

**Mount Holly Conservation Commission**  
**Meeting of May 6, 2025**  
**Minutes**

**Opening**

The May meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission was held at the Town Office and by ZOOM on Tuesday, May 6, 2025. Phil Crane called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

Members attending in person were Phil Crane, Jean Fitzgerald, Sue Presson, Peter Smith, Alex Yuster and Phil Leonard. Dave Martin attended via ZOOM. Guest attending in person: Katie Stiles, District Manager, Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District.

**Agenda and Minutes**

The agenda document was approved. Minutes from the April 1 meeting were approved as presented.

**Katie Stiles** introduced herself and discussed her role in providing information, and suggesting possible funding opportunities, related to the conservation of natural resources.

**Discussion of Agenda items**

Regarding our membership vacancy, Sue indicated she will add it to the next ChitChat submission.

Alex spoke of her recent attendance at a Vermont Coverts training in northern Vermont. She described the organization and indicated that a future 3-day training will be held in Castleton. The group works primarily with private landowners in the area of forest management, and also provides information on grants. Alex stressed looking at wildlife corridors. Peter mentioned the role that the Conservation Trust has played in this regard in Mount Holly.

Next came discussion of the scheduled May 29 meeting regarding Star Lake at Odd Fellows Hall. Alex has set a preparatory meeting for 6 pm on Tuesday, May 13 in the Community Room. This gathering should structure the May 29 event which should, in turn, present a Summer 2025 Action Plan for Star Lake. Items to stress are the Town Plan, projects already underway, the proposed harvesting permit, needs regarding the recreation area, specifying dates and times for hand pulling and other volunteer efforts in June and beyond. Rakes, tools and photos can be included to provide concreteness in the presentation. Jeanmarie mentioned that trees in the recreation area are in need of some trimming, and we briefly discussed liability and other issues connected with that need.

Dave addressed the Recreation Committee's interest in there being walking trails on private land. He mentioned Shunpike property in which he has part ownership. Other places mentioned were from Belmont Village to Mount Holly School, portions of the VAST trail and a strip to the north of Tarbellville Road.

Phil C. said the ash borer program is ready to begin serving people who have signed up, and that he will ask the town for some funds to refurbish injectors used in treating trees.

Sue indicated she has a good beginning on structuring the June ChitChat contribution.

**Action Items**

- Use May 13 meeting to prepare for the May 29 Star Lake event with attention to items mentioned above in Discussion.
- ChitChat piece to focus on our membership vacancy, on the May 29 meeting and on specific opportunities for volunteers.
- Work on presentation of a Star Lake Summer 2025 Action Plan.
- Recreation Committee to continue exploration of walking/hiking on private lands.
- Resume ash tree treatment and request Selecboard funds to service equipment.

**Next Meeting**

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 3, at 6 pm in the Town Office.

**Adjournment**

Adjournment occurred at 7:14 pm.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Phil Leonard, Clerk.