

Dummerston Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes 5/13/2021

Members attending: Dan Kray, Judy Fink, Christine Goepp, Lynn Levine, John Anderson, Jesse Wampler, Richard Mills, David Greenwalt, Connie Woodberry

1. April Minutes: Motion to approve by Lynn Levine, seconded by John Anderson. Unanimous approval by commission.
2. Financial Report: Christine Goepp reported a Kiwanis Club donation; thanks sent to club.
3. Online Outreach
 - a. Newsletter content (Dan Kray): Good response to “Grandpa Nature Notes” by John Anderson. Upcoming letter will have a trail input from Richard Mills. New subscribers are joining. Getting good responses via the postings on the Dummerston Community Facebook page.
 - b. Web site content (Dan Kray): Most of reorganization is done. Working on editing. Progress is being made on blogging capability and subscription options. Content being brought over from committee team stories and other background. Addition of content is being streamlined, as well as data collection.
 - c. Webinars (Lynn Levine): Gathered some fern videos (to include Maidenhead/hair Spleenwort (!) along East West Road) during Green Up Day, and there are two more videos forthcoming in her series. There are also subscription options available for Lynn’s videos on her YouTube channel.
 - d. Dummerston sightings: Lynn Levine sighted a bald eagle nest with a baby eagle near west Townsend. One of the adult eagles was also nearby. Jesse Wampler, while on a West River canoe trip, saw a number of brown bats clearing out the black fly eggs. Also, more morels (!) were located. And the Grosbreaks have returned. Connie Woodberry reports Indigo Buntings returning.
 - e. Conservation stations (Richard Mills): The station now has the metal roof installed. Prototype will be taken to John Anderson’s place to see if there is a good location for it on his property. Another option is Deer Run. Also working on reference materials for the station. Commission is looking for more options for maps and removable/to-go items for the community to use. Lynn Levine and Judy Fink have books and material to donate that can be used to stock the station. Motion by John Anderson to reimburse Richard Mills \$50 for his “parts and labor” on the station. Seconded by many. Unanimous consent by the Commission. Looking into if the regional commissions have any products or material that they might like to supply for the station.
 - f. Events / Groups: Lynn Levine and Christine Goepp attended the Windham Regional Conservation Commission (virtual) meeting. Christine spoke on the topic of fundraising for commissions – town

funding and/or grants being options. Also, the meeting led to a piece published in the Views of Dummerston concerning the Dark Skies project.

- g. Views of Dummerston: Christine Goepp wrote a short piece on the Dark Skies project after it was presented/discussed at the Windham Regional Conservation Commission meeting.

4. Active Programs

- a. Education and collaboration (Judy Fink): Commission needs to discuss donation amount to the school (due in August)
- b. BEEC activities (Judy Fink): No update
- c. Monarch project (Judy Fink): Plant pick-up is scheduled for June 19th from 11am – 2pm at Bunker Farm. Judy checking in with buyers from last year, as well as setting up training for the data blitz accounting that is upcoming this Summer. She should have the materials needed to participate in data gathering and will train participants on data collection. Still have not heard if we received a grant for the project; expectations are to hear in the next few weeks. As for publicity, Judy is working on a press release for both the Reformer and The Commons, as was done last year, in hopes that this event might grow into a more regionally recognized event. There will be plenty of plants (75 single plants / 45 six packs) available on the day and for purchases after the event. Judy will draft a release that will be focused on Dummerston residents and returnees for plants. If monarchs return this year, Judy may offer small group visits for people. Further work coming based on gathering recommendation and situations.
- d. Stewardship:
 - i. Richard Mills brought up a program where the state offers the ability to purchase Brook and Brown Trout that could be used to stock waters in the Dummerston area. Is there a possibility of a sustainable stream or brook that the Commission could help populate/sustain as a program? The Middle Road brook (Crosby Brook) could be an option for kids' fishing if stocked; or the stock could assist in additional wildlife attraction to the area. Vermont Fish and Game might be the point-of-contact. Richard Mills will take up the effort to coordinate with them.
 - ii. Lynn Levine asked about addressing access to the West River.

The Commission would like to look at making the West River accessible – and were originally installation of the steps. Last Fall the Selectboard wrestled with the stair access, but put off any major decisions. The Commission should maybe start taking more of a lead on river access moving forward. Discussion included concerns for current access options, alternate access points, and possible future trail access further north. The commission members will coordinate through Lynn

Levine with Roger Haydock to possibly walk the area and determine if a lower maintenance trail could be created.

- e. Town Wildlife Map (David Greenwalt): Map project is complete. He has not received any feedback yet from the town.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 10th at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Todd Davidson