

## **NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DRAFT MINUTES: 19 March 2024**

**Members Present:** Craig Layne (Chair), Lynnwood Andrews, Cheryl Asa, Chris Rimmer, Andy Torkelson, Cody Williams

**Guests:** Suzanne Leiter

Meeting convened at 7:05 PM

### **Additional Agenda items**

The Hanover Conservation Commission is planning a natural resources inventory and has asked if the NCC is interested in conducting one for Norwich. After discussion, it was decided that having such an inventory could help the town make decisions regarding issues that might affect conservation of important natural resources. Craig will follow up with the Hanover CC.

### **Public Comments**

Suzanne Leiter, who recently retired from the NCC, is passing on responsibility for some activities: annual guided walks for the Norwich community, Post Office displays, and distribution of No Mow May signs.

### **50 years of Conservation Commission**

There have been no updates from the Historical Society yet about the mural planned for display at Dan and Whit's, but NCC is planning to have a table at the Historical Society's New to Norwich event for new residents.

### **Invasive Plants Management Strategies**

Chris confirmed that Redstart will be removing chervil at the Milton Frye Nature Area and treating phragmites in Ompompanoosuc.

### **Vernal Pool Event**

UVLT is planning to hold an event at Brookmead vernal pools and has invited NCC to participate. Several members offered to attend and help at the event; Craig will contact UVLT to coordinate.

### **CT River Dams Relicensing**

NCC has an opportunity to comment on the relicensing proposal. Lynnwood has been approved by the Selectboard as the Norwich representative to prepare comments on the dam relicensing applications being submitted by the Great River Hydro to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. In their application for relicensing the Wilder, Vernon and Bellows Falls' dams, Great River Hydro is proposing to stabilize the water surface elevation within a 1-foot range, equalizing inflow and outflow to better approximate natural flow, to address concerns about bank erosion and other possible effects from dam management.

### **Milton Frye Nature Area Subcommittee**

Lynnwood reported that a small area of buckthorn that has been covered for 2 years should now be dead. She proposes planting tree seedlings in the area, but they would need protection from deer

browse with tree-tubes. Craig moved to approved purchase of 100 tree tubes, Cheryl seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **Trails Subcommittee**

Craig reported on what will be the group's main trail project for the year: an excavator will be rented to clear and repair the old jeep road trail bed section of the Bradley Hill Trail. Cody also mentioned that a plan has been developed to replace the worn treads on the Gile tower steps. An inspection judged the rest of the tower's structure to be sound.

#### **Updates from Public Forums, Meetings, and Minutes**

Lynnwood visited the town boat launch on River Road, which has a lot of invasive plants growing along the bank that could be removed and replaced.

#### **Approval of January Minutes**

Cody moved to approve the draft minutes, Lynnwood seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 8:05 PM

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Asa