

APPROVED CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
October 23, 2017

PRESENT: Joe Houston, John Brodhead, Diane Morgan, Elinor Osborn, Steve Wright, June Cook

ABSENT: Farley Brown, Emily Diaz, Susie Houston (Sel. Bd. Liaison), Carol Maroni

MEETING/COMMISSION FUNCTION: Draft minutes should be posted within 5 days. June will try to meet that deadline. Members should try to respond as soon as possible regarding corrections, erroneous information, or clarifications.

If not able to attend a meeting, please let chair know as early as feasible. Important for a quorum to be established.

Please be cognizant of time frame when wrapping up a meeting. Other Business section is important and should not be discouraged. Keeping within a time frame keeps discussion meaningful and more productive.

Communications via e-mail pertaining to a question or issue should be directed to Joe. Joe will respond individually; however, don't hesitate to resend if a response wasn't received. Joe will determine if issue should be aired by whole commission and discussed at next meeting.

MINUTES: July 23, 2017 minutes were approved as corrected. September 25, 2017 minutes were approved as corrected.

CONSERVATION FUND SUB-COMMITTEE: Joe reported the sub-committee (Joe, Elinor, and Carol) will be meeting in a week or so. He has looked at some information and is starting that research. Expects to have something more substantive for the next meeting.

ATV UPDATE: Joe attended the select board meeting in early October to discuss warning signage being placed on roadsides where ATVs are leaving the road to enter the river. Two sites were cited: Hatchbrook Road and Collinsville/Eden Mountain Road. The select board were in full agreement and asked that potential language be worked out. Joe and Carol will work on the language and have had some advice from Amy Gamble at VTrans. When wording is finalized, it will be given to Road Foreman Steve Marckres. Signs will be made and installed.

Joe confirmed the only roads open to ATVs are Hatchbrook and Collinsville/Eden Mountain Road to give trail connectivity. More pressure is on the select board to open more roads as ATVs can't get to center of village for gas. ATV rider numbers are increasing. People are turning to ATVs as a form of recreation. To legally ride on a road, the ATV must be registered and rider is supposed to have a VASA pass,

similar to snowmobilers and VAST. It is illegal to ride on a state road unless crossing one side to the other. Riders can be ticketed if driving on a road illegally.

At this point, the conservation commission has not taken a position on ATVs. Future discussion possible if it comes before the select board: safety issues, destruction of property, riding illegally on roads.

KNOTWEED SITE DEMONSTRATION: Elinor reported she has not been able to reach the person in Windham about their demonstration project. William Eldridge, who is in charge of small parcels of state land, i.e., Little Hosmer Pond parcel, referred her to Pete Emerson at Fish & Wildlife. The question of the parcel's boundaries can be verified by town maps. Demonstration project ideally should cover removal to preventing regrowth, be visible, and well publicized. To be effective, people are informed throughout the process.

A good project would require an explanation of the process, comparison of manual vs herbicide control, and hours required by each method to achieve results. Pictures of before and after, using each method, would be meaningful and educational.

Little Hosmer, town garage, school site were discussed. Each site has parameters as to visibility and closeness to marsh, river, or lake. If herbicides are used, person applying herbicide must be licensed. If applicator is not the property owner, permission from property owner is required.

Elinor will follow up: Research town maps to determine boundaries, keep trying to reach person in Windham, and try to contact Pete Emerson.

MILFOIL GREETER PROGRAM: Diane reported on her research. She received information from Josh Mulhollem of Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Watershed Management Division. He indicated the greeter program is successful as more intercepts of milfoil have been documented. Grant money is available; grant application is due in February. The grant pays 75 percent; town must pay 25% by in-kind labor, volunteer services, or cash expenditures from non-state source.

Applicant must be a municipality. Criteria include managing a new manifestation; controlling or preventing further spreading; and maintenance. Information required is extensive, i.e., lake or waterbody usage, timelines, projected tasks. Town must have insurance, including workmen's compensation. Greeter would be town employee. Mulhollem is willing to help so we could ask him to come to a meeting.

Discussion centered on the usage by boaters on Little Hosmer. Boat trailers and propellers on motor boats are ways milfoil enters a waterbody; however, milfoil is able to "hitch a ride" on anything. If milfoil attaches to smooth sides of canoes or kayaks was a question. Would town be committed to continuing greeter program

after grant? Studying boat traffic could be done anecdotally. Elinor indicated she would try noting it each time driving by.

OTHER BUSINESS: Joe will attend a select board meeting on November 14. The select board has asked all committee chairs to share what they are doing or projects. If anyone has a specific topic he/she wants Joe to put forward, please contact him.

The Northern River Land Trust will hold a reception on Saturday, October 28, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., in the Gould Building in Hardwick. Susan Sawyer will present her Natural Heritage book project which covers the Craftsbury/Greensboro/Hardwick area. The Commission donated \$50 toward the project and is listed as a contributor. The book contains Elinor's beautiful photography.

Whether or not contributions to the Craftsbury Conservation Commission Fund are tax deductible was raised. Joe reported contributions were as it is a municipality; however, the sub-committee will confirm explicitly.

The commission's next meeting has been moved one week. It will meet on November 20, 2017, (3rd Monday in November) at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Submitted by June Pichel Cook, Secretary