

Wallingford Conservation Commission Approved Minutes
Monday, October 23, 2023, 4:30 PM
Town Hall (Downstairs)

- Call to Order, Roll Call and Guest Introductions
 - Members Present: Dennis Duhaime, Denise Eddy, Tom Fort, Carol MacLeod, Ralph Nimtz, Jane Quigley, Debbie Scranton
- Sept 25, 2023 WCC Minutes were approved
- *Public comments invited after discussion of each agenda topic, and under Old and New Business*

- Stone Meadow
 - New Trail Signs
 - Plywood will be placed on the back of new trail signs to make them more sturdy. Signs will be added next Spring to the new Otters Edge Trail plus replacements of other signs as needed throughout the park.
 - Maintenance
 - No additional maintenance is needed in the park at this time; however, Ralph and Dennis will explore options to extend Otters Edge Trail.
- Transfer Station
 - RCSW Diversion Program Grant (Styrofoam recycling)
 - The styrofoam recycling program that was implemented in Lyndonville was discussed with RCSW. Mark Shea cited additional costs including equipment and personnel, as well as needed electrical upgrades, that prevent RCSW from pursuing the program at this time.
 - A contractor in Pittsfield accepts styrofoam to be used for foundation insulation. However, any benefits of styrofoam recycling would be offset by the carbon footprint associated with transporting it to Pittsfield
 - New Trex Bench
 - The new Trex bench has been ordered and will be shipped directly to Mill River Union High School. The Interact Club will host a dedication of the bench to help raise student awareness of the importance of plastic recycling.
 - Discovery Books
 - Over 4000 lb of books have been collected at the Wallingford Transfer Station as part of the new Discovery Book program
- Canopy Grants
 - Tree planting 1:1 matching grants are currently available with an application deadline of 1/5/24. Given the recent decision to encourage growth of existing locust trees along the trails in Stone Meadow rather than planting new trees, other possible tree planting opportunities were discussed, including lining Main Street through Wallingford.
 - The Town Administrator received information from VTrans on developing plans for tree planting along state right of ways. East Middlebury recently completed a similar project that could serve as a “blueprint”.
 - GMP had announced a plan to bury all power lines in southern VT. However, when Tom inquired about timing for lines to be buried in Wallingford, GMP was not able to confirm that our lines would be buried.

- In addition to power lines, parking would also need to be considered. In order to obtain the greenspace needed for trees, it is likely that off-street parking lots may be needed to replace parking on Main Street. This could in turn, create an EV charging opportunity.
- Given the multi-faceted scope of planting trees along Main Street, Tom will discuss with the Zoning Administrator in the context of the comprehensive plan.
- Debbie noted that a public presentation on use of ARPA funds for sidewalks will occur on 11/9/23, which could also be an important part of the broader plan.
- The WCC will continue to consider other smaller scale options to plant trees in collaboration with the Tree Warden and we will discuss again at the November meeting.
- Targeted Fall Clean Up
 - The inaugural WCC Fall Clean Up targeting two pull-off sites on Wallingford Pond Road was very successful with a pick-up truck and SUV worth of debris and trash being removed from the environment.
 - Given that fallen leaves masked much of the trash, it was decided that next year's Fall Clean Up will be held late September rather than early October.
 - Expanding support beyond immediate WCC members will be considered if sites are identified that require a larger number of volunteers.
 - Photos from the Fall Clean Up, as well as future events, will be forwarded to Denise and Debbie for use in a WCC informational board.
- No Litter Signs
 - The possibility of posting no litter signs was discussed. However, it was decided that anyone who would dump litter and garbage along the road and/or in the woods, would probably not be influenced by a sign.
- AVCC Summit
 - Tom updated the WCC on a 10/3 webinar on Prevention of Forest Fragmentation and a 10/19 AVCC webinar on Tiny Grant projects.
- The WCC Mission Statement ("Protect Wallingford's land, water, air, and biodiversity") was approved by the Selectboard on Oct. 2
- Budget
 - \$2500 in budget
 - \$2023 in CD
- New Business, Old Business
 - Tom will take over the duties of Secretary for the WCC. Carol will continue to serve as Treasurer.
 - Jane will purchase insulation board for the bee hives, as well as supplies to build swarming boxes.
 - Dennis and Ralph will inspect, clean, and refurbish bird houses in Stone Meadow as needed.
 - Dennis reported that the Agency of Natural Resources is trying to identify someone to provide an informational seminar on invasives.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM
- Next Meeting: Nov 27 4:30 PM at Town Hall