

Conservation commission meeting 2/9/2021 7:30pm

Attending:

- Bob Low
- Jack Linn
- Judy Rosovsky
- Max Krieger
- Ibit Wright

Members of public:

- Caitlin Littlefield → Member of Planning Commission and ACFC presenting EAB plan
- Allen Knowles → general interest
- Jim Monahan → Member of Richmond Land Trust and Andrews Community Forest Committee presenting application for CRF funds for ecological trail design

Public comments

- None

Appoint minute taker; review, approve January 2021 minutes

- Max Krieger taking minutes for February meeting
- Bob moves to approve, Ibit seconds, unanimous approval

Andrews Community Forest Conservation Reserve Fund Application – discussion and vote

- RFP for ecological study and trail builder to design network in conjunction with Ecologist
- Application was sent to committee members prior for review
- Request for \$2,000 from the CRF
 - o The total cost is \$12,000, they received other funding from logging revenue and grants
- **MOTION:** “The Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC) enthusiastically recommends approval of the proposal from the Andrews Community Forest Management Committee, dated January, 2021, requesting up to \$2,000 in Conservation Reserve Funds to pursue Phase-2 of trail development, to sunset three years from date of approval. “
 - o Motion by Bob, Second by Jack, Unanimous approval voted from Commission

Emerald Ash Borer management plan – update and request for assistance with tasks

- Caitlin Littlefield presenting 3 phases of EAB plan and is preliminarily requesting support from commission:
 - o The plan is funded by Urban and Community Forestry Grant, and hopefully by the Conservation Commission
 - o Phase 1: manage trees in village and nearby
 - o Phase 2: Tree removals on Richmond’s roads
 - o Phase 3: Management in Andrews Community Forest

- The purpose is to preserve some of the trees where possible, remove ones that might be dangerous, and study/learn from how they are influenced by the EAB and the pesticide treatments
- Some of the trees will be replaced as well with other species (there will be a variety of native, riparian species)
 - o There will be a contracted professional doing the treatment/removal/etc.
 - This will ensure the treatment occurs safely and consistently.
- The trimming from the removed ash would be chipped and used for mulch for the trees nearby (which will help them stay watered and renders the tree non-dangerous for further EAB spread).
- The wood could be given to local artisans/wood workers to make a bench for the town center and/or bowls to raffle off and raise funds for ongoing efforts or another local artisan purpose
 - o Perhaps the commission can solicit ideas on FPF
 - Caitlin's vision is to create products that can help the town, or be used in town in some way
- Jack Linn offered to contact a sawyer to coordinate getting the cut trees down and to his property and turning them in to useable wood for local craftspeople to use in some fashion
- GMP has already removed a significant amount of trees along roads
 - o Richmond will then need to work with the highway dept. to remove other trees over several years to ensure the roads are safe
- Caitlin will return with a formal request for funding in the future (spring?)
- Post Card Update: (not part of the grant, but will be a future CRF request)
 - o Caitlin has drafted a post card describing the EAB response
 - o Judy requests to put the VT invasives website on there
 - o Judy and Ibit volunteered to help get the postcards printed and sent out

LIRD update – review Ethan Tapper's plan

- Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester, and Jack Linn went out to the Lake Iroquois forest and took stock of the health of the forest and the possibilities there
- Ethan wrote a letter to the Commission detailing the adventure
- There are vernal pools, and other interesting resources
- The boundary will be marked (which is necessary for a management plan to be created)

Richmond Mobil Station upgrade – suggestions

- Jack's suggestion as a citizen (not as a commission member) → use the opportunity of the mobil being upgraded to extend the Richmond Town water line down the road and spread the cost to more users
 - o Water is extremely expensive in Richmond...
 - o Judy might follow up folks from the town regarding this idea

Wetlands – Jack Linn comment re zoning suggestions

- **Moving forward with wetlands inventory – who requests?**
- Judy has asked whether the Conservation Commission can request funds for its own activities...

- The question of whether this is allowed remains...
- How do we want a professional wetland's specialist involved?
 - Bob's suggestion → have person doing construction pay a specialist
 - Judy's issue is that the consultant would be biased towards the developer
 - Jack's suggestion:
 - Involve Chittenden County Planning Commission
 - This is a wide-spread problem and most town's wetlands are not well mapped
 - Also involve the Richmond Planning Commission?
 - The wetland inventory is VERY IMPORTANT (we would like to move this forward somehow)
 - Max's suggestion:
 - Ask the State to potentially weigh in on evaluations of class 3 wetlands if this comes to fruition
 - Have Kathleen Gent get involved → she commented on the Mobil station plan and she was formerly the town planner

VMN info and Dorney blog

- Judy will post this to FPF

Matters arising

- There is a proposed development on Hillview and the DRB meeting on it is tomorrow night (suggested by Judy)
 - Does the commission have a comment?
 - We should submit some form of comment if we want to further engage in this process
 - Questions we should ask?
 - Conservation Commission asks whether the DRB will request the applicant to go through the ANR layers they have and respond?
 - Express the commission would like to continue to be involved
 - More generally: Does the Commission want to be in line to get involved in these sorts of things?
 - It sounds like there is support on the commission to be involved more in the planning process
 - Members of the Commission would like to support smart growth, growth for density vs. sprawl, and conservation of farmland and working farms

9:15 → Adjourn