

Conservation Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2019

Present: Cedric Alexander, Gary Gulka, Dawn Andrews, Chris Duff

Next Meeting: **August 12, 7:00 PM**

Draft minutes of May 1 approved without changes

Public Comment

No public comment

Public Outreach

The next Cabot Chronicle article is due in mid-July. It was decided that we would do an article on invasive plants, with an overview on impacts, tips on preventing spread, and information sources. Some examples, such as honeysuckle, would be featured as examples. Chris will take the lead on drafting.

Natural Resource Inventory - Review of Scope of Work for Grant Application

The Committee reviewed the two preliminary proposals requested and received from Arrowwood Environmental and Matt Peters for conducting a natural resource inventory. These proposals provide a good foundation for developing the project description and budget for a municipal planning grant application.

In reviewing previously awarded municipal planning grants in the Central VT region since 2002, there was concern expressed that many of the grants awarded were significantly less than the full amount of funding available. There was some discussion about whether we should reduce the funding requested in the application and where we could cut back on the work. Gary will check with the grant administrators in Housing and Community Development about the funding amount.

Other sources of funding were discussed to supplement the work. Gary will check on CCIF funding and timelines as well as ANR's Watershed Grant Program. The latter may be able to fund some wetland inventory and riparian buffer work. We will also try to find out more information from Calais on their funding amounts and sources of funding for the project.

The next step for the Committee is to develop a preliminary project description and proposal that can be brought to the Planning Commission and Select Board for their approval to move forward on applying for a grant. Both will need to support the application.

The 2020 Municipal Planning Grant statewide priorities are due out later this month and it will be important to determine how this grant application addresses those priorities since it will be important in the scoring process for grant proposals. We also reviewed the competitive criteria for scoring grant proposals for last year's grants (this year is expected to be the same or similar:

Overall application quality - Is the grant well written? (10 points)

Project readiness and need - Does the project address a recognized need? (25 points)

Community partnership, support and commitment - Is there support for the project? (15 points)

Project approach - Is the project well-structured to address the need? (40 points)

Statewide priorities - Does the project address statewide concerns/priorities? (20 points)

Additional points can be awarded if the project is in a state designated area such as a village center.

Gary and Dawn will take the lead on developing a preliminary project description and proposal that can be presented to the Planning Commission and Select Board in July. We will first present the proposal to the Planning Commission.

The preliminary project description will be a one-pager with second page detailing project tasks and budget. The description will include the rationale for doing the inventory work, as well as impact and value of the project.

Timeline for next steps:

- Gary and Dawn to draft project description for Conservation Committee review by July 1
- Present project at July 11 Planning Commission meeting
- Present project to Select Board at one of their July meetings
- Review preliminary grant application at August 12 Conservation Committee meeting
- Present final proposal to Select Board at meeting in early September and get sign off documentation
- Finalize and submit grant application in late September

New Member Recruitment

On hold for now