

# Meeting Minutes

## Town of New Haven

### Conservation Commission Meeting

Home of Susan Smiley, River Road

Wednesday, September 25 7:00 P.M.

#### Agenda:

**Members present - Susan Smiley, Dave Lewis, Al Karnatz, Mark Krawczyk (minute taker)**

#### Meeting Opening

- Request for any changes to agenda
  - Update on Conservation Congress for Vermont's Center-West Ecoregion - Mark Krawczyk

#### Financial Report

- Financial report
  - No new financial data to report. As of January 1, 2019, NHCC has \$2044 on hand.

#### Approve/Amend Minutes from Last Meeting

- We were unable to hold the previous meeting due to the lack of a quorum

- **New Business**

- **Confirm Dates and Speakers for Armchair Naturalist Program**

- **Pollinators**

- Dave has been in touch with Dr. Samantha Alber? at UVM
  - her work focuses on the potential for virus spillover between mite affecting honeybees to native bee populations
  - Dave also reached out to Brooke Decker - the State of Vermont's newly appointed pollinator specialist
    - perhaps she could speak about her position and work...
  - Dave will explore the possibility of holding one of these speakers in February/March

- **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)**

- We discussed hosting a speaker to provide an update on the Emerald Ash borer
  - perhaps the presentation could also explore the possibilities of inoculating a select number of healthy specimens to maintain genetic stock in the New Haven area and neighboring towns as Vermont Family Forests has begun to spearhead
  - David Brynn of Vermont Family Forests has found 2 OMRI (organic) approved pesticide products that have been found to be effective at keeping trees alive. It requires an annual treatment
    - He's proposing a group purchase of the product to control costs. The applicator must be a certified pesticide applicator to use the product.
  - The town of New Haven has no ash trees within the town green, but perhaps some at Demers Park. There are several locations with brown/black ash as well as green and white ash around town.

- Al mentioned the Vermont Land Trust had hosted a discussion in the recent past and perhaps he could reach out to see who hosted it and if they would be willing to present.

- Al will talk to Chris Olson (Addison County forester) and folks at VLT to see if perhaps we could host a forum/workshop that would be open to a broader public.. (5 towns and beyond) in order to reach a larger audience and avoid redundancy in these types of presentations

- He'll explore the possibility of holding the event in November or January

- Susan will call neighboring towns to find out more about what the specific subjects they've previously hosted regarding EAB and inform us so as to help direct the angle of this potential event in New Haven

- **Tracking**

- Susan brought up the possibility of holding a tracking workshop followed by the organization of a citizen science-type tracking of wildlife crossings. It seems as if this would require a good amount of work and coordination to obtain and generate reliable data so it would likely be difficult for the NHCC to coordinate.

- We discussed instead just holding a workshop/armchair talk on tracking.

- **Reptiles/Amphibians**

- And possibly Jim Andrews as a speaker on reptiles/amphibians. We would likely need to compensate him for his time. It appears we have plenty of funds available to cover his fees

- Al will contact him to see if he's available to speak

- Cheryl Mitchell had proposed the possibility of **partnering with a Middlebury J-Term Intern**

- The group consensus was 'possibly'. We all recognized it would take some coordination and direction to make this a successful interaction. Since we don't currently have any pressing projects, we'd need to come up with a practical task that would be accomplishable within the span of 3-4 weeks (the length of the 'J' term).

- We discussed the potential to have a student with GIS training do some mapping and analysis of either subwatersheds throughout the town of New Haven with the intent of developing a map resource that helps residents better understand drainage patterns and relationships. This could potentially lead to a previously discussed project that could involve installing signage at stream crossings to help better inform residents of the waterways throughout New Haven.

- The other project idea discussed was a broad scale analysis of habitat blocks and areas that appear to create 'pinch points' for habitat connectivity. This would be more of a map analysis type project with the student developing projections for possible areas where management might help connect isolated or fragmented habitat parcels.

- We'll need more discussion to ultimately decide whether or not to go through with pursuing such a relationship with a J term student.

- **Update on Conservation Congress for Vermont's Center-West Ecoregion**

- Mark Krawczyk provided an update on the upcoming Conservation Congress being planned by Vermont Family Forests to be held on November 2.

- This is a small scale regional brainstorming event introducing the concept of the resource 'commons' that we all share - water, air, and wildlife. It will largely consist of time for break out groups to discuss the status, needs, existing resources and opportunities to preserve, protect and enhance these resources. The event is open to the general public and will be announced via Front Porch Forum, posted flyers, on the VFF website, and through press releases to local papers.

- Perhaps the outcomes of the event will help also inspire and spearhead future efforts of the NHCC while also helping encourage collaboration between groups working along similar lines.

- Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm