

Plainfield Conservation Commission Minutes
September 20, 2023

Present: Becky Atchinson, Rose Paul, Mary Trerice and Julie Hackbarth. Meeting via Zoom.

Welcome back: Rose welcomed everyone after our summer break. She mentioned a person who may be interested in participating and may join this Zoom meeting later.

Minutes: Review and approval of the June 2023 Monthly Meeting Minutes was overlooked. This will be included in the October 2023 meeting agenda.

Water Forum: Becky attended the Community Conversation on Clean Water & Climate Resistance, September 12th, at the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House. This forum was facilitated by the VT Conservation Voters and included a representative from the VT Natural Resources Council, VT River Conservancy, and Friends of the Winooski. The focus was on restoring the damage and bolstering our resilience against future flooding incidents. They discussed their various programs, how they often work together, and how this is the time to collaborate with the legislature, particularly regarding:

- H.374: An act relating to establishing the Resilient Rivers Commission,
- H.29: An act relating to development in mapped river corridors, and
- H.30: An act relating to the regulations of wetlands.

Dam removal in the state was also discussed. The Q&A included responses from Sen. Watson, Sen. Perchlik, and Rep. Dolan, who were in attendance.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP):

Rose shared her understanding of the town's application to the emergency watershed protection (EWP) program. This funding program is designed to address endangered situations that don't qualify for FEMA Buyout. This program is not intended for river assessments.

Town Forest: Rose received an email from a Maple Hill School staff person about possible Town Forest projects for student volunteers. Rose responded that projects could include building another section to the boardwalk at the Maxfield trailhead, installing trail markers/arrows and clearing debris on the trails from recent storms. Cost of materials will be reimbursed by the Commission. Rose has not heard back on this.

2024 Plant Sale: Rose reported that a new "simple streamlined" plant sale format is being considered. The format would be a Conservation Commission sponsored and advertised plant sale day at a local nursery after Mother's Day with a % of the sale price donated to and shared between the three participating Conservation Commissions. Rose will report back as this evolves.

Roadside ash trees report: The group discussed making sure that the Selectboard and Road Crew are aware of this report. Mary plans to forward the report to Riley Carlson, Selectboard Chair.

Conservation Commission Priorities: The group discussed current and upcoming priorities. These include: Town Forest management/maintenance, planning for the May 4, 2024 Green up Day, planning for a simple/streamlined plant sale in May 2024, Emerald Ash Borer, and addressing any river corridor related matters brought to the Commission.

Gonyeau Road: Gonyeau Road repairs & maintenance are still needed so that community members can access the Town Forest from the Gonyeau Road trailhead. Rose has recently learned that state funds could be obtained for road maintenance if the Town petitions that a section of Gonyeau Road (Class IV) be changed to a town trail. Rose will look into this further and report back.

Adjourned at approximately 8:15 PM
Respectfully submitted, Julie Hackbarth

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING: October 18, 2023, via ZOOM.