

Minutes February 16, 2017

Dummerston Conservation Commission

Members present: Bill Johnson, Betsy Whitaker, John Anderson, Bill Schmidt, Lynn Levine, Ed Anthes, Mary Ellen Copeland

Minutes of the January meeting accepted as written. Lyn moved, Betsy seconded. All approve.

Educational Programs

Astronomy program had to be postponed three times due to snow and ice. Now scheduled for March 28 7 pm, Learning Collaborative.

Wednesday Winter Series- excellent quality of presentations. Between 30-50 people each time. Costs have been covered. One program remains, Bob Engle on Pollinators, Feb 22.

Trees & Tracking- 10 people confirmed for Saturday with Lynn.

Drought panel- Our local drought was moderate last year, although other parts of VT and New England were severe. There does not seem to be enough interest to host a drought forum at this time.

Wetlands presentations with Patti Smith. Saturday in the field combined with presentation?

Our vernal pools and wetlands are the base of a lot of food chains and are interesting to kids.

Water quality?

Need to check Town Plan re wetlands. State definition includes a minimum size. Many smaller wet areas in Dummerston contribute to the ecological diversity of Dummerston, although they may not meet the VT definition of "wetland".

Deborah Luskin, will be asked to lead a program in Mary on Getting People Hiking.

Steven Long will be asked to do a program on the Hurricane of '38 in March.

Michael Snyder, Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation
Sam Lincoln, also with Forests & Parks would be possible speakers for the Commission.

David Foster's staff of Harvard Forest will presentation in September on the State of New England forests.

Mary Holland who wrote “Naturally Curious”, and “Naturally Curious Day by Day” would be a good speaker.

Monica Przyperhart from Agency of Natural Resources wants to present two courses they have developed with the Assoc of Vt conservation Commissions in our area: 1. VT Ecology and Environment and 2. Choosing Local Land Use Strategies. Mary Ellen will talk with BEEC about this opportunity.,

The Regional Conservation Commission Meeting will be held March 16, at Dummerston Church, 6:00 potluck, with a meeting to follow.

American Forest Foundation has granted the DCC \$1,000 for the 5th Grade from Dummerston School to develop a trail map for Prospect Pasture. Lynn will work with the 5th grade teacher on this project. The trail map will be ready before school ends for the year. This is the first year of a possible three-year grant.

Town Meeting:

We will show the Invasive Plants and Insects information. Mary Ellen will report on the Conservation Commission’s activities.

Dummerston School Program:

Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center will be working with the school children and teachers. This school year, grades 1-5. Next school year, they hope to do the full year with all grades.

Prospect Hill:

The Nature Preserve and Trail Committee has dissolved. At their final meeting, members decided to distribute their remaining funds to Putney Mtn Association (\$1,000) and \$3,400 to the Prospect Hill Fund.

Putney Mtn Assoc is purchasing two more properties, which include the present Putney Mountain trail location.

Black Mtn-

A bridge over the granite streambed and a boardwalk near the beaver pond have been installed by the Nature Conservancy. We will plan a walk there in the Spring, and will look into making a map for the area.

Dutton Pines:

The Conservation Commission will host an event at Dutton Pines June 25. Transition Dummerston will host a Summer Sing in late August. A monthly series, “Music at Dutton Pines”, is being considered.

Sightings:

Now that there is two feet of snow on the ground, the bear on Camp Arden Rd has finally gone to bed. Opossum on Camp Arden Rd. "Hundreds" of turkeys off Green Mountain Camp Rd.