

Cornwall Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 21, 2021
12:30-2:00 pm via Zoom

CC Members: Katherine Branch, Don Burns, Sharon DeHaven, Mary Dodge, Michael Sheridan

Recording Secretary: Katherine Branch

Old Business:

1. Conservation Reserve Fund guidelines document. The document was adopted by the Conservation Commission on June 8th and the Planning Commission on June 16th. The next step is to bring the document before the Select Board for review and adoption on Tuesday, July 6th.
2. Programming Ideas for "21-'22"
 - A. "Get Pollinated" fall presentation. Scheduled for Saturday, October 16th outside at the DeHavens' property at the southwest corner of Cross Street and North Bingham. Andrew Munkres who lives in Cornwall and is the president of the Vermont Beekeepers Association will be the speaker. Mike has a microphone headset like those a tour guide carries that can be used for the presentation. Sharon, Don & Mike will coordinate the program on October 16th and Katherine will work on the preliminary planning. The publicity will ask people to bring a chair if they want to sit. We will give Andrew the option of selling his honey and other products if he wishes.
 - B. Katherine mentioned that she was in contact with Jamie Brookside from the Middlebury Area Land Trust about possible coordinated efforts with Middlebury and Weybridge in the future.
 - C. Outreach to New Residents: The draft of a welcome letter to new residents was reviewed. Mary Dodge's contact information will be listed in the letter and she will forward the email inquiries to others, such as Don and Katherine, to answer.
 - D. CC Brochure. The brochure was first printed in November 2018. The idea came from idea at meeting of the Addison County Conservation Commissions several years ago. Its objective is to be easily accessible and promote the CCC and conservation in town. Several suggestions were made, including to list the CCC web site address.
 - E. CC Friends Support Group. This effort might involve more people-power than the Conservation Commission has right now, so the idea was tabled for now.
 - F. CC Backyard Blog. Property owners can have a significant impact on natural resources by what they do on their own

property. Making available knowledge on how one can integrate actions that support conservation, like composting, invasives management, and wildlife friendly plantings would be the purpose of creating an accessible resource of this kind.

Likewise, such conservation choices could be promoted via the newsletter, etc. This effort would reach potentially more people than just a one-time program. We would seek out townspeople who have special skills or knowledge. The "Blog" format could present some challenges and options to it were discussed. Mary will continue to explore this project.

3. Knotweed Update. June 2nd spraying by Fish & Wildlife, but the patch will be need to be monitored and sprayed again in late summer.
4. Updates from PC/SB/DRB Meetings. The DRB reviewed an application for parking places at new town store, no objection from CCC. DRB is looking for an alternate member of DRB, but might be a conflict if a CCC member was a DRB alternate; however, it is important to have a conservation viewpoint on the DRB. PC: Andrew L'Roe from Regional Planning Commission talked about flood resilience—this is an element that will be incorporated into the new Town Plan. SB & PC looking into technical updates to Town Hall to allow in-person and Zoom attendance at the meetings. It should be possible for the CCC to use the system as well.
5. Conversation with Zoning Administrator. Mary and Gary Barnet have emailed and will be setting up a conversation in the future. One question is: Are there natural resources considerations that factor into zoning decisions?

New Business:

1. July Newsletter Content Suggestions. For the CCC Town Newsletter column, Katherine proposed an update on the Conservation Reserve Fund approvals, some sort of plus for backyard conservation and the pollinator program on Saturday, October 16th. A list of Cornwall Library books that are nature-related that she compiled will be saved for a later column.
2. Douglas Pond Walk. Douglas Pond is 7 acres, purchased from private landowner by the Town about 40 years ago. At one point, it was a beloved swimming hole & ice-rink, but is too shallow for swimming now. River scientist Amy Sheldon did assess the pond for invasive growth a number of years ago. Her report can be found at: <http://cornwallvt.com/conservation/Sheldonreport2014.pdf>. In the past, the CCC had considered getting a grant for use as a recreational resource. Mary talked to Eric Mortensen, he was one of 1st CCC members in mid-2000's. He is an adjacent landowner interested in having the Pond used. He is willing to have a couple CCC members to take a walk around it, in mid-July, perhaps July 8 or 9. There is a

wooded perimeter around the pond but not a path. Cornwall Swamp is also a great resource. Don mentioned Wenlock Wildlife Management Area Moose Bog which has a wood boardwalk with an observation platform, up in Northeast Kingdom. Another idea is to have Brian Howlett lead a walk in the Swamp in the winter when it is more passable.

Next Meeting: Monday, July 19, 2021.

Newsletter: July '21 (June; Katherine) October '21 (September); January '20 (December); April '21 (March)