

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

October 19, 2020

ZOOM MEETING, 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Stephen Moffatt, Chair; Diane Morgan, Treasurer; June Cook, Secretary; Susie Houston, Select Board Liaison; John Brodhead, Carol Maroni, Ashley Nunery, Elinor Osborn

ABSENT: Farley Brown

MINUTES: Minutes of August 17, 2020 approved as presented. Minutes of September 21, 2020 approved as corrected.

OPEN MEETING LAW: Zoom access was problematic, however, appropriate public notice was articulated on town website calendar.

ACT 171: Discussion postponed until December meeting as issue is not time sensitive. ACT 171 deals with wildlife connectivity corridors. The town does have segments of forestland in connectivity corridors.

MEMORIAL BENCH UPDATE: Susie reported Select Board's concerns that neighbors be notified of the bench being placed on the Common. Questions: would the bench be inside or outside; can it be mowed around; have neighbors been apprised. Since the bench is not to be placed until Spring, Susie indicated she would notify neighbors and apprise them.

Announcement of the memorial bench being placed on the Common in honor of Steve Wright would be announced at Town Meeting.

4H UPDATE: Susie reported the funds have been donated to the town's Recreation Committee.

ASH TREE SURVEY: Steve reported there are some grants available. He reported County Forester Jared Nunery suggested waiting until there is more community participation. Steve noted some mapping has been done by his father and Carol.

NEW KNOTWEED DISPOSAL METHOD: Elinor noted the weak link in dealing with invasives is the difficulty of finding an easy disposal method and site. The town of Warren is researching methods for knotweed disposal, which she followed with success. She placed cuttings on black plastic and found the cuttings dried out; roots took longer. The town takes care of disposal. A project for us could be to encourage Casella to make it easy for residents to dispose of invasives. It would be good PR for Casella Waste Management.

Elinor discussed using wire mesh as an eliminator on knotweed. The cost is about \$27 for two 3' x 6' area; the mesh is kept in place for 5 years. Mesh must be

removed after 5 years or it will choke out natural growth of native plants. She reported planting purple flowering raspberries on the demonstration site and noted some earlier Intervale plantings had survived earlier but had died.

Issue of utilizing the town garage or town gravel pit was suggested as potential collection site for invasives, which would be similar to what Warren has done as a town. If money is an issue, it is prohibitive as no funds are available. Warren has an Americorps Volunteer but having a volunteer is not viable as no funds are available to follow up with one.

Links to Videos dealing with invasives, created by Jito Coleman, chair of Warren Conservation Commission, will be placed on town's website and on Front Porch Forum. Elinor will follow up with seeking permission from Coleman before any postings. It was suggested Mr. Coleman be invited to give a presentation to the community as part of educational outreach by the Commission on dealing with invasives.

To further educational outreach on invasives, Diane will post the following on Front Porch Forum: *"Fall is a good time to search for and remove those nonnative invasive shrubs hiding in your woods. Buckthorn, honeysuckle, and barberry can be easily pulled if they are not too big with the weed wrench, a tool that is available for loan from the Town Hall. Information is available on the Conservation Commission link on the Town website (Townofcraftsbury.com) and from the Town Clerk. Once pulled, the shrub can be just hung in a tree and it will die. If the shrub is too large to pull, we've found that cutting it now, letting it sprout next spring which throws its energy into that process, then cutting it again just after it is fully leafed out, will often kill woody invasives, although it may take a couple of seasons of this treatment for larger plants."*

Elinor reported the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association is a national organization which offers good webinars on invasives.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Diane reported the Craftsbury Conservation Fund has a balance of \$2,199.63. Money from the Good Neighbor Fund as voted at the annual meeting has not been transferred into the account but will be in November.

No further action or status reports have been received from Green Mountain Power relative to an Aircraft Detection Lighting System on the Kingdom Community industrial wind towers on the Lowell Mountains.

The commission will not be meeting in November. The next meeting, via ZOOM, will be held December 21, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by June Pichel Cook, Secretary