

## Minutes from the May 26, 2021 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting

Call meeting to order at 18:43 by Jennifer Tuthill

Members Present: Jennifer Tuthill, Ernest Lamos, Merry Ruggirello, Audrey West, Tom Guilmette, and Steve Whitman (remote)

Excused: George Whittaker, Ron Maclean,

BOS Representative: Bob Piehler

- ❖ Approve minutes from the 28 April 2021 mtg. Motion to accept minutes was made by Ernie and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob. **Minutes were accepted as presented.**
- ❖ Financials: Purposed 2021 Operating Budget. **Data not available at mtg.**

**Guest Speaker:** Mark Avery was scheduled to speak to us and answered questions pertaining to the control and eventual eradication of the Japanese Knotweed in Barrett Park, but did not attend our mtg. Bob will try to reschedule.

### Old Business:

1. Status of Website: Updating for change in officers and upcoming ACC activities continues to need editing. Corrections still need to be made to webpage to update member status, which will be addressed after the April elections. Known corrections to the webpage will be made after the 28 April election of officers. Steve will work with Jennifer D. to coordinate this effort. **Steve reported that this is still outstanding, and he will get this done before the June 30 mtg.**
2. Status of Town Forest Management Plan: Ernie and Merry will meet in January to work on a plan. Audrey West suggested accessing plans by other towns with TF management plans to develop language and structure for ours. They agreed that this would be part of their plan. Meeting has not been held; however, once the vacancy is filled, and the road to the Town Forest is more accessible a meeting will be convened, and a plan developed. Ernie has been reviewing plans from other towns. **Ernie reported that no meeting has taken place as yet, but he and Merry plan to meet before the June 30 mtg.**
3. Status of TF signs along town roads: Investigation has revealed that the sign at the intersection of Mt. Cardigan Rd. and Hutchens Hill Rd. has vanished and a large rock has been placed at the entrance to the class 6 road off Hutchens Hill. **Jennifer reported that signage will be posted identifying that the road off Hutchens Hill leading to the TF is a class 6 road, but not maintained by the town. It was further discussed that logging is scheduled to take place on property adjacent to the TF and that the logging company will be responsible for maintaining the road during logging operations. What happens to the road after the logging is completed is under discussion.**
4. Status of repainting boundary markers at the Town Forest: after discussion, it was decided to have a TF community activity in April specifically to mark the TF boundaries. This activity will fall under the 2021 major projects and will include working with AmeriCorps volunteers in clearing and maintaining trails, creating new trails, and designating boundary markers. Informational signage will also be addressed but will probably fall outside of the work done by AmeriCorp volunteers. **Jennifer has spoken with Andrew Veilleux and dates have been firmed up.**

***Commission members will be needed to assist AmeriCorp volunteers and provide direction. Jennifer has provided dates and 2 commission members are needed for each of those dates. Members were asked to advise Jennifer of their availability.***

5. Status of replacing member for Management Plan Committee. Jenny will speak with Tom about to see if there is any interest on his part to join the committee. ***The committee is still being formed. Ernie reported that plans from other towns he has reviewed vary widely in terms of complexity.***
6. Status of Potential projects for 2021: These are the projects that are under consideration for 2021. As each project comes to fruition, it will become its own entity and be reported on individually. At this time, projects may be added or deleted depending on available resources.
  - Mapping of Town Forest trails, creating a border trail, marking points of interest in TF. Jenny working with Andrew re AmeriCorp volunteers. ***See #4 above***
  - Barrett Park weed control- can use two forms of weed control for Japanese Knotweed and have as a demonstration to community; have a community presentation regarding weed control and then onsite visit(s). Extension service can be involved. Audrey and Steve are working on a restoration plan for the area. ***See # 1 New Business Below***
  - Status of the Photo contest. It was agreed to hold the contest from 15 April to 30 September so that calendars can be ready for sale by Thanksgiving. Theme of 2021 contest is "Exploring Alexandria through Photography". Posters advertising event were approved and will be posted to promote contest. Entries will be accepted for pictures taken in Alexandria by amateur photographers. Jennifer T. will coordinate activities. ***Promotional material advertising the event has been completed and distributed to members to post at their place of business. Jennifer will provide local newspapers with periodic reminders for publication.***
7. Status of investigation: It was brought to the attention of the Conservation Commission that disturbance of wetlands is occurring on Plumer Hill Rd. and Lake View Heights. The Commission is following up on these reports and will refer their findings to DES if warranted. ***The commission has followed up on these reports and will notify DES of our concerns.***

### **New Business**

1. Discussion of a restoration plan for Barrett Park. Steve and Audrey will lead a discussion on potential changes to the area. ***Audrey and Steve "walked" the park area and presented their findings to the commission members. Amongst the issues discussed were: 1) the need for a formal survey of the property – it was felt that this was not necessary at this time because any changes made will be well within the boundaries; 2) what permitting, if any, will be needed – it was felt that this should be determined before we embark on a formal plan and Jennifer offered to consult with Erin Darrell for an opinion; 3) the completion of species inventory or ecological assessment – it was felt that this would be very beneficial especially because this is a known nesting area for turtles. Various studies have been conducted already and at the very least these should be reviewed; 4) should a formal landscape plan or guide be developed for guidance long-term – it was agreed this would be helpful, but with the understanding that this would be a future project. Immediate concerns are the removal of the knotweed, improvement of the bog view, and a better delineation of the turtle nesting area(s). Any landscape plan must consider erosion control and maintain wildlife habitat.***

2. All other new business to be considered by the Commission at this meeting: ***Jennifer presented an Activities Schedule highlighting upcoming public events being sponsored by the ACC. Commission members were encouraged to promote these events whenever the opportunity presented itself. Jennifer will try to provide copy for local newspapers to promote each event. Steve has offered to help as needed.***

There being no other new business, the meeting was adjourned by Jennifer Tuthill at 19:40. Our next meeting will be 30 June 2021, at the Alexandria Village School.