

APPROVED
Conservation Commission Minutes
April 27,2015

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

Absent: John Bailey, Rhoda Sweatt, Steve Wright, Susie Houston – Select Board liaison

Minutes: Minutes of March 23, 2015 were approved as corrected.

Trees for Stream Project: Farley reported the tree planting was a great success with 27 people showing up; work was completed in about 2 ½ hours by 10:30 a.m. More work could be done to forestall bank erosion by planting willows. Leah explained a multi-tier approach would be planting willows that are young and vigorous. They grow quickly and help mitigate erosion.

Farley said the next step could be applying for a Ecological Restoration Program grant for area from Young Bridge to where Whitney Brook meets Black River at Old Atwood Farm. She wouldn't be able to walk it until July. She had been contacted by Pete Johnson and his wife, who are interested to be involved in projects.

Discussion on removing honeysuckle which chokes out native species, i.e., choke cherry. Honey suckle isn't as nutritious as choke cherry and creates easy access for predators when birds are nesting. The honeysuckle could be cut back until the willows take over.

Knotweed: Diane reported on feedback came from the Hosmer Pond newsletter. Some residents are interested to help remove knotweed. The consensus was as more people pay attention to knotweed, an event could be organized, similar to the tree planting event.

Joe suggested the commission can't address every issue that comes up but help to educate landowners. Having an educational workshop on knotweed, possibly starting at library or property in Mill Village, then followed by a hands-on session would be a good approach. Discussed an event with explanation of options and live demonstrations -- cutting, pulling, herbicides – and follow-up with hands-on work.

Potential would be setting up event to be organized by residents: Doing initial field work, have meeting outdoors, and work on area close to Mill Village center. Have Rose Paul explain knotweed and eradication, followed by hands-on. Elinor explained her attempts at eradication – pulling, digging, and chemicals. There are syringes with automatic reloads, reloading and other plunger devices.

Potential dates: June 13 or 20, mid-morning 10 a.m. to noon. Possible resident contacts: Elinor contact Brian McChesney; Diane contact Eva Dannenburg; Joe contact Carolyn Ryan; Farley conact Linda Ramsdell. Leah contact Rose Paul first. Wait until Paul has been contacted. Leah indicated she could talk about the knotweed eradication if Paul weren't available.

Town Plan Survey: Farley distributed the proposed survey the Planning Commission has drafted. Survey would be available electronically through Survey Monkey or through NVDA. Need people's e-mail addresses; possibly, Front Porch Forum???

Potential questions to be asked by commission:

Do you support creation of a Conservation Commission Fund that would allow the town to purchase and protect sensitive parcels?

If a Conservation Commission Fund were established, what would your priorities be as to what should be conserved?

(Comment) Please list environmental topics in Craftsbury that are important to you.

Do you think the Conservation Commission meets the needs of the town?

(Comment) Are there environmental topics in the Town of Craftsbury that concern you?

The commission will meet Tuesday, May 26, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. Meeting moved due to Memorial Day.

Submitted by June Pichel Cook
May 18, 2015;