

NCC Meeting Notes

8/20/2024

Norwich Historical Society

7pm

Quorum established: Lynnwood, Alex, Craig, Andy, Peg, Mike

Public Attending: Doug Hardy

Select Board approved committee with non-commission members for MFNA work.

MFNA Subcommittee could benefit from meeting

Trails:

Bradley Hill Trails- needed drainage and put in 10 stone checks and got a significant amount of drainage installed.

Potentially more work has been done since, 8/18- follow up work day 8/25

Future work: sloping trail, water bar: direct water into drainage.

Last stone dam, before Avery Brook- DPW work- little blowout around remediation.

Old road, fairly well retired, but limited use persists at top of old Bradley Hill trails.

Trail day: About 15 people showed up.

New step treads finished at Gile.

Dams:

Great River Hydro submitted to FERC.

Now need to apply to licensure from Vermont,

Lynnwood attended the meeting where 401 was established as a compliance measure for dam.

Public comment period upcoming.

They currently have previous comments, and we have the opportunity to comment again: with prior thoughts, additional thoughts, CRJC planning to comment.

Avenues of communication to other towns submitting comments?

Hartford was there.

American Whitewater: suggesting whitewater at Sumner falls could be eliminated under suggested regime. Also mentioned difficulty of through canoeing river due to fluctuations in river depths.

The new focus of the dam is inflow=outflow.

During certain periods they must keep the total fluctuation within 1 foot.

Going away from peak demand, towards a more "ecological model."

Many unknowns, but the hope is they can mimic a more natural flow (and reduce erosion).

Now 2 Norwich Reps on the Connecticut River Joint Commissions.

EAB Subcommittee

Now have direct line to selectboard as official subcommittee

Doug, shared progress- inventory continued, and "one pager drafted"

What is the process for sharing that document?

Ready to move forward with cutting recommendations.

Ready to submit hazardous tree documentation to Green Mountain Power. Town of Norwich.
Right of way is 10 feet from wire to tree (trunk or limb? Potentially to trunk?), outside of that, not power company responsibility.

Potential need for “electrically qualified contractors” to remove potentially problematic trees-
Green Mountain Power seems amenable, but not overly eager to pay for removal.

A large tree just came down, but not clear who all paid for it- GMP, EC Fiber, etc.?

On GMP bill surcharge for EAB/ Storm fall damage.

When a tree falls, GMP will get it “out of the way,” but it may be homeowner/ DPW responsibility to remove pieces.

Chris, Peg, Antoinette inventoried 30 trees in area of large ash tree fell, and there were several in the vicinity that were completely dead.

Still sections of Bragg Hill to inventory, and technology is potential barrier for cataloging.

“No action is not an option” clause in 1 pager. People just forget to do the work sometimes. Is there more town action that might motivate action: reimbursement?

How can we approach this as a “Community Initiative,” rather than individual vs town issue?

Could NCC send Ash ID/ working information home with Marion Cross students?

White River Conservation District could be a resource for “replanting” strategy, and others may be able to help- Cedar Circle Farm?

Opening in September-January EAB removal grant \$5,000-35,000, from Urban and Community Forestry Program

Tree planting dollars also available

IPM grants for parasitic wasps also available? Quite a bit of follow-up is required for that work as well.

Potential help from Dartmouth on that follow-up - maybe UVM?

USDA will make the final decision on where wasps will be released, and we may well fill the criteria.

Inventory of ash trees still needs to be completed.

“Lingering Ash” cit-sci program potential.

Take cuttings of “lingering ash” 5–8-year post infestation,” to be grafted and bred with other candidate trees.

Reach 95% dead rate, then ID lingering ash- which created callus around larvae- and send into Ecological Research Institute/ Cornell University- they plot into variety of “ecoregions” to match types to regional characteristics.

Work now is IDing stands of ash on TON land, away from trails, roads, and etc to monitor for “lingering ash.”

NHS Community Resource Fair:

Norwich Conservation Commission can discuss EAB and general information about what all we do.

Dig up trails trifold/ Milt Frye information

Town Manager forwarded survey about town properties over 5 acres over 75% forested: Woody Adams (300 acres) Milton Frye (34) Schmidt Bog (26 acres)

Select Board: Norwich Handbook is in the works- information about various commissions.

Craig updated the language of Commission Charge to make it more consistent between various documents.

MOTION:

Move to approve 17 June and 16 July Meetings Minutes (as amended with “submitted by”)-

Mike

Second:

Craig

Unanimous passing of both minutes

Submitted by Michael Loots