

Hanover Biodiversity Committee

Minutes, September 4 2014

Attendees: Michael Lunter, Gail McPeek, Barbara McIlroy, Vicki Smith

Minutes from March were approved. Minutes from May 2014 still need approval.

Sept 8th sessions on Forest Health and Deer Management

- The committee approved the use some of biodiversity funds to help bring Todd Bittner here, to cover fuel /auto transportation costs and one night in hotel. Barbara expressed surprise that the Conservation Commission had approved that **all** costs for the event (even including the \$250 donation to the Cornell Plantations that the Commission approved) were to come from the Biodiversity Fund. She wondered why the Commission had not budgeted for any educational efforts in its budget. Vicki explained the budget process had little time for input in this past year's budget planning.
- The committee ironed out logistics / details for this meeting - note-taking, sign in, food, odds and ends. Michael offered to take notes at the sessions. Gail, Barbara, Nina Banwell and Joyce Noll will be bringing food to the event.
- Distribution of the flyer was discussed. Details of remaining PR were discussed.

Shrubs from holding beds Some plants are still a bit small for moving (Hazelnut, for one), but some need a home next spring. Hayes, Mink Brook West and Rinker are among the possibilities. The group suggested that placement for shrubs on Hayes be determined this fall and that holes be dug now, in anticipation that in the spring we could move the shrubs briefly into pots, and then plant them on short notice when weather conditions are best for transplanting (i.e.: rain expected). The winterberry could be moved at any time to the soggy area at Rinker. Vicki expected that there might be another work party from the church in Burlington, so one of these projects might be good for that group.

It was noted that a few of the plants are extremely large and that we might need help in moving them.

Gail asked if the Conservancy might also have some of the shrubs. Vicki noted that the Conservation Commission decided that the shrubs should be distributed first to the town lands, and that any extras might go elsewhere, such as to the Conservancy. We need a firm decision this fall on what goes where, flagging the plants to be moved and we need some help on landscape design from at least one member of the Conservation Commission.

Fall workdays for other restoration work: Besides installing holes in anticipation of shrubs next spring for Hayes, we need to investigate / inventory Rinker, Tanzi, Mink Brook West, and other challenges and the tasks needed.

Barbara reported on a brief visit to Rinker, noted the poison ivy encroaching on new steps [note: this has been removed]. Also at Rinker there are significant honeysuckle re-sprouts on the far side of the pond and these could be treated by herbicide this fall OR flame treatment is another possible option. Since the brush piles suppress new buckthorns, and since the fast-spreading sensitive fern suppresses seedlings in much of the area that had buckthorn trees (more than 100 large ones were treated), there don't seem to be many buckthorn seedlings, since the sensitive fern seems to be suppressing buckthorn seedlings. Some of the work should be done in spring (such as installing plants).

There may be places where herbicide work is needed this winter possible at Rinker or Mink Brook West, as with resprouts or large seed-bearing invasive trees. We can use some help in scouting out

the options. Steep territory is not easy for herbicide applicator Prescott Towles; he would need a helper if he were hired for that purpose.

Ellen Snyder (UNH Cooperative Ext), Proposal: Ellen has proposed a Connecticut River Valley Invasive Plant Forum for our region. The group felt that this is something that should be held in some other town than Hanover, but Hanover could be a good place for field visits say to Tanzi, Hayes, Rinker, Mink Brook, etc. The group wondered if helping towns train a person for not-for-profit license is something this could be a part of the regional discussion that Ellen Snyder has proposed (see above topic).

Licensed Herbicide Applicator: Vicki has worked some of Biodiversity Committee's suggestions on use of herbicide into a draft updated vegetation policy for the Conservation Commission. It will be reviewed / adopted soon. The group discussed the difficulty of locating a licensed herbicide applicator and the high cost for such a person. With funds so limited, Barbara noted that the town now has a person who holds a not-for-profit license for pest control, and noted that it would be fairly simple to add another category to that person's list of categories (something like an additional \$5 for the license). Invasive plants in the town's right of ways are spreading due to plowing, mowing and ditching, so the invasive problem is much more than something for conservation land. While ROW is beyond the responsibility of the Conservation Commission, Vicki produced an enquiry from the local conservation district that seeks input from local communities about how the Conservation District could assist communities. The group felt that maybe the right approach to the herbicide problem is to have the Conservation District provide that expertise. Barbara noted that in Hamilton County in NY Adirondacks, it is the county Conservation District that has a person who holds an herbicide license and works on county invasives...also on private land with landowner's permission. Vicki handed out forms to be filed with the Conservation District, and indicated that the topic will be discussed by the Conservation Commission as well.

Next meeting October 16, 2014 at 4PM in the Howe Library Murray Room.

Postponed:

- Garlic mustard wrap up.
- Goals.
- Michael Lunter suggested an overview of the efficacy of our control/outreach efforts