



**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING**

Tuesday, October 23, 2018 6:00 PM
14 North Street, Claremont NH

**MINUTES
Approved 11/15/2018**

Mr. Dickerman called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM and asked for a roll call.

I. Roll Call

Present: Gary Dickerman, Scott Magnuson, Kim Gogan, Eileen Skowronski

Absent: Steve Wood

Guests: Lee Stevens, Lilly Gogan, Brianna Frisbee, Emily Vire

Mr. Dickerman re-arranged the agenda to accommodate guests at the meeting. The Commission had no objection.

Lee Stevens – Emerald Ash Borer

Mr. Dickerman had invited Mr. Stevens to speak to the Commission about the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive insect that is threatening ash trees in New England. Mr. Dickerman said the Mayor had expressed concern about the ash trees on City property. Mr. Dickerman had asked Mr. Stevens to recommend some ways in which the City might get ahead of the threat.

According to the State of NH Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources, the Emerald Ash Borer is now in New Hampshire. According to the Department map, the insect has not yet reached Sullivan County, but it is not far from it. It has been spotted in 7 of the 10 New Hampshire counties.

The ban on transporting ash wood within the state has been lifted. Shipping wood out of state is still covered by Federal regulations.

Mr. Stevens passed around specimens of the insect for Commissioners to view. The insect is small and hard to see.

Different communities are employing different strategies to get ready for the arrival of the beetle, including inventorying and/or removing the trees. The odds of a tree being resistant to the insect are remote. It is thought that removing ash trees before they are infected is effective as a safety precaution but will also prevent the insect from lingering in that community.

Mr. Stevens estimated there are maybe a dozen ash trees in the City center. He said they were put in quite a while ago and are now overgrown. Some are disrupting the sidewalk.

He thought some parts of the City are planned for doing over and perhaps someone might think to replace the ash trees with something else during that do-over.

Because the insects are beneath the bark of the tree, they are hard to see. Trees with insects may exhibit “blonding” and woodpecker activity. It may take 3-4 years for an infested tree to die completely. The dead or dying tree poses a safety threat when limbs begin to break off.

The insect was first discovered near the interstate in Concord. It is thought maybe it arrived via wood being transported up the interstate.

Mr. Stevens recommended removing the ash trees in the City center.

A second option is insecticide. If the insect is not within 10-15 miles, a bark spray can be applied to the trees. The state approves of this method as a preventative. The tree takes up the spray in the bark and sends it up to the upper part of the tree and its leaves. The spray is confined to within the tree.

There are also soil treatments available. Mr. Stevens prefers the spray as being the least invasive (to the tree’s surroundings).

Once the insect is here, the best option is injecting into the base of the tree. It will protect the tree for 2-3 years. It kills the insects as they hatch.

The insecticides are specific to anything that is eating the tree.

There is work being done to create natural methods of controlling the insect (e.g. other insects).

Mr. Stevens recommended the bark treatment if the City center trees are to be retained. The bark treatment has to be repeated annually, preferably in the spring when the leaves are emerging.

Mr. Stevens was not able to comment on the ecological impact of the loss of the ash trees. He said dying trees increase bird and other insect activity as they feed on the insects and break down the wood.

Mr. Stevens said the state is still in shock at the sudden explosion in the infestation and has not yet devised a good plan for addressing it. He feels that those trees that are protected and survive the first wave of infestation, will be easier to protect in the future.

The ash is a northern hardwood that is excellent for making bats and handles. It will be missed.

Mr. Stevens urges the City to be proactive in this matter. It could cost \$5 - \$18 per diameter inch to treat the trees.

The Commission thanked Mr. Stevens for his presentation.

Sargent Center – Nature’s Classroom, Hancock NH Attendees Presentation

Lilly Gogan, Brianna Frisbee and Emily Vire gave a presentation on their experience at the Sargent Center, a day trip funded in part by the Conservation Commission. The girls participated in team-building activities and then spent the remainder of their time there searching for and identifying aquatic invertebrates in the streams on the property. The students were able to determine that the quality of the water in the stream was good based on the array of organisms they found. They all enjoyed the experience.

