

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, January 16, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Andre Blais, Catherine Drake, Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore Town: Tom Jackman

Guests: Allan Thompson, Consulting Forester; Harry Shepherd, Stowe Department of Public Works

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m.

Forest Management Plan for Town Lots

Allan Thompson was present to review the draft forest management plans he prepared for the town-owned Reservoir Lot off Maple Street and the Cobb Lot off Brush Hill Road.

Mr. Thompson stated that when private landowners prepare forest land management plans the first step is usually to determine the objectives of the plan. For these lots, he determined that the objective would be to address timber management and timber growth moving forward.

The Reservoir Lot Plan describes the timber resources on three specific stands. Mr. Thompson stated that pine and spruce are the most desirable species on the Stand I parcel and that the beech and few elms found there are not worthy of preservation. He said that there are a lot of big trees in Stand 2 with the section to the south needing cutting the most. Stand 3 has hemlock, pine and ash in a somewhat wet portion of the property. He recommends promoting the hemlock growth here and letting the property be. He also discussed the location of a home on Maple Street which is surrounded by the lot.

Access to the Reservoir Lot is challenging via the Reservoir access road to a potential logging landing area at the Reservoir building. A landing spot off Maple Street would also be possible across from Shaws, but a difficult site as well. He explained that significant cutting in Stand 1 could result in wind damage because the trees are in mortal distance from a house, utilities and transportation. The biggest issue of the Reservoir property is the potential adverse impacts to the house which is surrounded by town-owned trees.

Mr. Jackman asked about the stormwater runoff effects of an aggressive harvest and Mr. Thompson replied that it is unlikely there would be a problem. Harry Shepherd of the Public Works Department joined the meeting to offer his thoughts on the water and erosion issues and potential impact on the house. He said it is a very wet property and described the culvert and drainage issues and the state's plans for drainage improvement near the Shaws intersection. Mr. Shepherd expressed concern for needing access on a 24/7 basis to the reservoir and the need to keep the area clear of any obstructions from the logging operation. He said it is not likely that the removal of trees directly adjacent to the neighbor house would increase flooding to the house.

The Cobb Lot is a standalone project and a much easier project in terms of access, landing and product. Mr. Thompson suggested we look for the authority to do a forest management/logging operation as it pertains to revenue generating on these sites. Alternatively, he noted we should consider the possibility of the town incurring cost by doing nothing.

Invasive species were also highlighted in the plans as present on both properties. The Commission will defer a decision on whether to move ahead with a timber harvest on either property to a future meeting.

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Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the December 5, 2018 meeting were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Mr. Blais and seconded by Ms. Moon and passed unanimously.

Ms. McGowan stated she will be setting the date for the Emerald Ash Borer public meeting with Ricky Dyer and Danielle Fitzko for March 20th. As previously agreed, the outreach meeting will focus on Stowe but be open to other towns.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM. The next meeting will be held on February 6, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, February 6, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Andre Blais, Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore
Town: Tom Jackman
Absent: Catherine Drake

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes Reports and Updates

The 1/16/19 minutes were approved on a motion by Mr. Blais, seconded by Ms. Moon.

Mr. Jackman let the Commission know that the Selectboard will be reviewing the draft EAB Plan at their meeting on March 11.

Ms. McGowan verified that the EAB Community Forum will take place on March 20 and that Danielle Fitzko and Rick Dyer from FPR have agreed to be presenters. It was decided to start at 6:30. Mr. Jackman will prepare a flyer to be available at Town Meeting. Charlie Lusk will have a table with EAB information at Town Meeting. Mr. Jackman will make sure the draft plan is on the Town's website.

Mr. Jackman let the Commission know that he will be meeting with the Stowe Trails Partnership board of directors on February 13 to discuss fatbiking and motorized grooming in Cady Hill Forest.

Conservationist of the Year Award

After discussion and not being able to come up with a worthy candidate for the award, it was decided to skip it for this year and consider doing it every other year.

Sterling Forest Kiosk Panel

The Commission reviewed the latest draft prepared by David Jaqua and make a few edits.

Forest Management Plans for Reservoir Property and Cobb Lot

The Commission decided that there was no compelling reason to do a timber harvest on either one of the properties, so they will not make a recommendation either way to the Selectboard and leave the decision up to them.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30PM. There will be no meeting on February 20 due to a lack of a quorum. The next meeting will be March 6.

