

NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DRAFT MINUTES: 16 May 2023

Members Present: Craig Layne (Chair), Cheryl Asa, David Hubbard, Suzanne Leiter, Chris Rimmer, and Cody Williams

Guests: None

Meeting convened at 7:10 PM

Public Comments: No members of the public were present

Milton Frye Nature Area: Additional plantings that Lynnwood had ordered have been planted. There are spotted salamander egg masses in the vernal pool now, in addition to the wood frog egg masses reported last month. Bat box construction has been completed and they are ready to be mounted on poles in the Nature Area, as well as in various other locations around Norwich. Craig, David and Alex did the measurements for the required signage (e.g., length, mean and maximum slope) for the ABA trail that will be created.

Deer Exclusion Plots: Sites at Milt Frye, Parcel 5, Gile Mountain, Schmidt bog and Brookmead have been staked out. Cheryl and Craig will produce signs to post at each site, and an informational display will be placed at the Post Office.

Schmidt Bog: Craig reported that 20 neighbors were out cutting buckthorn on Earth Day. Also, a group of Dartmouth students from the Flora and Fauna club spent some time cutting buckthorn. A bioblitz at the site is being planned for June.

Trails Committee: Cody reported that trail work day will be this Sunday, May 21, to relocate segments of the Heyl trail. There are plans to build more kiosks, including a new one for the Gile/Adams Trail. They also discussed possible changes in the sizes of kiosk maps.

Alternatives to Lawns: There was discussion about various approaches to mowing and managing lawns to allow more native vegetation to grow that will support insects and other wildlife. Until research can provide better guidance, the best strategy may be to simply reduce the size of lawns. The Energy Committee has invited someone from the NCC to be at their event at the Transfer Station on June 17 to distribute information and answer questions about ways to provide better habitat for insects, birds, and other wildlife, and about gardening with native plants.

Updates from Public Forums, Meetings, and Minutes: There were no updates relating to the NCC.

Slate of Officers: Because several members, who might be interested in one of the positions, were absent, this agenda item will be postponed until next month

Approval of April Minutes: Suzanne mentioned that her last name was misspelled in the April draft minutes. Cheryl will amend the draft and resubmit it. Cody moved to approve the amended minutes, Suzanne seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 8:10 PM

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Asa