

MINUTES
Underhill Conservation Commission
October 14, 2019
Underhill Town Hall

Present: Karen McKnight, Nancy McRae, Betsy Chapek, Amy Golodetz, Laurie Graham, Steven Webster, Pat Lamphere, Daphne Pratt-Tanis

Absent: Peter Hiskes, Dan Steinbauer,

Welcome and Opening Remarks: Karen welcomed all and led meeting.

Public Comment: None

Approval Minutes: September 7, 2019 were reviewed and approved.

Time: 6:30pm - 8:15pm

Beartown Pit, Crane Brook Conservation District:

- Ethan Tapper connected with Karen McKnight to view her wooded property in terms of biodiversity, riparian area and wildlife corridors. Visited Beartown gravel pit where Japanese Knotweed (JKW) had been discovered to assess; 2 sections of knotweed, close to the riparian area. They also visited Crane Brook Conservation District, Ethan feels it has really spread in the past 18 months, along the roadside and its width and proximity to the stream. Ethan recommends dealing with these areas chemically in the spring. Also spotted invasive phragmites. The hillside knotweed is still there. Ethan sent Best Practices from NH, we need to have a policy with highway department because invasives spread often through digging for roadside maintenance and fill.
- Karen visited Moore Park (where high school did community workday in the spring) to check on updates of Japanese Knotweed. Noticing more erosion along the bank and JKW has grown back on both sides of the stream. Asain Bittersweet was also noticed. Bittersweet is hard to control and is not treated with glyphosate.

Invasive Species Task Force:

- Presentation was attended in Stowe that was led by County Forester Rick Dwyer. He suggests dealing with JKW with Triclopyr.
- Concerns about glyphosate for human health for those who are spraying it. The injection method was suggested in the past by Ethan Tapper.
- The NH best practices suggests smothering JKW with mulch before using black plastic, also consider the fill that goes on top of the plastic. In NH it is illegal to move any material with JKW in it.
- This past summer, we did not get enough volunteer labor to successfully manage JKW on a regular basis. Vermont Youth Conservation Corps could be another volunteer source.
- Brattleboro Town Plan outlines 5 strategies for dealing with invasives: identify priority species, educate visitors/citizens/town personnel, private local state federal groups, control spread with town-initiated projects, involve town personnel to control/manage town properties road rights of way.
- In town, permit is required to cut and fill material for landowners.
- Spotted Knapweed is another invasive to recognize in pastures and hay fields. Purple loosestrife in pond on Beartown, spread by seed.
- Selectboard Meeting Thursday Presentation (slideshow presented by Karen McKnight): Task Force to attend selectboard meeting to share about our work on invasive species, areas of concern, future strategies. In regards to Knotweed at Town Garage, this is an opportunity to educate, recommend and work to establish policy with the highway department.
- Share slideshow on FPF.
- Future Task Force meeting to set specific priorities.

Motion to create official Task Force Subcommittee. Nancy McRae moved, Daphne Tanis seconded. All in favor 6 to 0.

Amendment: This subcommittee will meet the 4th Monday of every month. This will increase in meeting time to continue to meet the goals of both the Task Force & UCC other agenda items. Will warn meetings and publish minutes.

Capital and Other Expenses for Budget

- Suggestion to propose a Line Item in the Budget for control of invasive species. Ideally a budget that carries over from year to year to work to eradicate priority invasives with an expert, invasives consultant who will also provide recommendations.
- Consultant Ideas: Will Dunkley & Mike Ball "Got Weeds?" Jericho Underhill Land Trust used a consultant.
- By the end of October, budget numbers are due.
- Would like to purchase equipment and tools for invasive management. Talking about items to purchase with this years budget about invasive management tools at the Task Force meeting. Send Karen a list of other purchase items.

Other Information

- Cyanobacteria confirmed at Crane Brook water. No remediation suggested by state.
- Nancy connected with Anton at Recreation Committee for signage at Crane Brook.
- Stove at entrance to Crane Brook Trail needs to be removed, Betsy will look into removal options.
- Draft minutes will be re-sent for easy approval towards our next meeting date.
- Next time, conversation about education opportunities.

Adjourn at 8:15pm.