Respectfully submitted by Tom Jackman.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, March 6, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Andre Blais, Catherine Drake, Kevin Hudnell, Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan (arrived late), Darsey Moon, Robert Moore

Town: Tom Jackman

Guests: Elisabeth Fenn, Stowe Land Trust

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the February 6, 2019 were reviewed and corrected to note that Mr. Hudnell was present and a motion to approve was made by Mr. Blais, seconded by Ms. Moon and passed unanimously.

Mr. Jackman reported that the Sterling Forest harvest is on schedule and they will be moving to the Steel property shortly.

Charlie Lusk was present at town meeting with information on the upcoming EAB Community Forum.

Mr. Jackman recently attended a meeting with Stowe Trails Partnership to discuss the possibility of motorized grooming at Cady Hill Forest in the winter. He discussed adverse impacts to the forest as well as explained the existing agreements stating that the property not be used intensively during the winter. STP understood the constraints and will not likely pursue the issue further.

Mr. Moore asked if the Recreation Commission will be putting fertilizer and pesticides on the Recreation Fields/Events Field at Mayo Farm. Mr. Jackman stated that although there is no clear direction in the Management Plan regarding this issue, the Recreation Commission does not currently have funding for this purpose.

Mr. Blais reported that he received favorable reports from the birding community regarding increased bird populations at the Sterling Forest harvest area that was completed with Audubon guidance.

Stowe Land Trust has reported that the Brownsville Forest property consisting of 750-acres is under contract and will be turned over the State for management with SLT holding an easement. 90% of the funding for the acquisition is in place and closing is anticipated for July 2019.

Review FY '19 Work Plan & Budget

Ms. Fenn presented the initial bids received from Little River Survey for work on three potential projects. One project would create a comprehensive site plan for Cady Hill by consolidating several surveys into one ownership map, clearly defining property boundaries.

The other two estimates were to blaze and paint boundaries at Cady Hill and Sunset Rock. Blazing requires cutting into the tree which leaves a permanent mark and painting lasts for about 10 years. Permanent pins on the properties should already be in place.

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There's a history of minor encroachments, primarily mowing and cutting of trees on the properties. In several areas there are no clear boundaries on Sunset Rock and a neighboring property is planned for subdivision. All agreed the work needs to be done, however not necessarily all at once and that additional bids should be obtained.

Costs could be reduced by identifying boundaries that are most at risk for encroachments and not contiguous to lands already owned by the Town. Flagging could also be completed by staff.

The consensus was to move forward with Sunset Rock as proposed with additional quote and to refine Cady Hill project. Mr. Jackman will confirm that a comprehensive survey does not exist for Cady Hill.

Further discussion on the FY '19 work plan continued and all agreed that a picnic table at the Moscow Recreation Field is desirable and should be included in the budget.

The kiosk at Maple Run Lane would cost approximately \$2,200 and all agreed that the third panel could be ordered now and kiosk built later.

A revised budget based on the discussion will be presented at a future meeting.

Emerald Ash Borer Community Forum

Discussion of the March 20th Emerald Ash Borer Community Forum ensued. Mr. Moore will present the two page action plan and other speakers are scheduled. Ms. Moon suggested that the stewards of SLT be sent a notice of the event. Other neighboring towns' boards have been advised of the event and SLT is also advertising.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM. The next meeting will be held on April 3, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, April 3, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Andre Blais, Catherine Drake, Kevin Hudnell, Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore

Town: Tom Jackman

Guests: Elisabeth Fenn, Stowe Land Trust; Grace Jia, Stowe Land Trust

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the March 6, 2019 meeting were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Ms. Moon and seconded by Mr. Blais and passed unanimously.

Mr. Jackman reported that the Moscow riparian tree planting will be happening May 7, 2019 at 1:00 P.M. sponsored by Friends of the Winooski River with volunteers from Sun Common.

Mr. Jackman also said a letter from Forest Parks and Recreation was received with respect to Vermont Huts Association request for the construction of a hut in Sterling Forest. Mr. Jackman distributed a list of issues for discussion. The Commission will await the next proposal from VHA to further comment on the proposal.

Green Up Day

Commission members discussed the Green Up day schedule and volunteered for time slots.

Ms. Fenn and Ms. Jia were present to discuss the opportunity to tie in “Doodie Day” into Green Up Day on May 4th. They would focus their efforts to the Quiet Path and Wiessner Woods. The last time this was done there was 160 pounds collected and the day was coordinated by the Rusty Nail. Discussion ensued as to how to do the collection for this year.

