

Topsham Conservation Commission (TCC)

Meeting Minutes Approved 09/11/2023

Monday Aug 7, 2023 at 5:30 pm - Meetings open to all

Meet at 37 Pleasant St Topsham. **Next time park at the Grange, not in the tenant parking.**

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

.I. Approve May Minutes and June Minutes

Audie made a motion to accept the May and June minutes as written, Victor seconded. All were in favor, so the motion passed unanimously.

.II. Site walk of Pleasant Woods Easement

- TCC met at Pleasant Street to walk the easement. **Next time park at the Grange, not in the tenant parking. Perhaps consider sending a notice to folks that we will be checking the easement so folks know our intentions.** We introduced ourselves and talked with neighbors that have lived there for 6-10 years.
- The sign by Williams-Cone School is still there, but the one by Pleasant Street is missing.
- We discussed the need to measure the erosion, should we wish to monitor the situation. It seems, qualitatively, to be similar to the amount of erosion when we noted it at the last walk through.
- There continues to be erosion making the gully deeper, causing sloughing of the streambank and taking down trees. Perhaps we should recommend a fix at the parking lot – redirection or a rain garden to slow stormwater runoff that is causing the erosion.
- There are many invasive species growing there including barberry.
- **Victor will create a draft site visit for TCC to comment on.**

.III. Comments for submission to the Merrymeeting Trail RUAC

Victor mentioned the Merrymeeting Trail recommendations. TCC will draft a letter to add to comments in support of such a recreational trail. Even if passenger trail came back in the future, the current tracks are in such disrepair that they would need to be replaced. Using the trail for recreation in the meantime seems like value added to the area. Victor will keep TCC updated about the next meeting occurring at the end of August. **Audie will send in TCC comments.**

.IV. Further thoughts on open space in-lieu fee in light of denser smaller housing

Victor will craft an email to send to Julie regarding TCC's recommendation that we change the open space ordinance to be based on the number of bedrooms rather than the number of houses the in lieu fee is based on now. The Planning Board will talk about this ordinance soon, so TCC input would be timely.

.V. Updates

1. Changes in committee membership

TCC would like to thank Steve Pelletier and Raija Suomela for their service to the Conservation Commission. Steve and Raija have not renewed their terms, so the Commission will be looking for new members to join. Those interested in joining the TCC should talk to a member, or join us at future meetings to express interest.

2. Public site walk for “Green Infrastructure in the Topsham Fair Mall” on Aug 17th from 4:30 PM

3. Christine Cole memorial Sept 10 4:00 PM at the Topsham Public Library

Jeanne Bamforth is coordinating the Christine Cole memorial on 9/10 with her brother. There will be a brief remembrance at the Topsham Library outside at 4pm (bring umbrellas) followed by an indoor gathering at OneSixtyFive (165 Main St. Brunswick).

.VI. Items for upcoming meetings

- Don't forget to check the action items list and mark items as 'done' when completed
- Head of Tide monitoring
- Work with BTLT to identify potential Vernal Pools where the SAMP could be used
- Summer meeting schedule: Sept 11, then back to our first Monday of the month at 5:30 schedule

Audie made a motion to adjourn, Victor seconded. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:31pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Shana Deeds, Secretary.