

NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DRAFT MINUTES: 21 MARCH 2023

Members Present: Craig Layne (Chair), Lynnwood Andrews, Cheryl Asa, Alex Gottlieb, David Hubbard, Chris Rimmer, Andrew Torkelson, Cody Williams

Guests: None

Meeting convened at 7:00 PM

Public Comments: Craig asked for comments from the public, but no guests were present.

Milton Frye Nature Area Committee: Chris reported that the Committee has drafted a letter proposing that the name of the Nature Area be officially made the Milton Frye Nature Area (MFNA). David moved to endorse the letter, Lynnwood seconded, and the motion approved unanimously.

Lynnwood has drafted two proposals for projects in the Nature Area:

- 1) Streambank stabilization and wild chervil control: there was discussion of possible approaches to removing the wild chervil and who could advise on stabilization strategies.
- 2) Plant biodiversity project: community volunteers would be recruited to help with germinating, then planting native wildflowers and shrubs to increase bird and insect habitat and improve habitat around the vernal pool. There was discussion of approaches to attracting volunteers and organizing the project.

There was consensus that Lynnwood should move forward on the projects.

Animal Shelters: Lynnwood also proposes the installation of two types of shelters:

- 1) Bat houses to be placed in various town properties, starting with MFNA and Foley Park. There was discussion of various designs and whether students might be enlisted to help build and mount them.
- 2) Frog pipes, that imitate holes in trees where they would take refuge, to be placed along trails in MFNA, along Huntley Meadow paths, or at sites identified by the Trails Committee. The purpose would be to provide refuge for the frogs in locations where the public could view them safely.

Deer Exclusion Demonstration Plots:

Alex gave an update on plans to construct several deer exclusion plots that would allow the public to view deer damage to vegetation outside the enclosures. There was discussion about possible ways to transport the fencing materials to sites where the plots will be constructed. Timing for construction will take place after snow melt.

Schmidt Bog

Andy has walked the area with neighbors who are interested in helping eradicate the invasive buckthorn and replanting with native species. The Trails Committee would probably assume responsibility for repair and maintenance of the boardwalk.

Trails Committee

Cody reported on trail work and kiosk construction that are being planned when weather allows. The proposal for possible development of a disc golf course was discussed. There is still interest in weight restrictions being instituted for Burton Woods Road; the NCC will submit a request.

Woody Adams Conservation Forest

UVLT conducted its first monitoring survey of the property. Informational kiosks are being planned.

Updates from Public Forums, Meetings, and Minutes

Lynnwood reported that Norwich voters approved installation of a pre-treatment septic module on the green, but that won't affect MFNA.

Approval of January Minute

Craig moved to approve the January minutes, Lynnwood seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 8:45 PM

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Asa