

Calais Conservation Commission Minutes
6/07/2023 - Calais town office & online
Approved 7/5/2023

Present: Larry Bush, Neal Maker,

via Zoom: Tracy Sudhalter, Stephanie Kaplan

Guests: Scott Bassage(recorder), Noreen Bryan, Paul Olander; via Zoom: Mary Beth Herbert

Proceedings:

- *Meeting called to order at 7:10 pm.*

- *Non-native invasive plants:*

Neal and Noreen have been working on identifying invasive plants growing in Calais and prioritizing which species should be targeted for treatment.

Neal and Noreen identified a few specific projects that can be tackled this year, with the help of Tracy and Mark who will do a windshield survey of town to start mapping invasive populations.

Tasks include:

- ◆ Finding grants
- ◆ Mapping invasives
- ◆ Treating this year's target species; Phragmites and purple loosestrife because of their negative effect on wildlife and native species.

Commission members may organize an invasive identification workshop among themselves ahead of the mapping.

Mark will start talking to students and teachers at U-32 about involving kids.

Tracy reported that her windshield survey of invasives in Calais found lots of phragmites, knotweed, honeysuckle, and wild chervil.

The Commission will **begin** planning a volunteer effort to tackle the projects.

Noreen suggested a separate outreach program to educate landowners about invasives; particularly the species that are widespread and difficult for the Commission to take on.

Neal will map the roads that Tracy has covered.

Larry will stay in touch with Jeffrey Allen and John Jose about efforts to control yellow flag iris around Sodom pond.

Neal will write up the plan to control invasive species.

- *Introduction of, and talk with, prospective new commission member:*

Paul Olander discussed his interest in controlling invasives and in conserving important properties such as habitat blocks, connecting habitat and wetlands.

Larry will send to the Selectboard the Conservation Commission's unanimous recommendation that Paul Olander be appointed to the commission. Paul will write an email to the Selectboard asking to be appointed.

- *A possible problem with commercial dog walkers on the Town easement into Bliss Pond Town Forest.*
Larry reported that he has been in touch with the dog walkers and that they would like to address the concerns.
- *Mary Beth Herbert asked to address the Conservation Commission.*
Goat owner Mary Beth Herbert, of Moretown, has been engaged by the city of Montpelier to bring her goats to graze on poison ivy along the bike path. She is offering similar services to Calais. Larry asked her to send him resume and list of services on offer.
- *Calais Conservation Commission comments on Planning Commission's proposed Amendments to the Calais Land Use and Development Ordinance.*
The Calais Conservation Commission voted unanimously to forward this statement to the Selectboard:
 - The Calais Conservation Commission supports the Planning Commission's overall revisions to the shoreland zoning regulations and urges their approval. The proposed regulations will be a realistic and much-needed enhancement of protection of lakes, ponds, and streams in Calais. Mark Brown, Larry Bush, Tracy Coolidge, Stephanie Kaplan, Neal Maker
- *Stephanie said:*
"The CC has statutory authority to advise other town boards and commissions on issues involving Calais's natural resources. I'm on the DRB and will send applications for development that may involve important natural resources to the CC for the CC's potential comments or participation. "
- *Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.*
- *The next meeting is scheduled for July 5 at 7:00 pm, at the town **Hall** and on Zoom.*

Action Items:

- Larry:
 - Ask Selectboard to appoint Paul Olander to the commission. **DONE**
 - Stay in touch with Jeffrey Allen and John Jose about efforts to control yellow flag iris around Sodom pond
 - Follow up as needed with the dog walkers. **DONE**
 - Follow up as needed with Mary Beth Herbert about goats
 - Find and make available the record of Calais Conservation conserved property. **DONE**
 - Forward the statement in support of the zoning amendment to the Selectboard. **DONE**
 - Return safely from his travels
- Tracy
 - Have a healthy baby
- Neal:
 - Send blank town map to Tracy and Mark for invasive survey

- Work with Noreen, Tracy and Mark on planning invasive control project