

Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission
Meeting June 11, 2019
Approved

Members present: Craig Heindel, Chair, Dennis Armell, Jen Cirillo, Ron DeBellis, Amy Dohner, Jadziah Hannon-Moonstone, Karen Pettersen

Guests: Joe Nelson and Paul Stanilonis

Craig opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

The May 14, 2019 meeting notes were moved to be accepted as presented.

A. Emerald Ash Borer

1. Approximately 20 people attended the EAB Workshop.
2. Joe Nelson reported that an infected tree was found in Bristol. He contacted the State. The State confirmed the tree has been attacked by EAB. The eastern half of Ferrisburgh is now in the high risk zone.
3. What do we do? Craig suggested that an inventory of the ash trees along the town roads and town properties be conducted. Craig said Elise Schadler, Technical Assistance Coordinator with the VFPR, could tell us how to conduct an inventory. Craig estimated that the Town has 60 miles of Town roads. Elise told Craig that all the utilities are working on their management plans, but they haven't been released.
4. A UVM Natural Resources class is looked for projects for their students. We would have to submit a request for student assistance to UVM with a short description by August 15. Potentially the students could help with the inventory, provide maps, and/or develop a management plan with a description of the options. Jen will follow up with the professor.
5. Various ideas were discussed; the inventory should be started prior to the August submission date, there should be 2 people in a car to do the inventory, and a cell phone would be needed to record the GPS coordinates and a picture taken of each ash tree during the inventory, and the town could be divided into 4 quadrants based on Route 7 and Middlebrook Road .
6. Craig will contact Elise to provide some training. Also, potentially Chris Olson, County Forester, and/ or Cliff Mix, Town Tree Warden would help with the training. Craig will ask GMP if they have maps of their lines. Paul said each of GMP poles are numbered which would help with locating any trees near utility lines on a map .
7. Our role will be an informational gathering effort. The inventory will help the Town decide which trees are a risk of destroying property. Joe and Paul emphasized that EAB infected ash trees are different than other types of trees that are diseased or attacked by various insects, because when the branches or a entire EAB infected tree falls it will be like "exploding styrofoam", and is very dangerous.

B. Vorsteveld/Arnold Bay tree cutting

1. Craig reported that the Selectboard is waiting for the issue to get on the court docket.

C. Ashley Farm Open Space Agreement

1. Craig attended the Selectboard hearing on the Ashley Farm Open Space Agreement. DeVos, present owner of the Ashley farm, wants to sell the portion of the farm west of the home owners along Gilson Lane. The home owners want to revise the open space agreement before the farm land changes ownership. The SB stated that the only way the Town can change the agreement is with the existing or future farm owner, so they encouraged the neighbors to retain an attorney to pursue a change.
2. The Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission is mentioned in this Agreement, which was unknown to the FCC until the revision request was made by the Gilson Lane homeowners. Craig will ask the Town if there are other agreements where the FCC is mentioned.

D. Zoning Regulations rewrite

1. The present members agreed to meet this July and August to discuss the natural resources portion of the Land Use Regulations as proposed by Brandy Saxton.
2. We agreed to meet either on July 15th or 16th, and on Aug. 6th. Both Jen and Amy won't be able to attend the July meeting, and Ron won't be able to attend the August meeting.

E. Bat Monitoring

1. Jen will assume the leadership as Amy will be away in July.
2. We set the dates for the 4 monitoring days in July:
July 11, Thurs. with July 12, Fri. as the raindate
July 15, Mon. with July 17, Wed. as the raindate
July 24, Wed. with July 25, Thurs. as the raindate
July 28, Sun. with July 29, Mon. as the raindate

F. Yellow Iris eradication

1. There is no additional information from the Lewis Creek Association.

G. Master Naturalist Program

1. Amy was in touch with Alicia Daniel. The program will be taking requests for the 2020-2021 year. We should ask Alicia to come to our Sept. 10th meeting.

H. Animal sightings

1. Nothing new to report

I. New business

1. Monkton is planning on reactivating their Conservation Commission, and Laura Farrell would like to talk to Conservation Commissions from surrounding towns. Craig said he would attend their July 17th meeting at 7:00pm.
2. Keeping Track – Amy talked with Sue and Bobby about the winter site visit to the Town Forest. The date is Jan. 24th, Fri. between noon and 4pm. Amy will work on the contract.
3. Town Forest – Karen said she had a request from a nearby landowner to have the right-of-way thru the Schultz/Aldrich property marked with signs or flagging so they know how to get access to the Town Forest. Craig wants to wait until we have a definitive r-o-w agreement with the landowner.

No other business was discussed and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm. The next scheduled meeting is July 16th, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Pettersen, Secretary