Mr. Moore suggested a volunteer be present at each site to coordinate. Another idea, which was agreed to, would be to just concentrate the Quiet Path and have buckets lined up along the route. Ms. Fenn will purchase the buckets to be paid for by the town, provide small pickup bags and gloves and place buckets along the path. Buckets will be picked up by the town.

EAB Community Forum and next steps

The Forum held on March 20th included great presentations, however there was not a great turnout in terms of citizens. The event was well advertised and the Commission discussed continuing the out-reach effort with informational articles in the upcoming year.

Ms. McGowan said that there are organizations looking into uses for the wood from any future downed ash trees utilizing portable saw mills. Mr. Jackman suggested that when Thompson Park is ready to be cut, it could be considered as part of that project.

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Boundary Blazing and Painting - Stowe Land Trust

Bids were presented for the Sunset Rock Blazing and Painting and Cady Hill Forest from Little River Survey and Trudell Consulting.

Ms. Moon made a motion, seconded by Ms. McGowan to have the town work with Little River Survey to do Blazing and Painting of Sunset Rock and the motion was passed unanimously. The Stowe Land Trust will do the Survey Compilation of Cady Hill.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM. The next meeting will be held on April 17, 2019. The meeting will be devoted to the Rural Roads Survey.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, April 17, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Catherine Drake, Kevin Hudnell, Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore

Members absent: Andre Blaise

Town: Tom Jackman

Guests: Joanne Garton, Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program
Charlie Lusk, Town of Stowe

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the April 3, 2019 were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Ms. McGowan and seconded by Mr. Hudnell and passed unanimously.

Mr. Jackman reported that a second Volleyball Court will be installed at Moscow Field by the organizers of the league. Mr. Jackman will also order two picnic tables using the Conservation Commission budget. If budgeting permits, there may also be a contribution for the cost of sand for the additional court.

Mr. Moore reported that the nomination for the Marvin awards is now taking place and a suggestion was made to nominate Stowe Land Trust for their work in the community. Mr. Jackman agreed to put forward the nomination on behalf of the Conservation Commission.

Rural Road Resilient Right of Ways Vegetation Assessment

Ms. Garton presented the draft report on the “Action Plan and Recommendations for the Rural Road Resilient Right of Ways Vegetation Assessment.” Field work was conducted last summer, and the report detailed the process recommendations and field report summary.

The process recommendations discussed planting, regeneration, hazardous trees, tree policy, mowing policy, understanding utility companies’ roles, etc. in road right of ways. A list of grants was provided that could help with planning and projects.

Mr. Moore said that it would be helpful to have alternatives to tree cutting along roadways that would better inform stormwater management permits and still maintain compliance with the law. Mr. Garton agreed that would be useful along with a tree ordinance which would specify the process.

Discussion ensued about ash trees and the number of ash trees in the right of ways was summarized. Ms. Garton noted that some towns are taking ash trees down preemptively. Town usually hire contractors when trees go down to remove them. To avoid scams, Stowe could provide residents a list of trustworthy arborists that take trees down. Currently the closest town with Emerald Ash Borer’s is Montpelier.

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The Commission thanked Ms. Garton for the thorough and helpful report and agreed to review specific recommendations at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM. The next meeting will be held on May 1, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, May 1, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Andre Blais, Catherine Drake, Kevin Hudnell, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore

Members Absent: Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan

Town: Tom Jackman

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the April 17, 2019 were reviewed and a motion to approve with minor correction was made by Ms. Moon and seconded by Mr. Blais and passed unanimously.

Green Up Day Tasks were discussed, and Mr. Jackman reported that the doodie day has been cancelled due to lack of doodie on the Quiet Path. Apparently, an effort had been made by parties unknown to clean it up.

Volleyball sand at Moscow Field will cost \$1,500 and will be added to this year's Commission budget. An equal amount was recently received from the Sterling forest logging project. Picnic tables will be delivered soon to the field and will be secured in the location.

Morrisville is contributing \$1,000 to Stowe Land Trust's Brownsville Forest fundraising campaign. Commission members agreed that the balance of remaining funds from the current year Stowe Conservation Commission budget, approximately \$1,000 currently, will be donated to the Brownsville Forest project as well.

Mr. Jackman reported that beavers have taken up residency at the events field on the east side of Weeks Hill Road at Mayo Farm. Commission members agreed to continue its long-standing practice of wrapping trees at the next meeting on May 15.

Mr. Jackman reported that some Stowe landowners in the North Hill area have received a letter about erecting a Cell Tower on their property

Ms. Drake reported that the next Shutesville Hill Wildlife Speaker Series will be held on June 5th at the Green Mountain Club at 7:00 pm. The speaker will be Steve Hagenbuch of Audubon VT. There will be no Commission meeting that night so that members can attend this Conservation Commission co-sponsored event.

