

## Minutes Northfield Conservation Commission 11-25-20

- I. Roll Call: Brad, Ruth, Dave, Debbie, Russ, John
- II. Set/adjust agenda: Dave asked to add amending the Town Forest Stewardship Plan and concerns with the TFSC to the agenda. These items will be discussed under the "Update from Town Forest Stewardship Subcommittee.
- III. No public participation.
- IV. Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the October 28, 2020 meeting were approved with the following changes: #7 changed to read, "Dave Packie joined the meeting to explain his interest in joining the Conservation Commission; see attached letter of interest. On a motion by Russ, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brad, Dave was unanimously recommended to appointment by the Select Board". Motion to approve minutes by Brad, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ruth. Motion passed.
- V.
  - A. The first Emerald Ash Borer forum was held on 11-12-20, sponsored by the Northfield Conservation Commission and VT Coverts. Thank you to those who helped to publicize this event. It was well attended with 23 individuals listening in. The next forum will be held on January 13<sup>th</sup> and focus on woodlot management in the face of EAB.
  - B. Progress with Ash removal: Ruth needs updated information from J Jeff before a report can be submitted. It was agreed that a meeting should take place with Jeff in the next week. Ruth reported that a grant extension has been signed.
  - C. Town Forest Stewardship Subcommittee update: Brad provided an overview of the work groups formed by the TFSC. Forest management/access: Brad and Russ, master trail plan/mapping: Lydia, Nelson. Event management/NU relations: Colin, Russ. As there are currently 7 members of the TFSC including 3 NCC members, it is possible to comply with the open meeting law with 3 person work groups. Groups may add participants with expertise in a given area as needed. Brad offered to look into the membership of the trails group but this has been clarified by Russ.

The TFSC reviewed the Town Forest Recreation Management Plan drafted by Dave. Brad suggested this be sent to NCC members for review.

Map 6 in the Town Forest Stewardship Plan will be replaced by Ken McCann, the town's IT person.

Dave expressed a concern that the decision making process as outline in the Stewardship Plan was not being followed. He cited minutes of the Select Board meetings of October 8 and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 to reference comments made by Select Board members regarding the plan. Dave feels that by closing an unsanctioned trail this Fall, the TFSC acted without authority in that this decision should have been made at the

level of the Select Board. A group discussion of what actions were allowable by TFSC and NCC without Select Board consultation did not reach a consensus. Debbie, as chair of NCC will reach out to Jeff Shulz and the Select Board chair, Dave Maxwell to determine a process to identify decisions that can be made without referral to NCC or Select Board.

- D. Conservation Commission Vacancy: as there is currently one position vacant on the NCC, Debbie will advertise for a new member via Front Porch Forum.
- VI. Public Participation: none
- VII. Adjournment: Russ moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by John to adjourn the meeting at 6:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Zuaro

Chair Northfield Conservation Commission