

**Conservation Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2021**

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

Next Meeting: **January 10, 7:00 PM**

Draft minutes of November 8 approved without changes.

Public Comment

No public comment

Project Updates

See discussion below.

Conservation Plant Sale

Chris still needs to contact the Marshfield and Plainfield Conservation Commissions on the issue of sharing in sale proceeds and the amount of work that we would need to do in the coming months. Jim said that this year's workload would be low, but in the following year we would be the lead organization and have a greater role and workload. There was concern about committee members being able to devote the time to the sale, but it was also acknowledged that doing a sale on our own would be more work. A decision on this has been deferred.

Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan

We have a revised draft management plan from the Central VT Regional Planning Commission, at least with revised data on numbers of ash trees. It is our role to elaborate on the ash tree management strategy (preemptive vs reactive) and budget over a ten-year period before we have a solid draft. The Committee has asked Roland to work on drafting the strategy and budget for discussion at either our January or February meeting, depending on his ability to commit time to this. Once we have a working draft, we will involve the road foreman and one of the Select Board members to discuss the draft with us, make any revisions, and forward to the Select Board for their approval. It is a priority for us to get this project completed, at least from our end, before we take on any new projects.

Review of Natural Heritage Chapter of Town Plan

It was agreed that we would postpone the start of review. Dawn said that the Planning Commission is working on zoning issues at this time and waiting several months would not be a problem. There was a brief discussion about involving VT Fish & Wildlife staff in the review, and there was consensus that we would do this. Gary said there are several Fish & Wildlife webinars that he will suggest that we all review when we get this process underway.

Public Outreach

Next issue of the Cabot Chronicle will be February, with article due January 15. One suggestion was the Woodbury Mountain purchase by the Northern Wilderness Trust of several thousand acres with a forever wild designation. The other suggestion was an article on beavers and their role in shaping aquatic habitats.

It was noted that we had previously planned on a presentation on the emerald ash borer problem. It was agreed that it would be timely to do this around the time that the Select Board is presented with a draft management plan.

Planning for Next Year

Discussion on planning for next year was deferred, other than to mention that we would be taking up town plan review later in the year and we had previously planned on an invasives workshop in spring 2022.

New Business

Gary suggested that the committee consider adopting rules of procedure that talks about how we comply with the Open Meeting law, conduct meetings, elect officers, etc. He will circulate the rules of procedure recently adopted by the Trails Committee.