

Norwich Conservation Commission draft minutes of 17 October 2017

Present: Craig Layne, Courtney Dragiff, David Hubbard, Mary Sellmann, Lynnwood Andrews, David Hobson, Chris Rimmer

Public: Brie Swenson, Marcia Calloway, Frank Manase, Collin Calloway

Absent: Peter Silberfarb, Norm Miller

Commencement 7:05 pm

August minutes moved for approval by D. Hubbard (M. Sellmann 2nd), approved unanimously.

C. Dragiff reported that the Japanese knotweed test patch will not need any more work this Fall. Watch for cutting opportunities in the Spring.

M. Calloway brought to the commission the concerns about rezoning plans for the Rte 5 corridor. F. Manase discussed the broader special spacious nature of Norwich with undeveloped lands being part of the town's character. C. Calloway mentioned wetlands and watershed conservation concerns in the Rte 5 south area. They and other citizens are concerned about the rewrite of the Town Plan and any subsequent changes in the village center delineations leading to commercial development. They thought perhaps the NCC would have comments to make about Town Plan changes concerning land use and natural resources. The commission was grateful to hear about these concerns and encouraged the group to stay involved through all the town plan updating steps. The group was also directed to the informal open spaces priorities plan as a potentially helpful document to them. The commission will endeavor to find out what land use, natural resources protections, and open spaces priorities changes are happening in the next version of the Town Plan.

D. Hobson reported on the forest composition and structure in the Nature Area. Highlights include an even-aged structure, a high wood density, an abundance of snags, a low abundance of hemlock, low regeneration rates (except for Norway maple), and a few remaining 100+ year old hard maples and wolf pines. Possible inclusion of soil data was mentioned. Whether any active management of the standing crop or seedling regeneration would be done was also discussed.

B. Swenson reported on the trail committee activities on Gile and Ballard trails; respectively, the "stairway to heaven" and bank sloughing along the upper trail need work.

C. Layne will check with the Town Planner about town plan renewal timing and post the Informal Open Spaces Priorities Plan on the Google drive.

Adjournment 8:45

Minutes Submitted by C. Layne