II. Review of Minutes of Preceding Meeting(s)

a. September 13, 2018

Mr. Magnuson noted that the location was wrong.

Motion: To accept the minutes as corrected.

Made by: Ms. Skowronski **Second:** Ms. Gogan

Vote: Unanimous in favor

b. September 20, 2018

Motion: To accept as presented

Made by: Mr. Magnuson **Second:** Ms. Gogan

Vote: Unanimous in favor

III. Finance Report – There was no financial report.

IV. Public Comment

V. Old Business

a. Stevens Brook

i. Water Quality Monitoring

1. VRAP – The Commission is eligible to participate in the VRAP program. An introductory meeting with a program representative was tentatively scheduled for November 27th at 11AM at the Visitor Center. To be confirmed.

ii. Removal of pine trees from Area 2 – update

1. At the request of DES, photos of the pine trees in Area 2 have been sent to Lori Sommer.

iii. Invasives

1. The Commission set Saturday, October 27th as the date to remove invasives from Area 2.

b. Easement #2

- i. Steve Wood and Gary Dickerman located the two southern-most corner pins and the east-side property line.

Motion: To spend no more than \$200 to purchase boundary markers for easement #2 and area 2 of the Stevens Brook easement.

Made by: Mr. Magnuson **Second:** Ms. Gogan

Vote: unanimous in favor

c. Source-to-Sea wrap up

Mr. Dickerman extended many thanks to the volunteers from Eversource and Ms. Gogan and her students for helping to pick up trash from the rail trail during the Source-to-Sea event. Ms. Gogan commented on how close the dumpsters behind McDonalds are to the edge of the river. They picked up 5 bags of trash in the short section of the trail they were on, most of which was returnables and a couple hundred straws. It was a valuable experience for the students.

On the second day of the event, volunteers picked up trash near the Ashley Ferry boat landing (along the access road) and a spot on the far side of Jarvis Hill, where they found a large dumping area that they couldn't touch because there was furniture, tires, etc. Mr. Dickerman reported it to the City Manager. They got 13 bags of trash, a couple of tires, some sheetrock, fiberglass insulation and some boards.

Mr. Dickerman asked the Commission to think about how they could be more proactive in this matter (preventing dumping and littering). Signage gets vandalized. Ms. Gogan suggested game cameras. Ms. Skowronski suggested education. Mr. Dickerman felt it is part of the Commission's mission to share this on Facebook, in person, on the website, CCTV, etc. Ms. Skowronski suggested publicizing how many bags of trash had just been collected. Ms. Gogan felt it would be most effective to get more people involved (with trash clean-up).

d. "Trash Talk" Summary

Mr. Wood, Ms. Skowronski, Ms. Gogan and Mr. Dickerman attended the informal gathering at the Harpoon Brewery. They were introduced to river stewards Ron Rhoads and Kathy Urffer. Some states in the watershed have tried to get legislation passed that would make tire manufacturers more responsible for disposal of their tires. It was suggested to look into have a 2nd tire pick-up day in the City.

VI. New Business

a. Source Water Protection Plan – grant application

Granite State Rural Water Association is applying for a grant to look into land ownership, landuse, zoning and present/future threats in the Whitewater Brook water shed (most of which is in Cornish and Croydon) on behalf the of the DPW. A letter of support for the application was sought from the Commission.

Motion: To support the GSRWA grant application.

Made by: Ms. Skowronski **Second:** Mr. Magnuson

Vote: unanimous in favor

GSRWA also asks the Commission to obtain a letter of support from the Cornish Conservation Commission.

VII. Communications

- a. Vic St. Pierre would like to discuss composting of City organic waste. As he was unable to attend this meeting, the topic was tabled until he could be present.
- b. The Commission received a thank you note from Barry Conservation Camp attendee Emma O'Hara.

VIII. **Other Business**

IX. **Future Agenda Items**

X. **Adjournment**

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Made by: Ms. Gogan **Second:** Mr. Magnuson

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

de Forest Bearse