Officer Selection

It was agreed by all present to maintain the existing slate of officers. Mr. Moore will remain Chairman, Ms. McGowan will be Vice Chair and Ms. Drake will be Secretary. Mr. Jackman stated that he had spoken to Ms. McGowan about her willingness to continue serving as vice chair.

Rules of Operation

The Rules of Operation were reviewed and discussed. All agreed that no changes were necessary.

Stowe Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Rural Road Resilient Right of Ways Vegetation Assessment

The Commission discussed the next steps related to the Rural Road Project. Mr. Moore suggested that a one page summary could be provided to the Highway Department. Mr. Jackman suggested that we initially discuss our recommendations with Chris Jolly to get his thoughts on how to possibly implement. This subject will continue to be discussed at future meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM. The next meeting will be held on May 15, 2019 and will be a site visit to Mayo Farm.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, June 19, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Andre Blais, Catherine Drake, Kevin Hudnell, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore, Christine Dorsey McGowan

Guests: Walter Opuszynski, Forests Parks and Recreation
Kristen Sharpless, Stowe Land Trust

Town: Tom Jackman

Members Absent: Bob Johnson,

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the May 1, 2019 were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Mr. Blais and seconded by Ms. Moon and passed unanimously.

Mr. Moore asked for an update on the remaining funds in the Conservation Commission budget for donation to the Brownsville project. Mr. Jackman said at this point, it is not certain, but will let us know as final bills are received.

Mr. Jackman reported that the Sterling Forest Kiosk is installed at Maple Run and the panel will be attached when it is complete.

Ms. Moon said emerald ash borer was detected in Bristol. She also mentioned that a deer wasting disease is occurring in Oneida New York.

CC Putnam State Forest Long Range Master Plan

Mr. Opuszynski, Field Recreation Specialist with Vermont Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR), was present to discuss the Long-Range Management Plan and the State Lands Trail Maintainer Program. He shared drone footage of the recent Cotton Brook landslide and discussed the need for management of highly sensitive areas. The area is supersaturated and has a very vulnerable soil.

Moss Glen Falls, Brownsville Forest and Stowe Pinnacle areas are all included in the Master Plan and FPR is researching the degree of usage, user experience and cataloguing the infrastructure. "Collector App" is being used to collect the data to identify investments in infrastructure and the extent that assets are being maintained.

The areas in the Worcester Range Management Unit include Perry Hill and Elmore Mountain where trail infrastructure is being catalogued, including culverts. Usage data is obtained by infrared sensors; user/car ratio is used to determine visitors. Mountain bike, as well as pedestrian use, is collected. Data will be used to forecast future use and parking lot needs. Parking issues are found in every trailhead in the Worcester unit.

Mr. Opuszynski emphasized the need to get this data in order to have the public understand the land management challenges of managing these public lands. For instance, Pinnacle Trail saw 5,500 users in August 2018 and is one of the most used trails. Elmore and Perry Hill also get a lot of use.

Stowe Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

User surveys are also being collected to pinpoint more specific information about users and their experiences. Number of users, pedestrian or bike, frequency of visits, users with dogs, and time spent is some of the information collected. FPR is looking for people to do car counts and hand out surveys to visitors this summer. Mr. Moore offered to do a public forum for the project and Mr. Opuszynski stated that Winter 2020 is the target date to provide a “easily digestible” document for public scoping meetings.

Stowe Land Trust Projects and Initiatives

Ms. Sharpless presented information on several new projects including the Brownsville Forest project. She reported that the Brownsville Forest project is moving along and will close at the end of July in partnership with the State of Vermont. They are jointly preparing the interim stewardship plan and wrapping up the fundraising effort and are likely to overshoot the campaign goal. Attempting to secure 750 donations and only have 55 more to go. Mr. Moore expressed concern that donors are not aware of the specific elements of the associated project costs with the Brownsville acquisition. Ms. Sharpless detailed the project costs, including the legacy stewardship endowment, and stated that this information is provided in the campaign materials.

Ms. McGowan participated in the Brownsville birding event recently and asked what the parking and access plan will include. Ms. Sharpless replied that the Brownsville forest will remain primarily wild land and they will seek to maintain a more quiet, wild feel. She envisions parking and trails for dispersed public recreation and continued trail-based management. Assessments are underway to develop the management plan and will include assessing the existing trails and consider off road parking options.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM. **The next meeting will be held on July 3 2019**

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, August 7, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Andre Blais, Kevin Hudnell, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore, Christine Dorsey McGowan and Bob Johnson.

