

TOWN OF MARLBORO
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, November 27th, 2017, 6:30 PM
Town Office, South Road

MINUTES

Present: Ashley Bies, Pieter van Loon, Mike Percel, Adam Gebb, Dante Corsano, Jaime Tanner, Jeremiah Wallach, Kevin Kennedy, Daniel Medeiros

- Review and approve minutes from last meeting (09~Oct~17).
October 9 minutes approved.

- Welcome and integrate new, prospective and current Conservation Commission members, and community members interested to consistently participate in and assist with CC work.

- Review current and prospective CC initiatives, including:

--Wildlife monitoring and movement conservation (through outreach, zoning, or creating an opt-in easement possibility)

Reviewed some of the background of the wildlife crossings project. Pieter described how the planning commission decided that the wildlife crossing issue was controversial enough that they decided to remove it from the proposed zoning regulations to increase the likelihood that the regulations will be passed. It was agreed to table further discussion of the wildlife crossings issue (with the exception of scheduling field work to identify them) to a future date.

Discussed best ways to approach continuing researching road crossings this winter. The emphasis would be on helping the CC do something fun. CC members can invite people they know would be open and interested to participate.

Adam proposed educating people on the potential value (to the environment and property owners' taxes together with federal tax deduction) of considering the option to put a conservation easement on their property and then re-appraising it, which can be readily assessed in advance based on the new State law governing the property appraisal process. He's going to get more information from the VNRC about it.

Adam recommended that we consider collaborating with Newfane on maintaining wildlife population connections between the National Forest and our two towns.

--Invasive species monitoring and control

Possibly create a map that can be filled in from roadside surveys of invasive species areas.

Pieter said that the state is going to require that towns have a means of addressing knotweed in their emergency management plans.

Adam said that there are a half dozen key places in town that could be monitored for knotweed propagation.

Ashley said that Carol Johnson found a UNH publication indicating that roadside mowing can increase the spread of knotweed; CC is waiting to hear back from Windham Regional Commission on how we might coordinate with local and state transportation organizations to more carefully manage this concern around existing roadside knotweed patches.

- Facilitating public discussion and shaping of future municipal conservation possibilities,
- Welcoming and organizing public participation in all CC endeavors and expanding the membership and diversity of the CC,
- Presenting the context (from ecoregion to local) of municipal conservation possibilities to the public;
- Any other potential initiatives we may wish to consider.

- Consider whether to request budget for CC expenses, potentially including: Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions membership, AVCC annual conference registration, Community Wildlife Program trainings, Mileage reimbursement for travel to above events, Supplies for wildlife monitoring.

Adam suggested that the CC ask for \$900 to cover event organizing and speaker costs that could be used to educate and garner the support of the public. Pieter suggested Ashley and Adam come up with a specific budget and have it ready for the next CC meeting (December 11) so it can be presented at the following Selectboard meeting (December 14).

- Update on the Green River Watershed Alliance, including a request for CC input and aid in soliciting input at large in Marlboro.

GRWA participated in the granting program's first inter-Watershed Alliance organizational meeting focussing on communication and outreach, GRWA is in the process of drafting a mission statement and reaching out to receive input and ideas from residents of the three towns. Any input on values of Green River or concerns about Green River would be welcome.

- Consider whether the regular 2nd Mondays CC meeting date is workable for all who wish to be involved: Good for everybody.
- Organize minutes taking for future meetings: Mike will take minutes at the next meeting
- Next meeting: December 11 at 6:30.