

**Conservation Committee  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
February 19, 2018**

Present: Cedric Alexander, Ken Denton, Gary Gulka, Chris Duff, Dawn Andrews, Lori Augustyniak

Next Meeting: **April 9, 7:00 PM**

Minutes of December 11 approved with no changes.

Public Comment

No public comment

Strategic Planning Process

The Conservation Committee initiated its strategic planning process with Lori Augustyniak as facilitator.

The Committee started off by reviewing its goals and developed the following:

**CONSERVATION COMMITTEE GOALS**

1. Educate and motivate the general public to improve the quality of air, land and water and appreciate and understand Cabot's natural resources
2. Encourage private and public land stewardship
3. Know what Cabot's natural assets are (flora, fauna, natural communities, etc.)
4. Undertake action-oriented projects to protect and enhance natural resources
5. Support responsible natural resources stewardship by the municipality, town committees and other organizations in Cabot

With these goals in mind, the Committee brainstormed a potential list of strategies to undertake over the next five years.

**BRAINSTORMED CONSERVATION STRATEGIES**

**Public Information & Outreach**

- Develop a plan for public involvement in Cabot's natural environment
- Provide landowner workshops for natural resource/habitat enhancements
- Make river monitoring data accessible to public
- Outreach to new landowners

- Tabling at Town events - put together packets
- Engage public through VT Conservation Design
- Natural History publication (such as Woodbury's publication)
- Who Lives Here? Sharing photos and info on wildlife in Cabot
- Home Gardeners - what to plant/what not to plant
- Landowners Guide and Resources for habitat management
- Theme-based Conservation Speaker Series (such as Year of Water, Habitat, Year of Tree)
- Conservation articles in Cabot Chronicle

## **Other Projects & Actions**

- Conserve wildlife travel corridors
- Streambank stabilization
- Identify historical uses of the land and how it has changed
- Eliminate farm runoff (manure, herbicides, phosphorus)
- Enhance water quality for swimming and fishing
- Invasives education and action - projects to mitigate invasives
- Grassland bird conservation
- Conduct natural resource inventory
- Set up trail system with education base - nature trails
- Identify special and critical habitat or other interesting natural features in Cabot
- Conservation Fund - publicize and seek donations
- Acquire special lands for public use/access or to protect sensitive locations- and manage
- Lead role in drafting Natural Heritage section of Town Plan
- Assist Planning Commission to integrate conservation practices into zoning regulations
- Review and advise on conservation for municipal infrastructure projects
- Town Forest Stewardship - publicize, nature trail, nature walks
- Molly's Falls Pond State Park - participate in planning and use for Park
- Identify groups and committees to collaborate with on conservation issues

Committee members will individually score each of the brainstormed list of strategies against the following criteria:

### **QUESTIONS FOR PRIORITIZATION**

1. Does the project help us to strengthen relationships and involve residents?
2. How well does the project align with the goals of the Conservation Committee?
3. What is your level of interest in being personally involved with this project?
4. How feasible is it for the CC (with or without partners) to actually accomplish this?

5. To what degree is this project/idea best suited for the CC and not another group in town?
6. Overall, how high a priority should this project be for the CC to engage in over the next 5 years?

Lori suggested that the Committee also begin to identify the groups and organizations in town that it should consider coordinating with. A preliminary list includes: residents, businesses, Select Board, Planning Commission, Trails Committee, Mentoring Program, Joes Pond Association.

As a homework assignment prior to the next meeting, Committee members will be asked to score each of the brainstormed strategies against the criteria, and the next meeting will focus on reviewing these results and developing a list of priority strategies over the next five years.