Town: Tom Jackman

Members Absent: Catherine Drake

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. after it was decided to postpone the planned Sunset Rock site visit because of impending thunderstorms and hold a regular meeting inside.

FY 2020 Work Plan & Budget

Mr. Jackman presented a partial draft work plan. The Commission discussed things that were accomplished in FY '19 and possible activities for this fiscal year, including:

Sunset Rock

- Hired Jed Lipsky to clear the view from the Upper Overlook
- Hired Little River Survey to blaze and paint the boundary.
- Made another attempt to place a tarp over the knotweed patch. Will need to decide how to address the knotweed expanding around the edge of the tarps.
- Added trail improvements and the installation of a trail counter to the work plan

Moscow Recreation Field

- Funded the sand for the construction of a second volleyball court
- Friends of the Winooski River planted 200 trees in the riparian area

Mayo Farm

- Added \$100 for beaver fencing
- The agricultural lease is up in 2020

Sterling Forest

- A new kiosk was installed on Maple Run and 3 permanent kiosk panels were fabricated and installed (counts towards FY'20 budget).
- May have to budget \$\$ for trail work
- Can expect a revised hut proposal from the VT Huts Association
- Do a site visit on September 4.

Cady Hill Forest

- Funded a crew from the Intervale Conservation Nursery to pull barberry
- SLT is funding one day of their time through a grant and the CC will fund another day
- Need to decide about blazing and painting any section of the boundary.

Reservoir Lot

- Monitor trail use

Faunce Lot

- Do a site visit

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM. **The next meeting will be held on August 21, 2019 and is planned to be a make-up of the postponed Sunset Rock site visit.**

Respectfully submitted by Tom Jackman.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, October 2, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Andre Blais, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore, Christine Dorsey McGowan and Bob Johnson. Town: Tom Jackman. Members Absent: Catherine Drake. One vacancy.

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PM.

2019 Trail Updates from Stowe Trails Partnership

Rachel Fussell, STP ED, attended the meeting to provide updates on the trail work that STP was engaged in during 2019. The work included:

- The construction of 2 new public trails on Trapp Family Lodge property: Cheddar Shredder, funded in part by Cabot Cheese that parallels Haul Rd. from Kimmer's to Hardy Haul; and Haulapalooza, which connects Hardy Haul to Brook Rd.
- Improvements to Florence and Bear's in Cady Hill Forest.
- Clean-up work on Zog's and Lauren's in Sterling Forest.
- A part-time trail worker was hired for the second half of the season. The plan is to hire someone full-time next season.

Ms. Fussell also talked about the trail counters that STP installed in CHF, which showed that for a 2-month period this summer, Cady Hill Climb saw 16,000 users. By comparison, the estimate for the Lamaille Valley Rail Trail is 20,000 over the course of a year.

The subject of e-bikes came up and Mr. Jackman explained that they are not allowed in CHF, Adams Camp and Sterling Forest because they are considered motorized vehicles under the conservation easements, which prohibit them. Ms. Fussell also explained that STP does not favor having them on the single-track trails because of safety concerns, given the higher rates of speeds that can be achieved along with the heavy volume of use that the trails are seeing. Mr. Jackman explained that they are not currently allowed on the Rec Path because the Rec Path Ordinance prohibits them as motorized vehicles. They could be allowed on the Rec Path if permitted by the Selectboard.

Arbor Day Tree City USA Designation

Mr. Jackman had a request from a Stowe resident for the Town to receive this designation. The requirements include:

- A Tree Board or Department
- A Tree Care Ordinance
- A Community Forestry Program with an annual budget of \$2:00 per capita (10,000 +/-)
- An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

The Commission appreciated the sentiment of the request and is inspired to do something for Arbor Day as a result, but didn't see this as a good fit for the town. Very few street trees in town are within the town highway ROW; the CC budget always includes funding for trees, but is rarely needed, so \$10,000 would be impractical; and we have a Street Tree Plan and an Emerald Ash Borer Plan, so an ordinance is not needed.

Minutes

The minutes of the August 7 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Moon, seconded by Ms. McGowan.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Tom Jackman.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, November 6, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Robyn Anderson, Andre Blais, Catherine Drake, Bob Johnson, Darsey Moon, Christine Dorsey McGowan Town: Tom Jackman Members Absent: Robert Moore

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

Mr. Jackman updated the Commission on damage from the October 31st storm event.

