

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
October 22, 2019

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

Staff: Sue Fillion, Andrew Graminski

Guests: Marie Caduto, VT DEC; Jason Cooper, Jesse Wagner

A. Call to Order

D. Adam called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

B. Announcements

S. Fillion introduced Andrew Graminski, Planning Technician.

C. Approve Minutes of April 30, 2019 and May 28, 2019

L. Callahan moved approval of both sets of minutes with a typographic edit to the May 28 minutes.

M. Chiarello seconded. Pass 4-0.

D. New Business

1. Whetstone Brook – Projects and Issues

Marie Caduto, Watershed Coordinator for the VT Department of Environmental Conservation, presented information on the water quality of the Whetstone Brook. The data is from both VT DEC and Southeast Vermont Watershed Alliance sampling. She advised that the Whetstone has E.coli issues. It is good upstream of Detman Drive but not so good downstream. She said that it would be good to work on what the sources of E.coli are. She also said that the temperature monitoring data can help focus where buffer planting are needed.

M. Caduto spoke to other projects that VT DEC has been involved in, including basin planning, Crosby Brook Scoping Study, 250 Birge Street. She said that project still out there include:

- Kettle Pond cleanup and restoration
- Crosby Brook stormwater improvement
- Mountain Home Park floodplain issues
- Outreach to the community on water quality – especially as it relates to swimming holes

She said that if the Conservation Commission comes up with additional projects that they should let her know so that she can get them into the State database so that they can be eligible for funding.

M. Caduto noted that the grassy area to the right of the West River Park entrance should no longer be mowed according to the vegetation management plan.

2. Hinsdale Island Cleanup

S. Fillion advised that the Conservation Commission received an invitation from the group studying what will become of the existing bridges to work with the Hinsdale Conservation to identify ways to clean up the island so that people can better visualize what it could be. The idea is to have assistance with marking invasives and hopefully NHDOT will clean it up. J. Cooper advised that there is an upcoming Existing Bridges Subcommittee meeting where it will be discussed. The Conservation Commission indicated that they would like to participate, were

open to the Windham Regional Commission pulling together a joint-Conservation Commission, and some expressed interest in the upcoming meeting. Staff will reach out to find out more about the meeting and if it appropriate to have some (staff and a member) attend the meeting.

3. NRCS Soil-Related Demonstrations

M. Chiarello reported that the NRCS can do soil demonstrations. They have a soil tunnel, rain simulator. The Commission discussed having a launch event in the spring. It could be in conjunction with other area conservation commissions and organizations. M. Chiarello will follow-up with the NRCS to see if they would be willing to come in the spring.

E. Old Business

1. Japanese Knotweed– West River Park

The Commission discussed whether to do some burning of the material this fall and there were differing opinions. L. Callahan is going to check on the plant material and email with a recommendation.

2. Creamery Bridge

L. Callahan gave an update on a meeting she had at the site early in the month to discuss plantings. She advised that aesthetics is a primary motivation of the site work. She advised that she promoted the use of native species and keeping the site consistent with the VT natural landscape. M. Chiarello stated that she hoped that replanting will consider the need to improve the soil health. L. Callahan reported that she saw erosion upstream of the bridge on the Route 9 side. Staff will look into this area.

3. Source to Sea Cleanup

Due to time, this was not moved to the next meeting.

G. Adjourn

Due to quorum issues and the holidays, it was agreed that there will be no November meeting and the December meeting will be held on December 10.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.