

Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC)

Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2021

Opening

The regular meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC) was called to order at 7:01 pm on June 1, 2021 via Zoom by Fra DeVine.

Present

Annette Lynch, Fra DeVine, Peter Smith, Philippe Crane, Philip Leonard, Jim Corven.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was accepted by consensus after A. Lynch suggested that the survey status be added for discussion; this was inserted under Other Business.

Approval of Minutes

The May 4 draft minutes had been posted to the Mount Holly web site but had not been circulated to members. Approval was deferred until the next regular meeting.

Agenda Items

P. Crane provided a **Shade Tree Plan update**. As noted last time, appointment of a warden is a gating factor in implementing a plan. This matter is not yet entirely settled. Issues such as interaction with the Road Crew are included in the tree warden's responsibilities. Recent work on Maple Hill Road illustrates the importance of this aspect of the job.

Members discussed the role of the Commission regarding **Star Lake**. P. Crane said we should investigate and support efforts to help Star Lake; J. Corven indicated that this should begin with a conservation or management plan based on how we see the present condition of the lake. Members discussed that there are two views on how to treat Star Lake. One is to allow for reversion to a natural state resulting from continued filling in, and the other is enhancement for recreation and scenic views. Members discussed that there two views, reversion to nature and enhancement for recreation, on how to treat Star Lake. It will be important to involve community members and a variety of stakeholders in initiating our assessment. P. Leonard agreed to begin compiling a list and initiating conversations in this direction. P. Crane urged J. Corven to use the Newsflash and the Chit Chat to help raise community awareness of the water monitoring activities at Star Lake that will be taking place starting very soon.

A. Lynch continued her presentation about areas needing attention as we tackle updating an **inventory of community resources**. She referred to 2 attachments sent before the meeting that detail which aspects have, and have not, been surveyed to date. She then mentioned soils, prime agricultural soils and minerals – items not mentioned much in the Arrowwood report, but about which there is much information available on the internet. Members mentioned areas of interest and the desirability of a few

more simple field trips to help us become more familiar with aspects related to community resources. A. Lynch said these are not likely to provide the solid information we will need. She referred to a map about “prime agricultural soil” in the 2008 Town Plan that is now out of date, adding that recent information is available on that topic. P. Leonard asked if a sort of “case study” on one topic, detailing what documents we have, in what respect they are out of date, and where current information and data can be found. A. Lynch said she would be happy to do that.

J. Corven provided an update regarding the **iNaturalist Biodiversity Project** (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/mount-holly-biodiversity>). He cited the recent Chit Chat summary and added data current to June 1. There were 252 new May observations submitted by 109 people, 39 of whom (+4 in the month) have joined the Mont Holly project. Data include 73 nonnative species, 18 endangered or threatened species among 655 identified species. He encouraged more participation by Commission members. He discussed hogweed, Japanese knotweed and various poisonous roadside plant weeds.

Other Business. Regarding our recent Survey, F. DeVine reported that Prof. Rich Clark is still completing a final report. We will obtain it for discussion at our next meeting and then present its results to the Select Board.

Action Items

- P. Crane to report on Shade Tree project developments.
- P. Leonard to brief us on discussions about Star Lake.
- A. Lynch to provide a case study for using on-line resources to assist in compiling updated inventories.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of MHCC will be on Tuesday, July 6 at 7:00 pm. The agenda will be provided by F. DeVine/P. Crane. It is possible that an in-person meeting will take place.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Phil Leonard, journeyman clerk.