



# Brattleboro Planning Services

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230 Main Street, Suite 202 • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301  
Phone 802-251-8154 • [www.brattleboro.org/planning](http://www.brattleboro.org/planning)

**TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO**  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION Minutes**  
**Friday, August 28, 2020**

**Conservation Commission Members:** Erin Rodgers, Jesse Wagner, Laurie Callahan, and Marilyn Chiarello

**Staff:** Andrew Graminski and Sue Fillion

**Guest:** Lynn Levine

**A. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 2:03 PM.

**B. Announcements**

A. Graminski announced that the commission will receive a check for the 2020 AVCC Tiny Grant sometime after September 2, 2020 when the check will be mailed to the Town.

**C. New Business**

**1. Organizational Meeting – Elect Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk**

J. Wagner made a motion to nominate M. Chiarello to be the chair which was seconded by E. Rodgers, motion as passed. L. Callahan made a motion to nominate E. Rogers as chair of the commission, seconded by M. Chiarello, motion was passed. M. Chiarello made a motion to nominate J. Wagner as vice chair of the commission which was seconded by L. Callahan, motion was passed. The officers for the 2020-2021 calendar year are E. Rogers as the chair, J. Wagner as the Vice Chair and M. Chiarello as the clerk.

**2. 2020 AVCC Tiny Grant Discussion with Lynn Levine – Sign Content – Riverstone Preserve**

A. Graminski opened up the discussion with ideas that himself and L. Levine of Dummerston chatted about reading the possibility of having some of the signs include Abenaki perspectives.

A. Graminski mentioned that there are many efforts going around town regarding Abenaki advocacy and perspectives through interpretive signage and that he thought the signs of this portion of the Wet River trail would fit into those larger efforts. J. Wagner mentioned that there are signage efforts going along the Hogel Trail and below the Retreat.

L. Levine provided some background on how she got the idea to want to install interpretive signs along the Riverstone Preserve loop of the West River Trail. One approach Lynn discussed as a content idea was the natural history of that portion of the trail, starting with the splitting of the continents, glaciers and then the arrival of the Abenaki people coming into that area. L. Levine mentioned that she thought that the interpretive signs need to be very short and clear. If the signs are too long, people may not stop and read them all. It will be more effective to keep the signs short and simple.

Commissioners discussed the idea of having two signs per post, one more oriented for adults and other for children, and at different height levels. The idea of a scavenger hunt for the



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children's sign would be a great activity to involve children. Commissioners all seemed to be on board with that idea. L. Callahan liked an idea of including Abenaki poetry or stories to be used along with information regarding natural ecology but with it all being connected together. Commissioners felt confident in Lynn's ability to put something together after the discussion. L. Levine said that she will have sign content be reviewed by all appreciate people. A. Graminski will be in communication with Lynn and will make sure that right folks are in correspondence with each other as this project advances. She will provide feedback back to the commission once she is underway with some sign drafts.

### 3. Japanese Knotweed

#### a. Sheep Grazing Method of Management

#### b. Discussion/Follow-up on Gloria Cristelli's presentation from last meeting

As a follow-up from last meetings discussion regarding knotweed management methods, L. Callahan provided some more information on the different methods discussed and potential ideas that the commission could consider for next years knotweed cutting season. In conjunction with the sheep-grazing method which would cost around \$100 a day through a start-up business, the commission could create a comparative strategy area with different sections of knotweed patches to be managed through different techniques. One path would be managed through sheep grazing while other sections would be managed via mesh and cutting of knotweed manually, which is what the commission has been doing for some years.

Commissioners discussed the idea of harvesting knotweed root to produce tincture, which has positive medicinal benefits. It could be positive to get value out of the knotweed which is obviously negative to the environment. M. Chiarello thought that potentially for next year's cutting season, the town could consider incorporating the day-workers program into cutting knotweed at West River Park. S. Fillion will need to discuss that idea with Brattleboro's Town Manger. The commission will consider pursuing these ideas for next cutting season. Staff will look into grant/funding opportunities to help fund these management ideas.

### E. Old Business

#### 1. West River Park – Dog Waste Issue

A. Graminski followed-up with the Director of Recreation and Parks about the idea of installing a post which would house a sign reminding people to pick up after their dogs and to include a doggy waste bag. Rec and Parks gave the okay for the commission to purse this but need to have cost estimate for materials and what material the commission would need to put something like this together. J. Wagner thought that the post would be very basic made out of 4 X 4 post with a triangular top to drain water with an inexpensive sign that would be installed close to the floodplain if feasible. J. Wagner said the biggest cost would be the doggy bags. J. Wagner thought that a sign would be around \$30-40 dollars and a post would be around \$15.00. All together the cost would be under \$100 depending on the doggy bags. A. Graminski will get this information over to Rec and Parks and ask what the costs of doggy bags would be. J. Wagner volunteered to build and install the post at the park.



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## **2. Site Visits (Kettle Pond) – Pick a Date**

The commission decided to visit the Kettle Pond located in Wilson Woods on Monday October 5, 2020 at 1:00 PM.

## **F. Approve February 25, March 10, April 28, 2020, and July 28 Meeting Minutes**

L. Callahan made a motion to pass all minutes with edits from M. Chiarello seconded by J. Wagner. Minutes were passed.

## **G. Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:42 PM.