

Norwich Conservation Commission draft minutes of 21 March 2017

Present: Craig Layne, Chris Rimmer, Jennifer Goulet, Norm Miller, Mary Sellmann

Absent: David Hubbard, David Hobson, Peter Silberfarb

Public: George Clark, Brie Swenson, Don McCabe, Lindsay Putnam, Gary Plummer

Commencement 7:01 pm

February minutes approved by unanimous consent.

J. Goulet reported that the native plantings project at the Senior Center will be sorting through federal considerations and seeking commissioners to help recruit invasive plant removers, hole-diggers, and planters. The work will happen in late September.

J. Frishtick reported *in absentia* and in spirit about a plan to dig up knotweed in the east test plot and repeatedly cut it in the west test plot. Two monthly work sessions will be advertised for public involvement, one weekend and one weekday evening.

The Village Nature Area was discussed with respect to its future management. This management includes a general management plan, easement oversight responsibilities, control of invasive plants, forestry management plan, meadow mowing in concert with Public Works, summer fireworks launching, coordination with school and other educational activities (birding, mushroom walks, flower walks, winter walks, shelter classroom, sugaring, trail running, kids' mountain bike classes), birdhouse maintenance, dog feces management, trail work and stewardship, etc. J. Goulet will share an email proposal with the rest of the commission. The committee would like to dissolve and have the commission take over in concert with the trails committee, the school groups, and involved community members. A formal motion will happen at a future meeting after the commission sees a full accounting of the responsibilities and problems. N. Miller moved (C. Rimmer 2nd) that we get a written proposal of what should be done, approved unanimously.

C. Rimmer, Don McCabe, and N. Miller reported on Bird Week. Highlights (* see below) include six electives for 5th and 6th graders, films, and talks. In addition to Marion Cross components there are Boy Scout, Library, Historical Society, and other free & open-to-all activities.

C. Layne reported on the Pollinators Workshops Series. The March multi-presenter talk was super well attended. Three talks are happening in April. See the [published schedule](#) in the NCC Google drive for topics, dates, and times.

The UVLT dinner and discussion with UV CCs is March 30th. A couple commissioners are planning to attend.

A Norwich Times article on *Trail Etiquette* will be composed by D. Hubbard, M. Sellmann, and C. Layne.

Deer mice, ticks, and Lyme disease were discussed as all predicted to be very prevalent this year.

Adjournment 8:15

Minutes Submitted by C. Layne

*BIRD WEEK PROJECT

Marion Cross School

May 6-13, 2017

Bird Week is a collaboration between Norwich Conservation Commission, Vermont Center for Ecostudies, Norwich Boy Scouts, Norwich Public Library, Vermont Institute of Natural Science, the Montshire Museum, and Marion Cross School.

The project will teach MCS students in 5th and 6th grade how to become "citizen scientists" by choosing among six electives and applying the scientific approach to studying bird identification, habitat, migration, art, and music associated with birds.

Bird Week will be introduced to students at a school assembly on May 4, 2017. Study electives will be distributed and students will choose among the electives, returning them to school on May 5th.

Electives: 1) Bird Identification. Using the National Audubon checklist, students will present their work through the use of documentation, slides and/or videos.

2) Bird Habitat Study. With field trips to Frye Nature Area, Foley Park, and other locations, students will present their work with slides/videos.

3) Migration Watch. Guided study on Gile Mt. and other sites to document and count migrating raptors and other birds. Students will present findings in slides/videos.

4) Scout Encampment. BSA supervised camp and habitat management at von Miller's Pond. Students will present their experience with documentation and slides/videos.

5) Bird Art. MCS volunteers and adult guides will assist students in creating colorful art, and building bird feeders and houses. Students will display their work on the final day.

6) Bird Music. students who play an instrument or sing will compose selections related to birds and provide soundtracks for slides and videos produced in other electives.

During Bird Week talks and bird-related films will take place in the evenings at Norwich Public Library. Displays related to Bird Week will be located at the library and the school throughout the week.

Final Day: Saturday, May 13, 2017, on the Norwich Green. Family picnic at 5 PM, followed by student displays, slide shows, and videos. At the Bandstand, weather permitting, a raptor release will be conducted by Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Closing remarks at 7 PM on the Green.