

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
April 30, 2019

Conservation Commission Members: Drew Adam, Jen Latham, Erin Rodgers, Marilyn Chiarello, Laurie Callahan

Staff: Sue Fillion

A. Call to Order

D. Adam called the meeting to order at 5:20 P.M.

B. Announcements

- Spring Tree Road Tire Cleanup will take place on Saturday, May 4 at 8:30 AM
- On Tuesday, May 7 at 118 Elliot, an ecological economist will discuss breaking dependence on fossil fuels while strengthening the economy at Brattleboro Green New Deal Town Meeting
- The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions will hold a conference on September 28

C. Approve Minutes of April 9, 2019

M. Chiarello moved approval of the minutes of April 9; seconded by J. Latham. Pass 4-0-1. L. Callahan abstained.

D. New Business

1. Guest: Steve Barrett, Director of the Department of Public Works

The Commission discussed with S. Barrett how the Town handles the mowing of Japanese knotweed. The DPW usually cuts in once per year due to the staffing. They only cut to improve visibility at locations. S. Barrett reported that they don't have a best management practice for mowing, but they would be open to suggestions. He advised that they do have an invasive species management program on the watershed lands. Seasonal help is used to help do manual cutting but that funding comes from the water department enterprise fund. S. Barrett expressed interest in training opportunities. It was agreed that helping workers be able to identify plants and protect themselves would be good. The Conservation Commission will investigate training possibilities through VT Invasives or Better Backroads and explore potential partnerships (e.g., Windham Regional Commission). They will also see what best practices are recommended for roadside mowing. Ideas to look at are: is there a catcher available, is there any benefit to mowing only 1 mower width rather than 10 ft near streams, and what do other towns do for mowing.

E. Old Business

1. Joint Regional Conservation Advocacy Groups Meeting

D. Adam stated that the state is willing to do training on iNaturalist to assist towns in planning for natural resources. He distributed a couple copies of the new publication. He reported that the Natural Resource Conservation District will be the new hub to distribute conservation-related events. The next joint meeting will be hosted by the Marlboro Conservation Commission. He also reported on what other towns were working on which included projects related to Emerald Ash Borer, habitat linkages, urban trails, flood resilience, spring and summer walks.

D. Adam reported that he shared the knotweed video and it was well received. There was a discussion of creating an additional video or 2 that focuses on the "poisonous trio" of wild parsnip, wild chervil, and giant hogweed. The Commission agreed that two videos that show

people how to identify the invasive, protocol for what to do if one comes in contact with it, and how to report and where to report the invasive would be good. The 1st video may include pictures of videos and the 2nd would be longer to show how to identify it and how to differentiate it from other plants.

2. Japanese Knotweed– West River Park

L. Callahan advised that she visited the site and that though there is still some ice, there are also sprouts. It was agreed to have a workday on May 14 at 4:30. Conservation Commissioners will mark out and cut the sprouts. Wooden stakes and tape will be needed. A community workday will happen on May 28 during the regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meeting. There will be refreshments. S. Fillion will draft a Press Release to send the papers. L. Callahan advised that the piles of debris from last year have some sprouts and they should be burned before the 5/28 workday.

3. Stream Naming

S. Fillion has a preliminary compilation of unnamed stream segments based on staff work on Stream Stats. She needs to further review it before coming up with a finalized number of unnamed streams greater than 100 acres in the Whetstone Brook watershed.

G. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.