

STRAFFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes 22 March 2016

Present at the Justin Morrill Education Building at 7:00 p.m., were commission members Steve Willbanks, Chuck Sherman, Mike Hebb, Jared Jenisch, and Amy Metz. Special Guests: John Echeverria (Planning Commission / Strafford's Hazard Mitigation Review Committee) Tim McCormick (Old City Falls Manager), Michael Storace (Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission)

- Guest: Michael Storace, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission – Working the Strafford Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Michael wanted feedback on the identified goals/mitigation strategies for the Hazard Mitigation Plan, specifically related to Invasive Species (Plant and Insect species)
 1. Develop a Forest Pest Preparedness Plan
 2. Establish a Forest Pest Planning and Response Team
 3. Inventory critical species to establish a baseline for tree health.
 4. Formalize mowing practices
 5. Coordinated mechanical control events between Town volunteers and Town Road Crew. This needs to be a repeated effort.
 - Other recommended strategies from SCC discussion
 1. Control Transportation of firewood (mitigate invasive bugs)
 2. Plant trees –shade out invasives
 3. Forest Pest Preparedness plan – Where are our vital tree communities?
 4. Coordination across Town Borders is necessary.
 5. Identification of species is necessary to target the correct strategy. E.g. The strategy for chervil maybe different from Japanese knotweed. When do cut versus pull and how often?
 6. Need a Central clearinghouse to distribute information.
 7. Predict what would happen if we do not control the species. Provide a scare tactic.
 8. Use a Green-up type model to engage and raise awareness with landowners.
 - Strafford Hazard Mitigation Plan close to a final draft. Municipal Planning Grant expires in May 2016. The Hazard Mitigation Plan is required under the Emergency Relief Assistance fund in order to receive Federal aid.
- Approved 1/26/'16 Minutes
- Trails/bridge/orchid project update: Mike
 - Bridge is waiting for thaw.
 - New Trail behind Justin Morrill to Cross Town Trail is complete.
 - Held 3rd Pruning and Grafting class last weekend. Huge success.
 - Making 10 new signs for the trail
 - Chuck made a suggestion to reroute trail where it comes through Podunk and follow the new Logging road

- Podunk trail and Tyson Bridge needs some new markers.
 - Crossroads Academy Orchid Presentation April 26
- Wetlands Update: Jared - Currently trying to schedule a meeting to reboot for this season.
- Speakers' List for '16
 - April 26th presentation: Crossroads Orchid project)
 - Sierra Club Board – Steve will speak with his contact.
- Updates:
 - Old City Rec. Area: seasonal report – Tim McCormick will work on the logs in the lower trail
 - Podunk WMA: Timber-cut update – Chuck says this is now complete. The Logger will come in April or May to lay grass seed.
 - Invasives – Need to get this started in 2016
- Next Meeting: April 26, '16

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Metz, Recording Secretary