

## **NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DRAFT MINUTES: 17 JANUARY 2023**

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

**Guest:** Linda Cook

Meeting convened at 7:05PM

**Public Comments:** Craig asked for comments from the public, but there were none.

**Deer Exclusion Demonstration Plots:** Cheryl and Alex gave an update on plans for establishing some demonstration deer exclusion plots around Norwich where residents can see the effects of deer browse. Alex has talked with the State deer biologist to get information about building the enclosures. After discussion of potential sites, four were proposed:

- 1) In the Milt Frye Nature Area
- 2) Along the Gile Mountain trail
- 3) In the Brookmead Conservation Area
- 4) In Parcel 5

Cheryl will work on community outreach and educational material to explain the purpose of the plots and will organize guided tours when effects become apparent.

**Vermont Invasives Management Day:** Lynnwood is working on a draft letter from the Conservation Commission in support of a proposal by Bernard Paquette to the Vermont legislature to designate an Invasives Management Day that would bring attention to the problems caused by invasive species. She will send the draft to members for input.

**Schmidt Bog Buckthorn Mitigation:** Andy met with Bob Holley and walked the area to assess the extent of the buckthorn problem. He is in discussion with Redstart Natural Resource Management about possible approaches to eradicating the buckthorn and re-establishing lady slippers.

**Milt Frye Nature Area Committee:** Lynnwood reported that the Committee met during the past month and that Milt Frye has given his approval for use of his name. Another Nature Area neighbor whose property abuts the property has joined the Committee. Lynnwood is still waiting for town approval for the expenditure of funds for the purchase of plants and seeds for spring planting. There was discussion of whether she should apply again for a Norwich Women's Club grant to fund the next phase of work in the Nature Area.

Lynnwood proposed that the community be invited to help restore wildflowers in the meadow. She also has been looking into the feasibility of installing bat houses around the Nature Area. Cody suggested a bat-house building event for NCC members to help build the bat houses and invite the community to build bat houses that they would take home and mount. Cheryl suggested a presentation by someone from the Vermont Bat Center about bats in the region and how to provide environmental conditions to support them. The presentation could generate interest in bats and announce the opportunity to build bat houses along with NCC members.

**Trails Committee:** Cody noted that there has not been a meeting recently, so there is no Trails Committee report this month. A snowshoe outing they had planned in late December had to be cancelled following the snowstorm.

**Updates from Public Forums, Meetings, and Minutes:** Suzanne reported that the scoping study for a Gile Mountain parking expansion was not funded. Lynnwood reported on two proposals for mitigating the MCS septic problem in the town green.

**Approval of November & December Minutes:** Lynnwood moved to approve the amended November minutes, Cody seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. Lynnwood moved to approve the December minutes, Craig seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting ended at 8:00 PM

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Asa