

**Conservation Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2022**

Present: Jim Wolynetz, Gary Gulka, Roland Payne, Jr., Chris Duff, Dawn Andrews, Cedric Alexander

Next Meeting: **February 14, 7:00 PM**

Draft minutes of December 13 approved without changes.

Public Comment

No public comment

Project Updates

Gary mentioned that the proposed budget appropriation for FY 2023 (starting July 1) is \$500, which is the same as the current year appropriation.

Gary said that he will work with the Town Clerk's Office to get the Natural Resource Inventory report and video presentation posted on the town web site.

Actions and Next Steps: Gary will meet with Town Clerk and initiate posting of the Natural Communities study and video presentation. Get meeting minutes on web. Get meetings on web calendar.

Riparian Planting along Rec Field Tributary

Actions and Next Steps: Jim and Gary will meet with Friends of the Winooski staff to evaluate the rec field tributary for a riparian planting and develop a plan for a possible planting this year.

Tree Plantings on the Common

Two dead American Elms need replacement. It was agreed that we would try to replace by purchasing two elms (8 ft).

Actions and Next Steps: We will seek donations from residents through Front Porch Forum to purchase trees and a truckload of topsoil. Check on whether the town is willing to provide use of heavy equipment. Check on where to purchase trees.

Conservation Plant Sale

Chris has sent an email to Serena who is the lead person on the plant sale, letting her know that Jim is no longer the contact person, that we are still interested in participating, and to let us know the next steps. Jim said that the main tasks this year would be to distribute the brochures in town, sort the plants by customer order the day before, and help distribute the following day. This all occurs in late April. If there is no response in a few days, Chris will send another email (and include Annie Reed and Anne Miller). Cedric has agreed to be the lead person and Chris will assist as he can. Dawn suggested that if things don't come together soon on this project, that we drop it.

Actions and Next Steps: Chris to wait for email response and if no response in a few days, send another email to the three contact persons. Let them know that Cedric will be contact. As a result of the response, decide as to whether we will participate.

Public Outreach Planning for This Year

Continue monthly articles in the Cabot Chronicle. Continue to promote riparian plants through Friends of the Winooski.

It was agreed that we would plan on the following outreach events: Ash borer presentation/webinar, spring ephemerals walk, invasive plants walk, bird walk. We agreed to also check out beaver meadows/wetlands where we could host a future walk.

Actions and Next Steps: Chris will prepare an article for the next Chronicle on Woodbury Mountain purchase by the Northern Wilderness Trust and its forever wild designation. We will explore possible beaver areas for a future walk.

Rules of Procedure

There was a brief discussion of Rules of Procedure and there was consensus that we should draft and adopt something similar. Chris suggested that these rules also include a section on meeting minutes that describes closure and action plans/next steps on agenda items.

Actions and Next Steps: Review the Trails Committee Rules of Procedure and be prepared at next meeting to comment on and tailor this document of our use and eventual adoption.

New Business

Roland has been working on the ash borer management plan and will provide a draft to committee members when he completes his work on it. He is working on the strategic plan, specifying priority roads, and evaluating number of trees to be removed initially, with cost estimates. He will provide us with a draft for review and discussion at next meeting. Roland also plans to go out in the field in February to inventory the ash trees over 20 inches in diameter and measure them and identify their condition. He said he can use some help on this and will let us know when he plans to go out in the field.

Actions and Next Steps: Roland to complete a draft of the ash borer management plan and circulate to committee members. Committee will review and discuss at next meeting. Roland will let committee members know when he is going in the field to measure and assess large ash trees.

Jim mentioned an article in the current issue of Smithsonian on old growth forests. Roland will circulate an article by Ethan Tapper on old growth forests. There was a discussion of the old growth forest on Lord's Hill in Marshfield and an interest in visiting it.