

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Type:.....Regular Meeting  
Date:.....August 27, 2019  
Time:.....6:00 p.m.  
Place:.....Milton Community Room  
Address:.....43 Bombardier Road Milton, VT 05468  
Contact:.....(802) 893-1186  
Website:.....www.miltonvt.gov

### MEETING MINUTES

*Dan Gaherty, Chair*

*Judith Kinner, Vice-Chair*

*Laurie DiCesare, Clerk*

*Bonnie Pease*

#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dan Gaherty at 6:32 p.m.

#### 2. Attendance

**Members Present:** Dan Gaherty, Chair; Judith Kinner, Vice-Chair; Laurie DiCesare, Clerk; Bonnie Pease

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Kris Dulmer, Michael Burris

**Public Present:** None

#### 3. Agenda Review

Deleted item V-C. Eagle Mountain Natural Area: Invasive plants.

Deleted item V-H. Lamoille Riverwalk...

#### 4. Public Forum

*The public may attend and be heard in accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law (1VSA312).*

#### 5. Business

##### A. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB): Event recap and next steps.

Michael reported that the EAB meeting led by Ginger Nickerson and Ethan Tapper went well and was attended by 15 interested members of the public. The next public meeting for the Caring for Canopy grant will be held on October 16.

##### B. Eagle Mountain Natural Area: Property Boundary Survey:

Dan said that the Eagle Mountain Boundary Survey by Vermont Mapping and Survey Company is still in process. Corner posts have been established and they are now flagging the property lines. Dan and Town Manager Don Turner spoke with Terry Wilson from VT Mapping and Survey on Friday. The approximately \$3,500 remaining in the budget will pay for flagging the remaining lines. Dan explained that the prior Trudell Survey of Eagle Mountain was not based on on-site field work. Terry will provide us with a report on their work.

Dan said he received a letter from Craig Iverson about tapping sugar maple trees in Eagle Mountain Natural Area. (The Lake Champlain Land Trust also received a copy of the letter.) Dan suggested we table any response until the VT Mapping and Survey report confirms the boundary lines. Bonnie said that the former Milton Town Lawyer, had said a \$10,000 liability policy was required by anyone who wanted to tap sugar maple trees at Eagle Mountain.

Bonnie MOVED: "The Milton Conservation Commission (MCC) recommends that no additional tapping of sugar maple trees be allowed at Eagle Mountain Natural Area." Laurie SECONDED. Motion PASSED.

Bonnie asked that the current Milton Town Lawyer, Joe McLean, be asked about liability insurance for Eagle Mountain. Michael will follow up on this.

**C. Eagle Mountain Natural Area: Invasive Plants**

This item was omitted from the agenda.

**D. Eagle Mountain Plant Survey:**

Laurie and Kris walked several trails at Eagle Mountain Natural Area on August 11 and recorded many unusual plant species including Bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) with inflated papery fruits and Walking (*Asplenium rhizophyllum*) and Rattlesnake Ferns (*Botrypus virginianus*.) Kris recorded the presence of Ash trees along the way as part of Milton's Emerald Ash Borer survey. Dan said that a group representing the Native Plant Trust also surveyed Eagle Mountain on August 14 and will send a report of their findings to us.

**E. Lamoille Riverwalk: Final Draft of Brochure, New Metal Sign for Kiosk and Bridge Project:**

Bonnie found a possible error in #7, the Yellow Birch description. Laurie will look into the issue.

Bonnie MOVED that "The Milton Conservation Commission buy an aluminum VOSS map sign for the Lamoille Riverwalk Ritchie Avenue kiosk." Judy SECONDED. Motion PASSED. The metal sign will be in the same proportions as the 2019 brochure map and will not exceed 36 inches in width and 32 inches in height.

Laurie walked the Lamoille Riverwalk trail this afternoon from the Ritchie Avenue trailhead and found the steep ascent near the entry very difficult to maneuver. More steps are needed on the upper level. The chicken wire that was installed on the lower steps to aid traction is broken in many places and should be replaced by shingles. Laurie asked if we could apply for a grant to add more steps on the upper section. Dan mentioned a possible Recreational Trails Grant. Bonnie suggested we may need to complete work on the Milton Town Forest handicap-accessible trail first.

Dan says he has enough leftover materials from other projects to make "Laurie's Bridge" at the first stream crossing encountered when walking from the Checkerberry trailhead. The small planks currently on site will be replaced by an 8-foot long, pressure-treated deck. Dan scheduled the work day this Thursday morning (Aug. 29) at 10 a.m. Dan, Bonnie, Judy and Laurie will attend and bring tools and sleds.

**F. Draft Natural Area Ordinance:**

Dan suggested we table this discussion until our next meeting. Bonnie mentioned that the Select Board had recently worked with the Recreation Dept. on a 20-year Master Plan and may not be ready to work on other ordinances at this time. Dan said we will need some ordinance in place to discourage bad behavior.

**G. Election of Officers:**

Bonnie MOVED that the present slate of officers be re-elected. Laurie SECONDED. Conservation Commission members agreed to be re-elected to their offices. Motion PASSED.

**H. Lamoille Riverwalk: Brochure, Trail Map Sign, and Bridge Project**

This item was omitted and addressed under item E.

**I. Milton Town Forest (MTF): Repair of new Trail Section, Phase II Trail construction:**

Due to water erosion near the Milton Marsh trailhead (between the first 90-degree bend in the path and the new culvert), Bonnie said that we may need some trail repair. Judy suggested that the Public Works Dept. may be able to provide some crushed stone to slow the excess water.

Bonnie stated that the Pre-application deadline for the MTF trail grant for Phase II is December 1. Since the beaver dam was breached, the Milton Marsh has become a meadow. The viewing platform would still be good for birders and other visitors, and the beavers will probably return to rebuild the dam. A stream and small pond are still visible and attract wading birds. Michael will contact Timber & Stone about doing a site visit for Phase II and a cost estimate for construction.

**6. Approval of Minutes of June 11, 2019**

Bonnie moved that we approve the June 11, 2019 minutes as amended at 7:18 p.m.; Laurie seconded; Motion Passed.


**7. Adjournment**

Bonnie moved that we adjourn at 7:26 p.m.; Laurie seconded; Motion Passed.

**Next Meeting:** Our next meeting will be September 24, 2019 in the town Office starting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laurie DiCesare

APPROVED MINUTES:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judith Kinner, Vice-Chair

Date: 9/22/19

Filed with the Milton Town Clerk's Office on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_, Milton Town Clerk