

July 10, 2018 Tuesday

Conservation Committee Meeting 7:30-9:30

Members present: Judy, Bob , Kristen, Guy, Mary

Absent: Rick, Jimmy, Jack

Public: Jon Kart

No public comment

Updates to Master Naturalist Program: Kate Blofson is our Richmond contact. Program has met its required number of attendees to allow the program to proceed. There is still more time for more folks to sign up to take the course. August 6 meeting with Jane Dorney and Alicia Daniel and August 25 is first field day of program. Kirsten, CC member, is attending the class.

Jon Kart presenting information for discussion related to river bank stabilization need. Past site at Well Head, current issue at Band Shell area and future issue along entire length of Volunteer Green fields. Presented slides showing extreme scour of tree roots. Trees were and are of significant size. Jon dated the photos Feb 2017 after a high water and ice-jam event on river bank. Gretchen Alexander and Chris Brunelle, representing State of Vermont inspected the areas of concern and sent a letter outlining the immediate recommendation for a repair. Their recommendation (in letter form) represents a repair and not a correction of Nature. In Nature, rivers meander as a part of the natural process of the water body. Also presented were photos showing the resulting river change after the 1927 flood and the current lay of the land after the bridge reconstruction circa 2009. The bridge was not realigned, only the underpinning and the deck were replaced. Examples from Waitsfield's Mad River restoration from 2011 to the 2013 project completion were shown. The article Jon presented also included the names of the river restoration project contractors.

Overall the question remains: What fix is the 'best' possible solution to the area described? Can armoring the bank with a concrete pour stop the bank cutting? Is a solution placement of large boulders?

Part of the bridge does have wing walls which does direct water to the Band Shell river bank and then the water courses back across the channel to opposite bank. Whatever decision, there will be an impact in another area of the river bank downstream.

Bob reminded the CC and Jon the narrative of our June 12, 2018 CC meeting where Geoff Urbanik, Town Manager, presented the Town application for Conservation Reserve Funds for the Band Shell riverbank restoration project. Missing from the application were: analysis of alternatives, assessment with evidence (measurements if possible) available of the location and rate of erosion (e.g. Gretchen's comments). Need further information defining the problem of high water in terms of impact of upstream diversions mitigation. Impacts in immediate area (e.g. river bottom scouring) and downstream, flow effects downstream. Input from experts such as Gretchen, etc. Opinions with observations such as yours (Jon).

At the June 2, 2018 Selectboard meeting there was a question vocalized related to the absolute use of the CRF at Selectboard's discretion without the support of the CC. Question presented and discussed by Loc Parke and Gary Bressor.

Guy updated CC about Town Forest. Thursday, July 12 there is a meeting of the steering Committee at 5-7 pm in Library and following there is a public meeting presented by the SE Group for Town Forest discussion. There have been stakeholder meetings and guided informational walks in Town Forest.

Entire meeting was lively.

9:30 Adjourn