

STRAFFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

February 22, 2022

ZOOM

Board members in attendance: Micki Colbeck, Kate Bass, James Erbaugh, David Paganelli, Chuck Sherman, Mike Hebb, and Greg McHugo.

- 1) Approved the minutes from January 25, 2022, meeting.
- 2) Discussed general goals for 2022:
 - a) James: To usher our group through the process.
 - b) Kate: Focus on invasive plants and animals (emerald ash borer). Get school kids involved. Finish up the wetland inventory. Education and outreach, possibly a bulletin board with wildlife and plant photos and fact sheets.
 - c) Micki: Nature walks with the community and river reforestation.
 - d) David: Ashley Forest management. A family challenge to find the largest trees of every species in town. Have an informational site on our website to provide conservation information for landowners.
 - e) Mike: Keep trails system intact. Host some public events with naturalists, including orchid walks.
 - f) Chuck: Hikes and presentations. Live cam to our website.
 - g) Greg: Conservation projects with the school.
- 3) Open Space Plan review: Thank you to David. Reviewed the “recommended actions” section and discussed which ones to focus on and which ones to let go. Some actions have already been done; some are not as relevant. GIS mapping will eventually need to be done. Wetlands need to be inventoried. Town trail system is ongoing. Educational projects and invasive species projects will remain a focus. James and David will finalize the Open Space plan with the few changes we approved and submit it to their committee.
- 4) Membership to Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions. There is a \$50 fee for membership with access to mini grants and information. Voted and approved to try

it for one year and then reevaluate. The money comes from our fund managed by the town office.

- 5) Flood Resilient Communities grant update. Micki and Erik are still waiting to hear.
- 6) Ashley Forest update: David said as of a week ago there were three people from Sharon interested. Strafford Selectboard is meeting tomorrow to discuss the Strafford applicants.
- 7) Trails report from Mike: Not much has changed over the winter. Mike wants to start a calendar of events—community walks on the trails with conservation commission members and others who have some expertise. Mike will lead some orchid walks in May. Trail maintenance volunteers each have their own trail and develop a relationship with the owner. Several acres on O’Neil Road may be sold by the town. As this is access to parking and trailhead for the Townhouse trail, Mike will ask them to secure a right of way for trail access.
- 8) Motion to adjourn; seconded; motion carried.

Micki Colbeck