

NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DRAFT MINUTES: 18 APRIL 2023

Members Present: Craig Layne (Chair), Lynnwood Andrews, Cheryl Asa, Alex Gottlieb, Suzanne Leiter, Cody Williams

Guests: None

Meeting convened at 7:05 PM

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

No Mow May: Suzanne will post an announcement on the Norwich listserv and organize distribution of signs to interested residents.

Norwich Times article: After discussion of potential topics for the next issue, keystone plant species that support caterpillars was chosen.

Communication with the community: Cheryl proposed that the NCC place more posts on the Norwich listserv to announce events and to link to the NCC website for additional information on conservation issues. There was discussion about potential topics and additional approaches.

Milton Frye Nature Area: Lynnwood transplanted about 20 plants around the vernal pool and in other areas in the Nature Area. Additional plants are expected soon. The vernal pool is retaining water and wood frogs have laid egg masses.

Craig suggested approaches for streambank restoration and addition of logs in strategic parts of the stream to mitigate erosion.

Lynnwood has drafted an announcement for recruiting volunteers to assist in an initiative to improve wildlife habitat in the Nature Area. Volunteers would grow wildflowers at home, then transplant and tend them in the Nature Area till they're established.

Purchase of PVC piping to construct tree frog tubes has been approved. After a brief discussion of the design, Lynnwood offered to purchase the material and begin construction.

The Dartmouth Flora and Fauna Club will have a workshop Saturday to build 4 bat houses. Craig and Cody will prepare the materials. Lynnwood will provide materials to the Richmond Middle School shop class that will be making 12 bat houses as a class project.

Deer Exclusion Plots: Alex reported that plans are in place for constructing four plots, but the sites need to be identified now that the snow has melted. A date will be set to visit the potential sites.

Schmidt Bog: Craig reported that the volunteer neighborhood group has started removing buckthorn around the boardwalk and will have a pulling event on Earth Day. That could be a good place for an additional deer exclusion plot because of the high density of deer.

Trails Committee: Cody reported that they are requesting that the NCC present their proposal for Burton Woods vehicle weight restriction, needed to mitigate trail erosion, to the Selectboard once

again. They are producing kiosk signage for the Woody Adams Conservation Forest that will cover more educational material in addition to directional information.

Woody Adams Conservation Forest: Craig mentioned that historical information about the land, as well as educational material on ecology and wildlife, will be included in kiosk signage.

Land Management Advisory Role: Given competing land use needs, we discussed the advisory role of the NCC on issues such as potential conflicts between conservation and affordable housing and green energy siting.

Updates from Public Forums, Meetings, and Minutes: Cheryl mentioned that the Affordable Housing Subcommittee is discussing possible options for development of affordable housing on a New Boston Road site, including Environmental Assessments.

Approval of March Minutes

Craig moved to approve the March draft minutes, Lynnwood seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting ended at 8:25 PM

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Asa