

TOWN OF MARLBORO
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, April 9th, 2018, 7:00 PM
Town Office, South Road
MINUTES

Present: Ashley Bies, Dante Corsano, Mike Purcell, Jaime Tanner, Kevin Kennedy

- Review and approve minutes from meetings on March 12 and also Feb 12, 2018. Revised versions from earlier today approved.
- Creation of scheduling website for various town commissions in the area. Dummerston CC is looking for support to pursue a grant to develop a scheduling website that could be used for scheduling conservation events, so that dates don't overlap and organizations can be more collaborative in our region. MCC supports idea, but wonders if this need could be addressed by existing online applications, such as Google Calendar.
- Membership in Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions. Ashley asked if there's interest in allocating some of our joint CC~PC Marlboro budget for membership in the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions, as we had indicated in our budget proposal. Would allow us to apply for grants, get a discount to attend annual conference, network, access behind their conservation success story payway, etc. Commission voted yes.
- Regional CC meeting in Putney. Mike reported on the regional CC gathering at the new Putney firehouse. Mostly attended by people from Putney and Dummerston. Some discussion of knotweed eradication. One recommendation: keep cutting it every time it grows back, on the scale of weeks consistently throughout the growing season. One topic discussed was how to attract younger people to CCs.
- Update on potential consultation with Marlboro College on the siting of a potential major ski trail clearing project with respect to wildlife connectivity habitat. There will be a site visit to discuss potential trail siting this Thursday, April 12, at Marlboro College at 9 a.m. at the Outdoor Program building. The college president will be there, as well as students involved in initiating the trail project and the Outdoor Program director. The CC will tour the proposed trail route and offer ideas and feedback. We reviewed maps and satellite imagery of the area of the proposed trail. Jaime and anyone else from the CC who can attend will represent our concern for the sensitivity of area in the vicinity of the bend of South Rd. and its junction with Lucier Rd. (in terms of its ecoregion~ to local forest block~scale habitat connectivity context in Marlboro) and report back at our May meeting.
- Report on potential nonchemical knotweed control method based around marketing medicinal content of roots, which may focus on riparian areas away from roads.

Stephen Dotson has been exploring the possibility of combining the use of heavy equipment for knotweed root removal with finding a medicinal market for the roots to help reduce the cost of this control method. He met with Ashley to discuss the possibility of finding a test site in Marlboro or further South along the Green River, but for now his partner in developing the method wants to focus this work closer where his equipment is based. If we can identify some more remote knotweed patches then Stephen may at least be interested to include Marlboro in soil testing to figure out how far a patch needs to be from major or minor roads to be appropriate for medicinal use, and they may eventually consider exploring further treatment experimentation in our Town or watershed as well.

- Consider potential invasive species monitoring and potential facilitation of control consideration.

Dante suggested focusing on sensitive waterways.

Jaime suggested mapping knotweed stands and distributing fliers to landowners with pointers on eradicating it. She said she knows some Marlboro College students who might be interested in doing mapping.

Dante recommended making summer meetings work meetings for inventory and mapping, starting earlier and continuing to dark out in the field.

- Report on recent wildlife connectivity habitat monitoring progress.
Reviewed Ashley's documentation of wildlife movement patterns from this Winter, and began considering implications for CC identification of important wildlife connectivity habitat in Town.

- Update on outreach to explore collaboration with nearby Towns within the MA~Green Mountain habitat linkage area of SE Vermont.

Wardsboro's Planning Commission is interested to visit our May 14th MCC meeting to review the conservation context and discuss potential collaboration between Towns to explore how we may be able to maintain habitat connections from the Green Mountains to the MA border in SE VT.

Dover's CC will see if they can join in that meeting as well.

Stratton's PC will discuss whether they would like to be part of this collaborative process at their May 4th meeting.

Newfane's CC meets this Thursday and Ashley will visit them at 8pm to provide a brief review of the conservation context the MCC has been looking at and invite their collaboration in future.

Ashley will reach out to Halifax and Guilford as well, through Green River Watershed Alliance connections, now that connections to our North are forming.

- Discuss, nominate and elect CC Chair and Vice Chair for 2018
Chair: Ashley Bies elected
Vice Chair: Jaime Tanner elected

- Organize Minutes taking for future meetings.
Pieter van Loon will take minutes at the next meeting.
- Meeting adjourned, 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kevin Kennedy.