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Weston Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes Thursday, August 2, 2018

Attending: Anne Degan, Annie Fujii, Andrew Harper, Donald Hart, Deborah Hennessey, Susan Sommer

Absent: Jeff Lennox

Visiting: Jim Linville, Irwin Kuperberg

Meeting Called to Order: 7:04 pm

Requested Changes to Agenda: Moved emerald ash borer discussion to top of the agenda. Moved Londonderry Conservation Commission discussion to 7:45 pm.

Public Comment: None

Review and Approve Minutes: Donald moved and Deborah seconded to approve June 7, 2018 minutes. Unanimously approved.

Emerald Ash Borer:

Selectman Jim Linville discussed the need for a townwide strategy to deal proactively with the damage caused by the emerald ash borer, known to decimate all ash tree varieties. The insect was detected this year in areas of Vermont, including recently in Bennington County. At the town level, a first step might be a formal survey of the number of ash trees – abundant and easily identifiable - within the right of way on the town's 30 miles of roads. Eventually, Jim said, any townwide effort must involve discussions with Green Mountain Power, VTel and VTrans to see how the town and utilities can work together to get a jump on the problem. Another idea is to offer incentives to loggers willing to harvest ash trees before the damage is done. Jim noted that the emerald ash borer is both an economic and a liability issue for the town so it will be critical to tackle the problem early on and in stages. Annie noted that it is a problem for private landowners as well, not just within the town right of way. It was agreed that the Conservation Commission, as an immediate step, should place an insert in the upcoming town tax mailing, alerting landowners about the problem and pointing them toward more information.

Londonderry Conservation Commission:

Irwin Kuperberg, chairman of the Londonderry Conservation Commission, shared ideas and projects his commission is working on with an eye toward collaborating on events in the future. He said the group works with property owners on land use programs, hosts educational events, assists with monitoring West River water quality, does trail work and contributes to drafting parts of the Town Plan that apply to conservation. Londonderry is also concerned about the emerald ash borer and is interested in coming up with a strategy to deal with the problem. It was agreed that the two town commissions should collaborate in the future on a public forum dealing with the emerald ash borer.

WCC Projects Update

- Library Books Donation: Deborah will purchase and deliver \$60 worth of conservation books for the Wilder Memorial Library as part of the Conservation Commission's \$100 annual donation to the library; the remaining \$40 will be used for future joint program(s) with the library.

- Cold Spring Brook Park: Weston Community Association is moving ahead with preliminary engineering design, permitting and identification of funding sources for the removal of the lower dam, in anticipation of going out to bid in fall 2018. The WCC will continue to act as a technical resource.

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- **Civilian Conservation Corps Trail:** Andrew reported that the US Forest Service has no apparent interest in working with us to restore the CCC trail, but has encouraged us to proceed on our own. The next steps will be to identify the area with GPS and to hike out in the fall to see what needs to be done.

- **Web Site:** Annie and Susan will work to reestablish passwords, etc., so we can access and update the WCC Web site.

Old and New Business: None

Adjourned: 8:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Degan

Next meeting: September 6, 2018, 7 pm, Weston Town Office