

Guilford Conservation Meeting January 21, 2016

Attending: Susan James, Linda Lembke, Linda Hecker, Marli Rabinowitz, Bill Jewell, Gordon Little, Bevan Quinn, Karen Murphy, Gabby Cuiffreda.

Not attending: Rory Lincoln

Public resident: David Gessner

Meeting called to order at 5:05.

On motion the December 17, 2015 minutes were accepted.

Susan James volunteered to write the review of the past year's work and activities. They include, completing the Ancient Roads work with the help of Eric Morse and Jeff Nugent, manning a table at town meeting with various Guilford maps, applying for and receiving an AVCC Tiny grant (\$500) to upgrade the Weeks Forest Trail, attended two joint Conservation Commission meetings, submitted articles to the Guilford Gazette, and planned various monthly walks. We wrote the natural resources section of the town plan which was aided by the WRC's Forest Stewardship program which kept in mind the need for a town wide natural resources inventory. Susan James applied for a Municipal Planning Grant to finance the NRI. She had help from some of the GCC members and John Bennett from the WRC. Unfortunately, despite the strong application we did not receive the grant. We had a successful work day at the Weeks Forest Trail in October that included six Guilford residents. In a matter of hours, the trail was weed whacked, a metal culvert removed and stone channel built in its place, and many invasive plants dug up and removed. Looking forward, the Weeks Forest Trail needs to be completed by June. Other work includes establishing a trails committee, planning future walks and looking for ways to fund the NRI.

Natural Resources Inventory report:

Gabby reported that the select board voted to allocate the yearly \$500 and to also include \$1500 to help finance the NRI. The GCC has a special fund so that any unused money rolls over to the next year.

Karen, Susan and Bill met with John Bennett and Jeff Nugent to figure how to move forward with the NRI. Any grant applications should use the language in the Town Plan Natural Resources section, and the citizen involvement activities in the MPG application. Without the large MPG, we will probably need to do the inventory in steps. First would be to look at available maps such as wetlands, habitat blocks and bedrock geology to identify the most important areas to prioritize. Linda Lembke has put many useful maps in the Dropbox and the WRC is willing to help with any gaps. This will help in applying for smaller grants in the future.

Weeks Forest plan:

Karen and Linda Lembke had a meeting with Jen Kramer, the 6th grade teacher at GCS. She takes the kids out every week for Forest Thursday. She will invite her students to identify 10-12 places along the trail that they find interesting. This will translate into markers and descriptions in the trail brochure.

Linda also met with Michelle Frehsee who helped with the Guilford Mineral Spring's history including many pictures.

Linda Lembke talked with Joan Weir and Bill Guenther about the possibility of presenting a program to describe and answer questions about Current Use (UVA) and conservation easements. They are willing to do this and we hope to have the program planned before town meeting. A tentative March 10th date was suggested.

Linda L also spoke with Brian Yellen, grad student, about presenting his program on Tropical Storm Irene. We would like to sponsor this with other CCs and have it at the Learning Collaborative in Dummerston.

Our monthly walk is this Sunday, the 24th at 10 AM. We will be exploring the Roaring Brook Wildlife Management area. For the next walk in March, Susan James will walk the Blanchard Cemetery and snowmobile trails and report back whether we should try this area.

The next meeting is February 18 at 5 PM in the town office.

Meeting adjourned at 6: 35.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Murphy
Guilford Conservation Commission clerk