

## Topsham Conservation Commission (TCC)

Meeting Minutes passed 5/1/23

Monday April 3, 2023 at 5:30 pm

Topsham Town Office and via Zoom - Meetings open to all.

In attendance: Audie Arbo, Shana Stewart Deeds, Julie Erdman (Town Planner), Victor Langelo, Steve Pelletier

### I. Approval of Jan 2023 and March 6, 2023 minutes

TCC members reviewed the January and March minutes. We discussed the need to insert comment boxes or suggest edits (which allows you to track changes as you can in a word document) when we make changes on the google drive so that members can see the changes to the documents.

After discussion of the minutes, Steve made a motion to approve the March minutes as edited. Victor seconded this motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

After discussion of the minutes, Audie made a motion to approve the January minutes as written. Victor seconded this motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

### II. Letter explaining Natural Areas Plan (NAP) Update

TCC members were updated by Julie who feels that applying for a community grant for a NAP might be a good option. TCC members edited a draft letter to the Select board regarding the need for an update to the NAP.

**Action item: Victor will use our input to edit a final letter, and will send the final draft out for our review before our next meeting.**

### III. Suggested Landscape Ordinance

- A. Current ordinance suggestions available in our google drive
- B. [Portland's recommended tree list](#)
- C. Additions from ordinances in other towns

**Action item: As Raija resigned from the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC), Julie will check with CPIC to see if our suggested ordinance language may be added to the ReCode package of suggested edits from the consultants.**

This ordinance is part of site plan ordinance under landscape standards - [§ 175-10 Additional landscaping standards](#).

TCC workshopped proposed changes to the landscape ordinance. We decided to propose changes that remove invasive plants from the recommended plantings in the ordinance. This will include suggesting an additional column to the ordinance that gives appropriate examples under landscape specifications in each of the recommended categories.

Plant Type	Size of Plant Material Adjacent to Vacant Land	All Other Plantings
Canopy Tree (CT)	1 1/2 inch caliper	Minimum 2 inches caliper
Understory tree (UT)	4 feet (height)	1 1/2 inches caliper
<u>Multistem</u> clump (MSC)	6 feet (height)	8 feet (height)
Evergreen tree (ET)	3 feet (height)	5 to 7 feet (height)
Deciduous shrub (DS)	15 inches (height)	24 inches (height)
Evergreen shrub (ES)	12 inches (height)	18 inches (height)

We will also create a recommended tree/plant list to include as an addendum to the ordinance.

**Action item: Steve will go through the Portland list to edit it and create a Topsham Recommended Trees/Plants list with an eye toward identifying at least one species in each of the above categories, and highlighting those that are particularly good for wildlife habitat.**

IV. Updates

A. Christine Cole memorial

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

B. Upcoming talks

Shana mentioned to save the date for the 4-25 from 6-7 at the Topsham Library talk about carbon sequestration, followed by a zoom talk from the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust on the Androscoggin River

V. Items for upcoming meetings

- A. Mallet Woods and Head of Tide monitoring (Perhaps at a May or June meeting)
- B. Work with BTLT to identify potential Vernal Pools where the SAMP could be used
- C. Revise landscape ordinance, complete the recommended tree list to be appended to this document (highlight those that are best for wildlife)
- D. NAP RFP review over email between now and March meeting, get RFP out by April
  - 1. RFP - Focus on deliverables and be sure they match scope of services
  - 2. Finalize letter to Select board
- E. 2023 Work plan updates

Shana made a motion to adjourn at 7:09pm that was seconded by Victor. Meeting adjourned at 7:09pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Shana Stewart Deeds, Secretary.