

**Town of Monkton
Conservation Commission
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, May 7th, 2020 6:00pm
Zoom and Phone Meeting**

Members Present: Chelsea Smiley (Chair), Jaime Schulte (Clerk), Kevin Lambert, Ann Johnston Miller

Members Absent:

Guests Present: Laura Farrell, Caroline Alves, Ian Smiley, Mark Boltz-Robinson

Chelsea called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

Regular Business

- Review Agenda
- Set Time/Date of Next Meetings
 - Thursday, June 4th, 2020 at 6:00pm
 - Thursday, July 9th, 2020 at 6:00pm
- Approve Minutes
 - Approve Minutes for April 9th, 2020
 - **Ann moved that we approve the minutes for April 9th, 2020. Jaime seconded. No edits were made in discussion. All were in favor (4-0-0).**
- We would like to thank Ian Smiley for his service to the Conservation Commission as Treasurer over the past two years!
- Appoint officers and discuss officer terms
 - **Jaime moved that Kevin Lambert be appointed Treasurer of the Monkton Conservation Commission. Ann seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0).**
 - Will postpone consideration of other officer positions until Caroline joins the commission.

Stewardship

- Pond Brook Management Plan update
 - Resolving last questions and including more recent information in the updated plan which will go next to the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) for approval (as the holder of the conservation easement). Once approved by VLT it will go to the Selectboard for preliminary approval. Following preliminary approval by the Selectboard it will be posted on the town webpage (and some hardcopies made available) for at least two weeks for public comment. Following the public comment period the public will also be invited to an MCC meeting to discuss the feedback. The commission, Selectboard, and VLT will then approve a final version.

Community Engagement

- Values Mapping
 - Having an in-person Values Mapping event is not feasible in the near term.
 - Values Mapping would ideally be an early step in an Act 171 habitat connectivity map but could happen separately (the Planning Commission has asked the MCC to assist with an Act 171 map).
 - Given COVID – is there a different way we should address this?
 - Could we have an online/virtual Values Mapping process? Ann will reach out to Jens Hilke regarding what other towns are doing for Values Mapping and Act 171 map creation.

Working with Other Committees

- Maps for committees and residents to use (such as the Development Review Board)

- At our previous meeting we consolidated map layers (such as wetlands or forest blocks). Jaime and Caroline will follow-up with some proof-of-concept maps for the layers which should be ready for our June meeting.
- We will review Act 250 & 171 as preparation for upcoming Commission activities and to inform our work with other committees.

New Business

- ENB Update from Ann
 - Ann will reach out to Zapata Courage to see if she would visit us on the topic of ENB.
- We enjoyed a very informative presentation from Caroline Alves on how Monkton can use digital data (GIS) to prevent flood damage. There are online resources that can inform land use to prevent future road damage and flooding of structures. Jaime will discuss this with the Development Review Board to see if they would also like the presentation.
- Mark Boltz-Robinson joined us. Mark is on the Town Forest Committee, Energy Committee, and is our Monkton Tree Warden.
 - Mark offered to do a presentation on how to use iNaturalist and gave us an eye-opening presentation on the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) beetle.
 - The EAB is a small green beetle that kills all varieties of ash trees.
 - EAB has been confirmed in Bristol. It is very likely already in Monkton.
 - It is possible to treat specific trees (but very expensive per-tree). Mark is beginning to map ash trees in Monkton rights of way and on public land.
 - UVM is providing materials for locating EAB and educating owners of ash trees. There will be an education program as we move toward the fall.
 - Firewood awareness is a way that we can help: firewood should not move out of EAB zones, which now includes Monkton. Even kiln-drying is not sufficient: it must be heat treated. Please buy firewood only from local sources!
 - If you see what seems like a dying ash tree: please report it to treewarden@monktonvt.com

Updates & Other Items

- Anything else?
 - Discussed community engagement on conservation topics:
 - Local mushrooms, tree/plant ID, ramps, fiddleheads, etc.
 - Jaime did a post on the Monkton Facebook page about managing Burdocks.
 - Jaime plans to do additional posts on invasives in the coming weeks.
 - We will schedule a third summer of community action days (with plenty of distancing) to continue the work of eradicating wild parsnip at Morse Park.

Adjournment

- Jaime moved to adjourn. Ann seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0). Adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaime Schulte
Clerk