E-bikes - The Stowe Land Trust Stewardship Committee has determined that no motorized vehicles including Ebikes are allowed at Cady Hill Forest or Adams Camp. They have expressed concern for safety and adverse impacts on the trails. Mr. Jackman said that E-bikes are also not allowed at Trapps or Sterling Forest.

The Stowe town attorney says that his interpretation of the Vermont statute is that Class One E-bikes with a maximum speed of 20 mph should be allowed anywhere that bicycles are allowed, including the rec path. Depending on how the issue evolves, the Select Board may decide to have further discussions on the topic. Mr. Jackman will inform the Commission if there are any future agenda items for the Select Board pertaining to E-bikes.

Trees - Charlies Lusk and Rich Dyer met with Mr. Jackman at Thompson Park to talk about combining a timber harvest at Bouchard Farm with removal of ash trees at the Park. The Percy's forest management plan was completed and work could take place either in the winter of 20-21 or 21-22.

Emerald Ash Borer has been discovered in Windham County. As it moves closer, Mr. Lusk is interested in getting any ash trees removed as soon as possible.

Minutes - The minutes of the October 2nd meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Moon, seconded by Mr. Johnson.

2020 Conservation Commission Work Plan

The Commission discussed the upcoming year work plan and budget and considered two additions. The first would be developing and sponsoring an Arbor Day event for Friday April 24th, 2020. Some ideas include hiring a speaker, organizing a tree planting event or conducting a big tree/oldest tree search. Mrs. Drake volunteered to take the lead on proposing an arbor day celebration for the Commission to consider and propose a budget.

The second addition is "Stowe Climate Action Network" (CAN) funding. This organization has recently been reactivated by Marina Meerburg and has been funded by the town in the past. The Commission would consider funding requests for events or other purposes. Stowe CAN has not yet decided whether to become an officially sanctioned committee of the town or operate independently.

Additional funds were discussed for potential trail maintenance work at Sterling trails that were previously provided by Gar Anderson. Mr. Jackman suggested we find out if there are any community members interested in taking over the role. Stowe Nordic or another group might be interested. Maintenance would include chain saw work, clearing blow downs and building bridges. The person

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or entity would need to have liability insurance. A suggestion was made that in addition to the Anderson family doing periodic inspections, stewards could be identified for sections of trails. Ms. Anderson suggested that Rob Taylor might be interested in work up there as well.

It was also noted that Moscow Recreation Field budget should be increased up to \$1,500 to assist with the restoration of Moscow field volleyball courts.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for November 20th.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday, December 4, 2019
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Robin Anderson, Catherine Drake, Bob Johnson, Christine Dorsey McGowan, Darsey Moon, Robert Moore Members Absent: Andre Blais
Town: Tom Jackman

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

The minutes of the November 6, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Moon, seconded by Ms. McGowan.

Mr. Jackman distributed a Map showing the Riparian Planting Plan to be completed as part of the Act 250 rip rap project on the Rec Path. The Friends of the Winooski River provided a list of recommended species to be planted and are willing to do the planting. Ms. McGowan suggested that we increase the width of the mowed area to the extent possible to deal with the Knotweed. Mr. Jackman will provide the plan to the Agency of Natural Resources.

The Friends of the Winooski River asked if we would like to do another planting at Moscow Recreation Field following the washout. Discussion of the pros and cons of planting at Moscow where the river is cutting into property ensued. Mr. Jackman will talk to the Friends and let them know we are open to them working on the property.

Ms. Anderson has been asked by Stowe Trails Partnership to join their committee on E-Bikes.

Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor Update

Ms. Drake reported on the significant progress on the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor project. \$500,000 has been raised by the three partners and four projects have closed for a total of 469 acres. Another significant property should close shortly. The partnership is working on a second-round of projects and fund-raising goals will be identified in the next few months.

On Thursday, December 5, 2019, at 7:00 pm at the Green Mountain Club there will a presentation on the History, Status and Research efforts of Moose in Vermont as part of the ongoing Shutesville Lecture series.

Emerald Ash Borer

Charlie Lusk is going to the select board on Monday the 9th to request that they start budgeting money in the town highway right of way to proactively cut ash trees before they get infected.

The CC members asked that a letter of support for budgeting in accordance with the Emerald Ash Borer Management plan was made by Ms. McGowan, seconded by Ms. Moon and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm. The next meeting will be held on January 15th, 2020.
Respectfully submitted by Catherine Drake.