

Conservation Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2022

6:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8909380092?pwd=bVB3WGNhODF2VXI6a3R0RIBRdVdFUT09>

Meeting VIA Zoom

Members: Kimberly Roth, Ryan Ordnung & Donald Brown (joined at 6:26 PM)

Absent: David Cowell, Rebecca Longvall

Kimberly Roth opened the meeting at 6:18 PM

No Quorum to start the meeting, Kimberly Roth recommended Gloria speak first and give updates for Rauscher Farm.

6:18 Rauscher Farm Management Subcommittee

General Note: As discussed at previous Commission meetings, the Commission has approved an expenditure of not-to-exceed \$5,000 for Rauscher Farm in FY 22. This report updates FY 2022 expenditures for Rauscher Farm and provides updates on major ongoing projects.

- 1. Revised RF FY 2022 expenditures based on actual expenditures to date:**
 - 15 cartons and shipping of *Galerucella californiensis* beetles from Integrated Weed Control **Estimate=\$2,500.00; actual=\$2,450.00**
 - Rauscher Farm Electricity **(\$105 already paid/ est. outstanding) \$80.00**
 - RF Pollinator Meadow expenses (loam, equipment: protective wildlife fencing, rain barrels, watering equipment, etc.): **Not to exceed \$2,315.00; actual= \$1,982.97**

FY 2022 TOTAL (to date) == \$4,512.97

****FY 22 Residual funds available for RF =\$487.03**

RFMSC asks approval to purchase RF maintenance materials not to exceed \$487.00

-- FYI. Town Accountant has confirmed the ADA picnic table may be funded out of dedicated RF ADA funds approved at Town Meeting, June 2021; estimate= **\$1419.00**

- 2. Rauscher Farm Pollinator Meadow Pollinator Meadow: Phase 1: Site Preparation**

You can make plans and a timeline and then there is life! The site prep phase has proved challenging. Started on Saturday, April 23, site prep, although now almost complete, is

ongoing, awaiting the arrival of previously ordered site materials. Local community and town departmental response to the site prep phase has been wonderful. Over the course of the past seven weeks upward of 20 volunteers have been engaged in lifting sod, levelling the site, spreading loam, levelling the site for a second time. Town Facilities Director, DPW staff, and the Clinton School Department’s procurement staff have also provided critical practical help. Since site prep has taken longer than anticipated, the revised planting timeline is to start planting in spring 2023, at the beginning of the pollen/nectar cycles of native plants identified as most beneficial for pollinators in decline.

3. Implementation of Approved Loosestrife Biocontrol Strategy: *Galerucella californiensis* Beetles

Review: After highly invasive Loosestrife was seen in RF’s grassland meadow last year (invasion area is approximately an acre in size), the RFMSC has been in consultation with a number of people, including an expert in the state’s Fish and Wildlife agency, regarding employing dedicated Loosestrife-devouring *Galerucella californiensis* beetles as a containment strategy. (FYI . Not long after the town purchased RF as conservation land for the community, a small outbreak of Loosestrife was observed and eradicated via a then-state program that distributed beetles and Loosestrife plants together. Known as “beetle ranching” this approach wasn’t feasible in the current situation.)

Update: Several months ago, on behalf of the Commission, the RFMSC placed an order for 1,500 beetles with the sole North American provider of these beetles, Integrated Weed Control in Montana. IWC said at that time the final number of beetles and delivery date of same could not be confirmed until at least mid-May. Word came late in May and on 24-hours notice, 1,500 beetles were shipped to 90 Haskell Avenue where they enjoyed a temperature-controlled sleepover on May 26. The morning of May 27, pre-recruited volunteers David Ammerman, Dave Notaro, Gloria Parkinson, and Jim Webster, deposited 15 cartons (1,500 beetles) on Loosestrife growing in the grassland meadow. Now we wait and monitor for evidence that a substantial number of these beetles laid eggs. Specifically, we’ll be looking for signs of leaf-eating larvae that will hopefully mature into adult beetles around July 4, when the egg/larvae/adult cycle should begin again and repeat throughout the summer months.

4. Path to Clamshell Pond—Universal Access Pathway

The town, as the property owner, has now signed the Notice of Intent paperwork. This allows for the project to move forward with the Conservation Commission’s permitting process.

5. Barn Signage Installation

Currently underway. Completion this week is dependent on weather!

6. Nature Cam Installation

After being delayed because of the two major season-sensitive projects described above, installation of remaining cameras will resume over the summer.

7. Rauscher Farm Climate-Resilience Management Plan

The need for such a project has been under discussion for some time. RFMSC will soon suggest a strategy for developing a plan to the Commission. Such a plan is especially relevant because we already observe changes in some habitats.

