

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 12, 2023

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Dean Locke, Noel Dodge, Peter Hammond, Denise Ashman, Jared Jasinski. Absent: Jackie Stanton

The December minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our conservation reserve fund had a 1500. donation (Wooza!), bringing its balance to \$5,000.

There were \$241.17 in expenditures, leaving a budget balance of 1758.83.

CONSERVATION VIA YOUTUBE

Peter continues to do a great job bringing along our new YouTube site. The EAB movies are posted and the mission statement has been added. (A question was posed about inquiries from the Academy Awards for the bug movies. But of course, my glamorous red-carpet friends!) And the snowfall in Peter's back yard has had 30 hits.

He's looking into the technicalities of access and posting things. To view our videos, go to YouTube, then to johnsonvtconservationcommission.

LAND MANAGEMENT TIMELINE

Sue produced a form that will collect information about potential town property located projects. We will review this information from an environmental standpoint and deliver an opinion to the selectboard regarding the project in question. We approved the form, with the addition of a request for an attached map and identification of the specific location for the proposed project.

The next step is presentation to the selectboard of a streamlined review process, designed to help the planning process, with a four-day turnaround after receipt of the completed form. Sue will get us on an agenda, preferably on February 6, and will email the form to board members and Brian Story. Lois will talk to Mark Woodard, who is probably the most environmentally-minded board member.

MARCH GLADNESS

To date the schedule is:

March 5: snowshoeing at Prindle at 10:00, led by Noel. We'll meet at the parking lot there.

March 12: Sue hasn't heard from Jane Sorenson and has had no luck with other possibilities, so will keep trying.

March 19: speaker from the Green Mountain Backcountry Program at the Library.

March 26: Noel will talk about either INaturalist or the Great Backyard Bird Count at the Library.

ROADSIDE MOWING

Denise has researched mowing and provided us with a list of pollinating plants, shrubs and trees suitable for our area. We decided to concentrate primarily on parsnip and chervil and will suggest to the road crew that those should be mowed after blooming and before seeds set. It'll be impossible for them to selectively cut every invasive on the roadsides, unfortunately. A great deal of the parsnip is found on state roads and the state doesn't bother with it.

Denise will come up with dates that cutting should take place and a paragraph explaining why mowing should be done.

It was suggested that we could put 'don't mow' signs on areas of native plants as well.

NEW POLLINATOR PROJECT

Noel had a swell idea: there are easier places to grow native plants than on the side of the road. Why not plant the +/-3 acres where we put the bat houses on Wescom Rd. with pollinators and create an informative, riverside, bird and bug-friendly garden? At present it is mowed grass. We could rototill it and seed it with a wildflower mix, starting with one acre.

Lois will ask Kyle and Jackie if they want to get involved.

To do: find out if we can use the Wescom site, identify funding sources, plan for signage and educational opportunity, plan community work days.

ASH TREATMENT

Sue identified four ash trees at the Arboretum that should be treated for EAB. Sadly, one day they may be trees that no one would recognize. The cost would be in the vicinity of \$800. It was suggested that the CC and the Tree Board share the cost of saving them. No consensus was reached.

Sue will research a firm price.

Another ash that ought to be treated is a very large one on private property on Cemetery Rd. It would qualify as a heritage tree.

MISC

- Lois passed out copies of the draft annual report. Everybody approved.
- Information on the Backyard Bird Count can be found on EBird.

Adjourned at 8:44

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary

Next meeting is on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at the Municipal Building