

Cabot Conservation Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2023

Present: Chris Duff, Gary Gulka, Roland Payne, Jr., Dawn Andrews, Niels Larsen

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

Draft minutes of August 14 approved without changes.

Public Comment

See discussion below under Flood Resilience.

Project Updates

Flood resiliency – Select Board endorsed the Flood Resiliency Task Force membership at their meeting of Sept. 5. Seth Pitkin has not responded regarding serving on Task Force. Brittany Butler was added since the last Select Board meeting. A shared drive has been set up for various documents and resources. On Tuesday Sept. 12, there is a flood resiliency meeting in Plainfield sponsored by VNRC. Several Task Force members and Select Board members are planning to attend. Brittany Butler volunteered to produce some LIDAR maps of the town. An initial meeting of the full Task Force will be scheduled in the coming week or two.

Niels Larsen mentioned the pond on his property as an example of how water can be stored and released slowly to reduce intensity of flooding. The pond (with no outlet or standpipe) increased 4 feet in height and then spilled onto adjacent fields. He believes that ponds can be constructed at relatively low cost by local contractors and can make a difference in storing flood waters high in the watershed. It was mentioned that ponds need to be constructed properly to avoid breaches.

Flood Recovery Grant – we received a \$500 flood recovery for the purpose of assisting landowners with riparian plantings.

Conservation Plant Sale – Rose Paul shared a preliminary proposal on changes to the plant sale. The suggestion was to have a weekend sale in mid to late May at East Hill Tree Farm where a certain amount of sale proceeds would go to the Conservation Commissions. None of the specific details have been worked out yet to evaluate this fully. Some skepticism was expressed to continuing the plant sale if the commissions are not willing and able to put the time into it. Chris mentioned a new nursery in Greensboro that will be selling native plants and operated by Lynette Courtney.

Public Outreach and Event Planning – A Chronicle article was submitted on broad winged hawks last month. It was not published in September, but we were told it could be in the next issue. Tyler Brown was contacted about giving a presentation on beaver ecology and management. He is interested in doing an in-person presentation and requested that we do this in the winter when his fieldwork has

ended. We agreed on this. We also discussed the possibility of doing a winter field trip to a beaver dam when access may be easier.

Beaver Management Policy on Town Lands

No progress on developing a draft.

New Business

Dawn mentioned that the Planning Commission will soon begin work on reviewing and revising the Town Plan. It was agreed that the Conservation Committee would review the current natural resources section of the plan and provide comments and recommendations to the Planning Commission. The timeframe is three months. It was noted that the new Town Plan will require the identification of priority forest blocks (Act 171).