

Mount Holly Conservation Commission

Meeting of June 3, 2025

Minutes

Opening

The June meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission was held at the Town Office and by ZOOM on Tuesday, June 3, 2025. Phil Crane called the meeting to order at 6:10 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: Ron Unterman.

Agenda and Minutes

The agenda document was amended to replace *Recreation Committee update* by *Harvesting Permit discussion*, and then approved. Minutes from the May 6 meeting were approved as presented.

Discussion of Agenda items

Phil C. reported about the ash borer program, saying he has secured Town agreement that Mount Holly will lend money for the purchase of fluid (costing some \$430 per quart) before it is paid back by townspeople who have trees treated under the program.

Alex began discussion about the May 29 meeting dedicated to Star Lake, noting that the May 13 planning session worked well as preparation. She indicated that 40 people signed in, but a few more than that were present. A debriefing should follow in the next ChitChat. (Sue noted the absence of MHCC news in the current edition, and indicated that she likes Jeanmarie's summary as a starting point for a July report.)

At Dave's request discussion moved to *Harvesting Permit discussion*. Phil L. had circulated the May 28 comments from Olin Reed on our harvesting application 4512-ANC-H, which pointed out both possibilities and complications in the approval process. Phil had also spent time in a TEAMS conference with Olin Reed and Zapata Courage on the afternoon of June 3. On the positive side, an Authorized Use (A.U.) area was specified, and indication of a harvesting path likely to gain approval was provided. The negative aspect is that ANY harvesting outside of the A.U. area would require issuance of an Individual Wetlands Permit, and this would involve both delay and significant cost. The MHCC decided that, at this time we should pursue the second of Olin Reed's four options, namely, to achieve a permit to harvest in the A.U. area and defer seeking a Wetlands permit until later. We discussed various aspects of the Wetlands constraints during the meeting, with ideas about lobbying and seeking an exception among them. Many favored the exception route – to be taken up later. Dave, Sue and Jeanmarie might be added to future meetings with Statwe of Vermont folks involved in the permitting process.

Following the Permit discussion we returned to discussion of the May 29 meeting, with attention to suggestions from the three breakout groups. Alex agreed to make a spreadsheet so that attendees can be contacted easily. Sue indicated that the ChitChat piece will essentially be a May 29 report.

Saturday mornings 9-11, on June 14, 21 and 28 will be sessions for Star Lake spring cleanup.

Action Items

- Phil L. to report permit option to Olin Reed and Zapata Courage and follow up on permit progress, informing Select Board as needed.
- Sue (with others) to shape ChitChat piece recounting the May 29 meeting and Star Lake matters more generally.
- Alex to compile contact information from May 29 (and April 28?) attendees so as to facilitate communication with them.
- Phil L. to coordinate and publicize cleanups for June 14, 21 and 28.

Next Meeting

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 1, at 6 pm in the Town Office.

Adjournment

Adjournment occurred at 7:22 pm.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Phil Leonard, Clerk.