

Minutes  
Norfolk Conservation Commission  
P.O. Box 552  
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Regular Meeting  
Zoom Video Meeting  
5/19/21

Present: Martha Klein, Susannah Wood, Nash Pradhan, John Anderson, Shelley Harms  
Mattie Vandiver

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

A motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to accept the minutes of the April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to accept the minutes of the special meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Comment:** None

**Correspondence:** CACIWIC renewal. Let Martha know if you want to attend June 12<sup>th</sup> virtual meeting.

**Budget:** No change

**Road Salt and other road issues:** Susannah reported on her meeting with Matt on North Colebrook Road about the pile of road sand that has accumulated where the trucks turn around. Matt said he will have this removed. She also mentioned other places where salty sand has been pushed too close to a stream, as at Benedict Pond.

Further discussion of roadside management followed:

Shelley proposed that the commission ask the town not to cut trees during nesting season. She had observed young wood ducks plopping down from a hole in a dead tree on School House Rd. She also wonders about getting a scenic road ordinance for North Colebrook Road.

Martha reported concerns about lower Ashpotag Rd where the crew has been pushing road material into a stream.

John also spoke with Matt about N. Colebrook Rd and ongoing concerns about damage to Aton Forest property, about properly directing the water off the road, minimize disruption so as not to make the area more vulnerable to invasive plants. In general, he said that the road sides are not too bad at present and that most of the problems have to do with root systems of some trees.

Shelley pointed out that bringing in or moving around road material often spreads invasives. This needs to be part of an ongoing conversation with Matt and Troy.

**Action Item:** Martha to draft a letter addressing these issues.

**Action Item:** Susannah to contact Martha about photographing problem area on Ashpotag in the week of May 24<sup>th</sup>.

Susannah confirmed that a \$100 contribution to the Carey Institute as thanks for all the help from Vicky Kelly has been made and the money taken from our budget.

**Action Item:** Susannah and Mattie to continue testing.

**Publicity and Recruitment:** As Martha announced she will be stepping down in February to pursue other projects and as Mattie is off to college in the fall, new members will be needed soon. Given the past problems with recruitment, we need to work at getting the word out and making people more aware of our activities. Martha proposed that any articles in Norfolk Now we do have a clear link to our mission and agenda. Shelley suggested recruiting at the climate events in town as a new group of people is showing up to these. John said Sue Frisch is asking us to do something for the WIN line up in August. Shelley suggested something around pollinator pathways. Shelley proposed we offer to be at Norfstrom's one day a month. We could have fliers on waste reduction and composting. Discussion to continue next meeting.

**Action Item:** Martha will see if Mary Hogue is free to do a presentation on Sat. Aug 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Action Item:** Susannah will contact editor of Norfolk Now to see if they will agree to let the commission have a dedicated column.

**Action Item:** Shelley to put in NN an announcement about the plant exchange

**Village Green and Welcome to Norfolk Signs:** Nash reported that the projected plantings at the outskirts of town will now be mostly ornamentals, not natives. He proposes that we get together to discuss native planting around the Village Green sign instead. Linda Perkins has said that the native plantings at town hall will need to be reduced so some of those might be used at the green.

**Action Item:** Commission members to meet at 8 a.m. Sat. June 5<sup>th</sup> to look at the site.

**Botelle School Meadow:** Nothing new to report

**NRI:** John will be working to finish this up with a target of June 1<sup>st</sup>. He will need proofreading help from commission members. Sean Hayden will review the soils map. Shelley mentioned the importance of mapping the locally important agricultural soils as it enables local farmers to get grants. 490 lands will no longer be in the NRI as they are not protected.

**Action Item:** Everyone get back to John with any edits or changes asap.

**City Meadow:** Bids are still be accepted for the stairs. Invasives removal on the bank will be have to be done by hand. Funding up in the air.

**Buttermilk Falls:** Shelley reported that she and Susannah did a lot of cutting and pulling and that some acorns and pines were planted. She and Susannah proposed the possibility of putting in some native plants and shrubs on the bank.

**Waste Management:** Susannah discussed composting program in conjunction with Curbside Compost at the transfer station with Matt. He is not opposed to the idea but has concerns about whether it would work and also about any additional burden on the transfer station manager. According to Matt, the Litchfield program was not so successful. He knows what Salisbury is doing and will keep up with that pilot program through Curtis Rand who is also on a waste reduction committee with Matt. We need to follow what is happening with this committee.

Martha contacted Abe at Sustainable CT about a possible grant for composting containers to either give away or sell at a minor cost and found that it would be a matching grant. They would help us set up a gofundme kind of campaign to raise the rest of the grant. DEEP also has some funding available for composting. (An aerobic composter could be put on the town farm at a cost of around \$4000.)

**Action Item:** Susannah to check in with Matt about pursuing a grant for home composting bins.

**Public Events for 2021:** Only 4 people showed up for the composting webinar (most of them members of the commission). Martha will not do any more as it does not seem worth our time. We can offer ideas to Dawn to fit into the HUB schedule of Monday talks.

We will go ahead with the talk scheduled for Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>: Sensible bear management with Dr. Tracey Rittenhouse

Shelley proposed the commission co-sponsor the June 28<sup>th</sup> HUB talk on plastics in preparation for a plastic-free week.

Town orgs. are hosting Friday night events on the green aimed at families. We will try to find someone to do a moth night.

**Action Item:** Susannah to make inquiries about a moth night presenter.

Susannah talked to Ann Havemeyer who loves the idea of a book gift each year. Susannah has been pulling together a list of books and will send them around.

**Action Item:** Everyone to look at book suggestions by the next meeting so we can decide.

**Invasive Plants:** Plant exchange at the Norfolk Farmer's Market on June 26<sup>th</sup>..Will also have information about composting.

**Action Item:** People should contact Shelley to schedule a shift.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Submitted by Susannah Wood, 5/25/21