

HARDWICK CONSERVATION COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES
AUGUST 20, 2019

Present: Judy Bellairs, Nicole Davignon, Ken Davis, Renaud Demers, Rachel Kane, Ben Pougner, Judith Ruskin, Jerry Schneider, Norma Wiesen

Guest: Lucian Avery

Minutes from last meeting approved.

Reports from Committees:

River Committee: Discussed a plan for kayaking the Lamoille River on the morning of September 7 for the purpose of determining if there are erosion or trash issues. Meet at Highway 16 and Pumpkin Lane at 8:00 a.m. Interested members to let Rachel know they will be attending.

Mapping/Inventory Committee: Nicole is looking for existing maps. Some are available on the Town's web site. After our discussion with Michael Lew-Smith at our September meeting, we can move forward on gathering more information. Nicole is looking into assistance from the State such as grants that will fund watershed projects.

Tree Committee: We need to identify street trees (particularly ash trees) and where more trees can be planted, taking into account landowner preferences and infrastructure restraints. We also need a method for keeping track of the data. Rachel will come up with a plan for this.

Committee members plan to walk around the Village to inventory trees on the following dates:

Wednesday, September 4 @ 5 p.m.; Thursday September 12 @ 4 p.m.; Wednesday September 18 @ 4 p.m. Meeting place is Atkins Field.

In the future we need to find a source of trees for planting. We should try to locate areas of Town-owned land where planting could occur.

On the topic of the Emerald Ash Borer, there are some federal funds for restoring areas impacted by EAB. There was an article in North Star newspaper about EAB management for landowners. One suggestion was to girdle some ash trees to weaken them and attract EAB. This will attract woodpeckers that will then eat the larvae. It is recommended not to be in a rush to cut down ash trees. The Vermont Invasives web site has information on EAB. Perhaps it contains information on best management practices for EAB. Going forward, we will likely need to develop a plan, have a public meeting, etc. Renaud pointed out that there are not a lot of ash trees in Hardwick.

Comments on updated Town Plan: After some discussion, it was decided to submit the following comments to the Planning Commission prior to the deadline of September 3:

Page 21, in section on ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION add “and the conservation commission” as a reviewer of proposed purchases of development rights.

Page 23, in the GOAL, change to read “Maintain and enhance the abundance and diversity of game and non-game wildlife in Hardwick”

Page 27, in the POLICIES section, change the second bullet to read: “Flood plains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be protected and restored.”

Page 46, in the Projected Time Frames column, change Natural Resources Inventory to “Short Term” and change wetland inventory to “Short Term”.

Other items: Judith discussed the importance of forests in sequestering carbon and the need to look into this for our own forest. There is an urgent need for outreach to the public because of the climate crisis. She distributed copies of an article entitled “Intact Forests in the United States: Proforestation Mitigates Climate Change and Serves the Greatest Good.”
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/ffgc.2019.00027/full>

Action items:

Nicole: send links to members regarding maps and pertinent information on State web site.

Lucien: send link to map of Town-owned land

Submitted by Judy Bellairs