Gloria stated there was a donation made for the loam and the beetles were \$50 cheaper than initially proposed.

No vote necessary for budget because they are keeping it under \$5000

Rauscher Farm Sub Committee plans on using remaining money at Lowe's for needed supplies.

Upcoming business will be NOI filing for Path to Clamshell Pond.

6:30 James Tomolo
NOI File #135-0290
187 Stone Street

Jimmy Tomolo here for Notice of Intent filing for 187 Stone Street. Dave Sadowski who is working on the site plans is unable to attend the meeting due to travel.

Kimberly Roth has questions related to storm water report.

Kimberly stated they need to see soil tested data (TSS worksheet) water quality report, storm water report and setback showing the 50 FT from the wetlands.

Jimmy Tomolo said the drainage is coming down from the road above their lot.

Ryan Ordnung is surprised by the rain guards being used.

Jimmy Tomolo asked for other suggestions to help with runoff other than the storm garden which is what they are currently using.

Kimberly Roth suggested using guards that could eventually be paved over.

Ryan Ordnung made a motion to continue the NOI filing for 187 Stone Street, Donald Brown made a motion to second, all in favor with a (3-0) vote.

6:40 James Tomolo
ANRAD File #135-0289
187 Stone Street
(Continuation from 5/18/22)

The Commission agreed that all information has been completed regarding the ANRAD filing for 187 Stone Street.

Kimberly Roth made a motion to close and issue the ANRAD for 187 Stone Street, Donald Brown made a motion to second, all in favor with a (3-0) vote.

6:45 NYPRO
COC File #135-0284
101 Union Street

Applicant not present during the meeting.

Kimberly Roth shared her screen with the Commission to review COC filing.

Kimberly stated that she is Ok with approving the COC with information provided.

Commission agreed.

7:00 Ed Baird Jr.
NOI File #135-0291
231 Grove Street

Kimberly Roth opened the hearing for the Notice of Intent on 231 Grove Street.

Kyle Burchard (GPR) representing project for residential work being proposed at 231 Grove Street. The site is located on Lancaster Mill Pond. Kyle shared his screen to show current plans of the work being done at the location. They plan to demolish a portion of the existing house and then start reconstruction. In order to start construction they must bring in crushed stone to create a working plateau to prevent runoff into the Lancaster Mill Pond. Kyle said they will then remove stone once work is complete. The work being done is on a steep slope. They plan to cut some brush, install a construction fence and will use erosion control. When operation is complete they will come in with turf and seed to regrow and stabilize site.

Donald Brown mentioned he received a notice in the mail and happens to be an abutter so he needs to recuse himself.

Donald officially recused himself from the hearing.

Kimberly Roth said informally her thoughts are relatively comfortable with project but would like to plan a site visit with the other Commission members.

Ryan Ordnung would like to see the slope stable for construction but is also relatively comfortable with project.

Kimberly Roth asked about restoration after project is completed.

Kyle Burchard mentioned seeding and revegetation.

Kimberly Roth asked about erosion control and providing that information. She said it would be helpful due to the steepness of the slope.

A site visit will be arranged and posted to the public.

7:15 The Woodlands

Rick Roper

(Continuation from 5/18/22)

Desheng Wang, Creative Land & Water Engineering, LLC, was present at the meeting to represent The Woodlands. He spoke about the 2019 expired OOC and how Rick Roper purchased the property in 2020 and didn't realize the OOC was expired. Desheng mentioned the proximity to the wetlands and how Rick was unaware it needed an OOC. They are now working to correct all issues. He is also working on updating the COC.

Desheng shared his screen with the Commission.

Desheng said they are reviewing the buffer zones and updating erosion control.

All storm drains around construction sites have been sealed. A lot of work being done now is focused around erosion control.

Kimberly Roth asked if he met with Judy Schmitz from the DEP at the site. Desheng said not yet, but hoping to soon.

Kimberly asked if he submitted for the COC yet. Desheng stated that he needs to get an as built plan first before he submits for the COC.

Kimberly stated that the old OOC should be closed out first.

Michael: (Resident of The Woodlands)

Michael asked Desheng if they are working to implement a better solution for the runoff from Building A to Building B. He noticed that after the last storm there was still quite a bit of runoff.

Desheng said maybe make crushed stone a little more solid. Rick Roper has picture provided from resident.

Don Brown asked about single OOC or multiple OOC for the project. Desheng said there would be about seven OOC filed in total.

Meeting Minutes Taken By: Ryan Rouillard