was okay with project.

Knotweed Control Demonstration Sub-Committee needs to set goals and make recommendation as to preferred control method and project Commission involvement in Years 1, 2, 3. We need everyone present at the May meeting so we can make these decisions and move ahead.

ANTIQUES & UNIQUES FUNDRAISING: Susie reported Anne-Marie Keppel is seeking volunteers to help, not only on Saturday (day of market), but need help Thursday and Friday before festival. Volunteers needed for a multitude of tasks. Last year, Susie and Ned donated their volunteer hours to the Conservation Fund. Need to get word out that Craftsbury Conservation Fund is a new option for volunteer hour donations.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE DISPLAY: Idea is to present display of photographs, showing Craftsbury landscape from earliest times to the present. The display would be a permanent collection. Farley noted the Planning Commission could help Historical Society to spearhead the project. Suggested seeking help from Land Task Force group as well.

LITTLE HOSMER BOAT LAUNCH: Diane continued email correspondence with Josh Mulholland about monitoring the usage of Little Hosmer by boaters, and the type of information needed for a future grant application. Names not needed; important information needed - day and time; boat type; town and/or state of residence. If a greeter program is implemented, good to know how much usage from town residents, as well as, people from other places and when the most usage occurs. Mulholland authorized attaching sign-up to existing milfoil information sign and, therefore, would not need to involve Fish & Wildlife.

Discussion centered on how specific should signage be re Conservation Commission monitoring lake usage. Consensus was there is no need to be specific but urge people to sign in. Diane reported that Ross is willing to make a box with drop-down lid for sign-up's; need "write-in-the-rain" copy paper.

Moved, seconded, and voted to authorize Diane to spend up to \$30 for necessary supplies for Little Hosmer Boater Sign-In box. Diane will investigate recycled materials. Sign-up box needed primarily from middle of May to first week in November or the end of waterfowl hunting season.

CRAFTSBURY CONSERVATION FUND: The sub-committee has defined the mission. Work has to be done on the details of the Fund's operation. **Need for sub-committee to meet and report at next meeting.** Guidelines to be established: (1) What is the process to follow if someone wants money for a project; (2) What are the parameters/regulations to be used to consider projects; (3) What are the criteria for accepting/expending funds; (4) How is benefit to town defined. Conservation Commission makes recommendations to Select Board; Select Board is ultimate decision maker on accepting funds and making expenditures from Fund.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 28, at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall. Discussion on date being Memorial Day week-end and possibly changing meeting date.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

June Pichel Cook, Secretary
April 29, 2018