

**Conservation Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2021**

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

Next Meeting: **December 13, 7:00 PM**

Draft minutes of October 11 approved without changes.

Public Comment

No public comment

Project Updates

Ash Borer Management Plan – Roland and Gary are on the Selectboard agenda Nov. 9 to discuss the plan and to suggest that the Conservation Committee would be willing to assist in drafting the remainder of the plan and budget over the next few months. If they agree, Gary will send out the current version of the draft plan and East Montpelier’s plan as an example. Not acting proactively could be a financial liability to the town.

Natural Resource Inventory – It was agreed that we would ask the Selectboard about the possibility of using ARPA funds to do a second phase on the inventory study.

Conservation Plant Sale

Chris spoke with Annie Reed and Ann Miller about Cabot’s continued participation in the plant sale. He came away from those discussions thinking that we may want to continue participation. He said that all plants offered are reviewed by Bob Popp in the Natural Heritage Program. We deferred a decision until next meeting. Chris will get clarification on whether we will share in proceeds. We also need to know what our commitment will be in drafting the sale brochure by February. We also recognized that in the following year Cabot would be the lead on organizing the plant sale. We also acknowledged that doing our own independent sale would be even more work. Our participation also links us with the other conservation commissions in our regions and helps build relationships.

We had a brief discussion of important native plants that would be good to promote to landowners. Some plants mentioned were sumac, red elderberry, crabapple, and choke cherry.

Town Plan Review

We agreed that we would read the Natural Heritage section of the current Town Plan and begin discussions at our next meeting. Dawn will mention our involvement to the Planning Commission. It was agreed that the information contained in the plan should be relevant, engaging, and readable by the public. There is also interest in getting assistance from ANR eventually in reviewing priority forest blocks as well as general assistance. Gary will send out a link to the plan.

Public Outreach

It was agreed that the next Conservation Corner article in the Chronicle would be on the topic of backyard bird feeding in winter. Dawn and Gary will take the lead.