

Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC)

Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 9, 2023

Opening

The January meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC) was called to order at 7:02 pm on Monday, January 9, 2023 by Phil Crane. It was held in the Library and by Zoom.

Present

Fra DeVine, David Martin, Phil Leonard, Jim Corven, Peter Smith, Jeanmarie Fitzgerald, Phil Crane . Sue Presson was excused.

Introductions

Members welcomed new Commissioner Jeanmarie Fitzgerald, and we spent time introducing ourselves.

Approval of Agenda

The meeting agenda was approved with a name spelling corrected. Moved by Fra, seconded by Dave.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the December 6, 2022 meeting were approved as submitted. Moved by Fra, seconded by Dave. Unanimously approved.

Canopy Grant Proposal

Phil C. discussed the proposal he submitted on December 30 to the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program. He indicated that, after Select Board consultation, the amount requested has been increased to \$1,300, and the local match reduced in order to balance the two funding sources. (Dave remarked that the Select Board minutes indicate a lowering of the Shade Tree budget because funds had not been spent – a caution for us to keep in mind for all of our projects.) A decision on the current Caring for Canopy grant is expected somewhere near the middle of March.

Ongoing Programs (4)

We discussed possibilities for a **ChitChat** submission for February. The group focused on the emerald ash borer threat. This pest has not yet been found in Mount Holly but has reached neighboring communities. Dave spoke about his experience within the Wilderness communities, which has helped landowners to inoculate trees on their properties. He suggested two articles, one on invasive species more generally and one focused on the ash borer.

Phil L. gave a summary of year-end reporting and correspondence about the **Star Lake** bottom barriers. (Dave suggested that we make sure divers have billed for services to date so that the current year's records show the expenditure.)

Fra unveiled a large town map as part of a discussion of **Inventories**. He noted that it shows deer habitat, one of the inventory categories. The map also shows the progression of houses built over the past several years, indicating a couple of areas of greatest growth. We discussed our role of providing input to the Planning Commission to assist their formulation of a Town Plan.

Jim reported on **Biodiversity**. He noted the connection with data included on the Inventories map. Current data show 3482 observations made by 203 observers, and reiterated the fact that all observations are important given that information is needed on What? When? and Where? for each species.

Other Business

Jim began, and members discussed, opportunities for **Public Outreach** by the MHCC.

Action Items

- Chit Chat: Phil C. and Dave to develop material on ash borers for February, with an introduction mentioning upcoming articles on invasive species, as suggested by Jim.
- Star Lake: Phil L. to check on invoicing by divers.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the MHCC will be on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, at 7:00 pm. The agenda will be provided in advance.

Adjournment

Following a motion by Peter Smith, Phil Crane declared the meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Phil Leonard, clerk.