

Washington Conservation Commission
Minutes – April 10, 2024

Assembly time: 7:00 PM, meeting at Town Hall.

Members present: Arin Mills, Nan Schwartz and Jed Schwartz (came later due to a rescue call)

Visitors: Pete Martin

1.0 Approval of Minutes: March, Arin made a motion to approve as written, Nan seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

2.0 Permits Committee –

New: **Town of Washington**, 143 Valley Road, Emergency Authorization, repair a 36'x7'x5.5' failing corrugated metal arch pipe with concrete headwalls and concrete stone inlet/outlet protection, approved

Previous:

Aboreal Oasis, 1025 Ashuelot Dr, TM 10-3, After the fact Shoreland Permit for a deck, approved. We spoke with the Select Board about their findings when they did a site visit. We also reviewed pictures of the site and project provided by an abutter. ARLAC asked us to comment and we sent a letter. ARLAC sent us a copy of their comment letter and the project was approved by DES as presented on the Meridian plan.

Previous:

Cote, TM 24-58, 46 Lookout Point Road, DES asking for outstanding items from review.

Calabro – DES approved the tree planting, reforestation plan, accepted

3.0 Committee and Board reports

3.1 Land Protection Committee – We will contact the property owner again about plans to protect their property.

3.2 Energy Committee – No news

3.3 Planning Board – No news

3.4 Forestry Committee – Pete Martin, who is a Forest Committee member is attending our meeting tonight and Arin discussed doing a cut on the Camp Morgan property to get the ash trees and reduce density. Pete said that they are concerned that will pulp prices low the cost of doing the cut wouldn't be covered. Nan said that Ash has some value. Arin thinks that cutting the Ash now for ecological reasons would be smart. It will become a safety issue in the near future and will impact the use of the property. Arin discussed with Pete combining efforts with the Forestry Committee. Pete said he will speak with the other members and perhaps we can have a joint meeting in the future.

3.5 Legislative – No news.

3.6 NHACC has sent out an email asking towns to help Granit update the Conservation lands layer. We will let them know of any new conserved/protected land in Washington.

4.0 Public Presentations and workshops –

4.1 WES visit – Arin said the date for a vernal pool presentation for April 19th in the morning (8am to noon). We will meet with each of the three class groups and present the power point, play some games and bring critters to look at. We reviewed our materials for the presentation.

4.2 We will research doing an Emerald Ash Borer presentation some time this summer.

5.0 New Business:

5.1 Robinson Dam project – Arin explained the issue with the Robinson Dam and the Town's need to span the dam with an upgraded road project. Arin thinks the dam owner wants to remove the dam instead of repairing it. We reviewed a Meridian plan that documents the existing dam and road. Ed Thayer wants Meridian to delineate the wetlands on their plan. Arin has looked for ARM funds to help the dam owner but no funds are available in this round of funding.

6.0 Other Business:

- 6.1 East Washington Town Forest, Sand Pit Crossing – Nan said that in the Select Board minutes Ed Thayer presented the board with a new sand pit water crossing which would save significant costs. Nan asked Ed about it and he replied that it is the same crossing but the span would be 26’ as opposed to 52’. Arin isn’t sure whether they are applying for the wetland application at this point or holding off.
- 6.2 Adopt-a-Highway Trash Pickup – We set a date for our first pickup for May 5th at 3:30pm. We will meet at the Library parking lot.
- 6.2 Trails and Recreation Guide Booklet – Arin has been working on the maps again. Arin will send the new maps she has to Nan to put in the document. Nan will send the document to Pete for review and comments.
- 6.3 Facebook Page – Arin said she hasn’t been posting but will keep it going and will use it for announcing hikes, etc. Jed suggested she also share to the Town’s Facebook page to reach more people. To check out the CC’s Facebook page go here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2173271309586226/>
- 6.4 CMPC document –Arin will work on an accompanying map for the document.

7.0 What’s Happening in Nature?

Jed mentioned the 2 late snow storms we had in April, one was 12’ and the other was 16”.

Jed mentioned he has had Blue Birds at the bird feeder all winter. Today he had a Purple Finch. Arin has had large flocks of Gold Finches, Juncos and lots of Blue Jays. Nan said that she kept her bird feeder up because of the snow storms and the birds are eating the seed like crazy. They are really hungry.

Arin has had lots of Blue Jays sticking around.

Nan mentioned the Solar Eclipse that took place on Monday. We had a clear view and with eclipse glasses were able to observe it. We didn’t get totality here but it was about 96%.

Arin heard a loon on Ashuelot Pond this morning (first time this year). To find out where loons go for the winter click here: [NewinNature](#)

8.0 Correspondence:

- 8.1 Copy of ARLAC comment letter on Aboreal Oasis shoreland permit.
- 8.2 Copy of DES notice to Farrington, Valley Rd, notice of inspection.
- 8.3 Copy of Forest Notes magazine.

9.0 Adjourned at 8:15 PM, the next meeting is May 8th at 7PM, at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Schwartz, Secretary