

Conservation_Minutes_1.21.2021

Attending: Linda Hecker, Linda Lembke, Marli Rabinowitz, Bill Jewell, Anne Montgomery, Steve Soszynski, Susan Bonthron, Karen Murphy
Not attending: Bevan Quinn, Michael Becker
Guests: Dave Eastman, Patti Smith

Meeting called to order at 5:35 PM via Zoom.
Minutes from November 19, 2020 accepted unanimously.
Action Steps from November and December reviewed.

Marli and Bevan are willing to continue on the board.

We discussed the state's new Tree Warden and Shade Tree Laws and the reasons some towns are adopting shade tree ordinances. We agreed to inventory and map important trees in our town. These would include old trees in good health, rare species like Black Ash, fine specimen trees, trees framing a scenic view, and trees near historic buildings. This work will complement our natural resources inventory and community values mapping. A shade tree ordinance would be useful to have for future Town Plans and to avoid controversy about taking down trees that might become potential hazards. Under the current law we have no control over non-planted trees or ornamentals except for removing hazardous trees.

We agreed to begin inventory walks along town roads and properties as early as summer 2021 (following Covid guidelines) and to invite the public to join us on these walks.

Preserving ash trees in Green River, the town office and Carpenter Hill cemetery: More research is necessary in determine whether to try to save selected ash trees as most preservation methods use toxic pesticides and need to be retreated every year or two. The cost per tree treated may also be quite high.

Patti Smith described her latest field work for the natural resources inventory project. She has mapped out some interesting sites such as a black ash/red maple/blueberry swamp. She also found woolly adelgid on two properties. She estimates she needs about twenty more hours of field work in the coming year. We talked about how we might document Patti's findings. A printed format might not be as useful as a digital one. There is an online model for developing a "story map" that integrates photos, maps and narrative that we might use.

Community Values Mapping: Vermont Fish and Wildlife has a virtual model that can be used instead of an in person meeting, hosted by Jens Hilke and Margo Ghia of the WRC. The Planning Commission is eager to be part of this community discussion. Perhaps it can be scheduled for early March.

Collaborative updates:

Green River Watershed Alliance: The Deerfield Watershed Association is working on an application for a national Wild and Scenic River designation for the Deerfield River

and its watershed (which includes the Green River). This is a multi-year effort that ties in with a future regional goal to reclassify the Green River to Class 1A.

Two other items on the agenda, Equity and Inclusion discussion and AVCC Tiny Grant application for the extension of the Carriage Trail, have been postponed until future meetings. .

Meeting adjourned at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Murphy Clerk Guilford Conservation Commission