

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### REGULAR MEETING

FEBRUARY 2, 2023 – 6:00PM (VIA ZOOM)

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:08pm.
2. Roll Call. Present: Maria Grace, Susan Rand, Zach Sadow, Lee Potter and Abby Conroy (Land Use Director). Absent: Tom Blagden
3. **Approval of Agenda. So Moved** by L. Potter, seconded by S. Rand and unanimously **Approved**.
4. **Approval of Minutes of January 5, 2023. So Moved** by L. Potter, seconded by S. Rand and unanimously **Approved**.
5. Public Comment – None
6. Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) Workshop/Discussion  
There was discussion about possible farmland projects, potentially involving the HVRHS Agriculture class, and getting in touch with local farmers like Allen Cockerline for an interview. M. Grace suggested collecting data, even if negative, using the broad USDA definition of farming and looking at 2009 NRI data for a possible project starting point. A. Conroy asked about protected farmland; M. Grace pointed out that some large landowners and tracts may not be protected. S. Rand asked about what land has gone under permanent protection since 2009, what has been protected and what has been lost. M. Grace mentioned that there have been land use changes; A. Conroy noted that lines up with the POCD. She added that the Land Trust has considered protected lands, but the criteria were unknown. She also pointed out that some long-term leases are going away, like the Yale easements which are now expiring; private landowners can now develop the property. M. Grace indicated that a lot of land at Indian Mountain School is not protected.  
Another topic discussed was the Japanese Knotweed problem, the use of pesticides and the need for a map of it. Christian Allyn will be invited to the next meeting in March to talk about the problem. Some other areas have been mapped, but a map for Salisbury is needed. The knotweed mapping could be a possible FFA project, perhaps in collaboration with the Salisbury Land Trust. M. Grace will get detailed information from Tom Zetterstrom.  
M. Grace indicated that she had sent some NRI sections to Michael Klemens for review and comments; she considers them done. She wants this Commission to think about the recommendations, as they will go into the POCD and be looked at by the PZC, IWWC and possibly the Board of Selectmen for Ordinances. She also mentioned that applications could come to this Commission for comments, at some point in the future. A. Conroy pointed out that

different groups are working on studies and projects, but they are not centralized. There were brief comments regarding thinking about potential new Commission members.

#### 7. Vernal Pool Study

Abby Conroy mentioned that Michael Klemens is willing to teach volunteers how to monitor vernal pools; they don't have to be members of this Commission. P. Potter and S. Rand have done a lot of work on the address list of known vernal pools; Curtis Rand will look into getting insurance coverage for the volunteers. L. Potter mentioned that a letter to the property owners needs to go out. Mr. Rand suggested having an award to recognize people for the care of their vernal pools; Z. Sadow supported the idea of having a certificate or some acknowledgement from this Commission, by starting the recognition process.

**A Motion To Institute a Conservation Commission Certificate for Exemplary Conservation Efforts** was made by Z. Sadow, seconded by M. Grace and unanimously **Approved**.

S. Rand and L. Potter will finish the list and draft a letter to send out to property owners; M. Grace will review before the next meeting. M. Grace will contact Michael Klemens to find out about the timing of the training and the priority of the vernal pools. Mr. Rand mentioned the guides who are out on rainy nights; John Harney and Joe Mulligan are part of that group. The letter will inform the property owners of the Conservation Commission's interest in looking at their vernal pools to see if the pools are active. The Commission will ask for permission to come onto the property and limit the number of people going to the sites; the list will be short and prioritized. A. Conroy suggested doing a field class on the Rand property, then M. Grace and Mr. Klemens could be small group leaders.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02pm.