

# Meeting Minutes

## Town of New Haven Conservation Commission Meeting Percival Home\* Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm

Members Present - Susan Smiley, Cheryl Mitchell, Dave Lewis, Dean Percival, Mark Krawczyk

### Agenda Items:

#### "Heritage Tree Contest" Update

Susan drafted a list of the most prominent public bulletin boards/posting locations in New Haven and Dave has posted flyers in most of them.

Dean added content about the contest on the NHCC website

- [www.vermontconservation.com](http://www.vermontconservation.com)

We will add submissions to the website to build a resource of exceptional trees in New Haven

Once we've added a few submissions to the website, we'll send the contest details out via Front Porch Forum to invite further participation. And as we receive new submissions, we'll share them every so often on Front Porch Forum to keep folks engaged and encourage further participation.

The 'submission deadline' is roughly June 21st.

We'll plan to allow several months for a small team of 'jurors' to visit each submission, measure them officially, and take a photo. We'll plan to honor the 'winners' at an event to be hosted in late September.

#### May Armchair Outdoorsman Event

Ponds, wetlands and more... walk w/ Craig Zondag Sunday May May 6 at Treleven Farm from 1:30-3:30 -

Dean will create a flyer for the event

This will also help to align with the Beeman curriculum as students will just have been discussing ponds in class

#### Vermont Naturalist Program

It's a training and certification program that's previously been held in parts of Chittenden Co. This time around the focus is on the 'Five Town' area and they're inviting local

Conservation Commission members first if they'd like to sign up. It spans several months during fall and winter. It costs \$300-400 and you then receive a certificate and are asked to create projects with fellow students.

Polly Darnell is interested in applying and also wanted to reach out to the Conservation Commission to see if there was any interest.

No member of the conservation commission who was present felt available to participate, but we discussed asking Polly and any other New Haven based participants to share on their experiences in the program and any projects they take on. Perhaps this could be an Armchair Naturalist type event in late winter of 2019.

## **Conservation Fund Discussion**

We began with a discussion of our respective understandings of the function of the fund, and the current state of discussions surrounding it's development. It seems that there is still a general lack of clarity on any specifics.

Susan and Al attended the select board meeting following Town Meeting where they learned a bit more about the concept. It's very early on in the process to know how the committee will develop. One thought is that a new committee will form that includes various interests in the discussion, similar to the Town Lands Committee. The town currently isn't rushing to form the committee. They are presently looking for input to help inform next steps.

Monkton is one nearby town that already has created a framework for their conservation fund. Since they didn't already have a conservation commission established, they created a fund and a committee to make recommendations to the select board

Monkton seeded their fund's coffers by adding a line item to the general fund - citizens actually fund it directly.

One of the ways the funds become available is through an an application that's available to residents in order to submit funding requests.

There will be a joint meeting of the Selectboard, Planning Commission and Conservation Commission on Thursday, May 10, 2018 at 7:00 pm. We intend to be well represented there.

Susan and Al discussed putting together a spreadsheet that catalogs the scope and context of similar existing funds like the one in Monkton. We'll be able to share this with the select board at the joint meeting.

Dean also created a bullet point list of criteria that may serve as a useful starting point and guide to help craft the specifics of this emerging fund.

The NHCC members present planned our next NHCC meeting on April 19th where ideally Monkton resident Laura Farrell will come to share their experiences there. This will give us an opportunity to check in on any new developments on this thread and also ensure we're on the same page for the May 10 Joint Meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned - 8:20 pm**