

Meeting Minutes: Dummerston Conservation Commission

March 10, 2016, 7:00 pm

Dummerston Town Hall

Members: John Anderson, Ed Anthes, Mary Ellen Copeland, Bill Johnson, Jane Michaud,
Jonathan Royce, Bill Schmidt

Guests: Marilyn Allen, Sarah Berg, John Evans, Jesse Furman

1. *February minutes.* A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as submitted.
2. *Halifax Conservation Group.* Marilyn Allen and Jesse Furman reported on efforts by their 100+ member conservation group to prevent the permitting of a schist quarry in their Conservation District, now under appeal in Vermont's Environmental Court. Marilyn and Jesse were invited to attend the March 31st regional meeting of conservation commissions.
3. *Prospect Hill Trail.* John Evans reported that the Trail Committee has decided to stop maintaining, and will remove postings from the 2.4 mile Loop Trail, due to uncertainty around continued access through private property. He and Bill S. have notified the Selectboard and the Prospect Hill Trustees. DCC will support maintenance of the section of trail within town-owned Prospect Hill land, rerouting as necessary. The Committee plans to focus on trails at Scott Farm.
4. *Tree pests.* Jonathan reported that the purple traps used for detection of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) have not been effective; a method of girdling ash saplings then chopping them each year to look for EAB is now being utilized. As the importing of firewood is thought to be the main source of entry, DCC will contact area campgrounds in the spring about the threat of EAB. John A. has found infestation of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in town.
5. *Dummerston Views.* John A. will submit an article on DCC activities at the end of April.
6. *Windham Regional Commission (WRC).* The WRC has created the position of liaison to area conservation commissions; he will attend the March 31st regional gathering of CCs.
7. *West River Trail.* John A. has contact Bob Popp about rare dogwoods that may be in danger from ongoing trail work. State regulations that prohibit disclosing the location of rare/endangered species has been an issue of concern in protecting them.
8. *Town Plan.* Sarah reported that public forums to review draft revisions to the Plan will begin in November. She will attend the first hour of the next few DCC meetings as we review conservation-related sections for possible input. The issue of managing barberry, which harbor deer ticks, was discussed for inclusion in the Natural Resources section.
9. *Upcoming area events*
3/17: Beetles, Bees & Butterflies, pollinator symposium sponsored by VANR, Burlington
4/9: Citizen Scientists: Making a World of Difference, 9:30 am-12:30 pm, River Garden, Brattleboro, sponsored by the town of Brattleboro
6/24: Community Sing, Dutton Pines, sponsored by Transition Dummerston

10. *Scheduled DCC programs*

3/14: Biological Communities with Bob Engel, 10 am-12n, The Learning Collaborative

3/26: Maple Day, 12n-4 pm. Eight sugarmakers will have open houses; Bunker Farm will host a sugarbush tour. Bill S. coordinating. Fire Department's sugar supper starts at 4:30 pm. Flyers at participating sugar houses and at Town Office.

3/31: Joint conservation commissions meeting, Putney CC hosting, Putney Cares barn

4/5 or 4/6: Fish program, Ed coordinating

4/26: Invasives program with Chris Polatin, Learning Collaborative, Mary Ellen coordinating

11. *Sightings*

Jefferson salamander, coltsfoot, hepatica, redwings, honeybees, snowdrops, coyote, bobcats, fox sparrow, raccoons, woodcock, crows, ravens, wood ducks, hawks migrating, eagles, turkey vultures, ducks, geese

Next meeting: April 14

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Michaud