

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, June 20th, 2019 at 7:15 P.M.

Note: The regularly scheduled June 27th meeting has been moved up one week due to commission members' schedules. The June 20th will be held at the Westminster West Public Library to accommodate invited guests.

1. **Call to Order** 2 min
2. **Adjustments to Agenda** 3 min
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Minutes from May 30th
 - minutes accepted from May 30th
4. **Communications and Public Comment:**
 - Jan Ameen: wants to know what our plan is regarding Emerald Ash Borer.
 - We don't have any plans at the moment, but are aware of the issue.
 - Stephen suggests that we include the Emerald Ash Borer issue to our Town Plan input.
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) - POSTPONED UNTIL JULY**
 - a.) Watershed grant – discuss any remaining tasks
 - b) Invasive species – non-chemical control brochure – review assigned tasks
 - c) Town Plan recommendations – on hold for July meeting
 - e) Town Forest trail work – schedule date for walk
 - f) beaver concerns in Westminster West – update
6. **New Business (Discussion / Action)**

Invited guests: Rebecca Chalmers, John Broker-Cambell and Jeff Nugent to review Moosewood flood resiliency report, help interpret maps, and advise re: next steps.

- Rebecca:
 - encourages us (and others) to include LIDAR data to identify wetlands because aerial photography can miss 30-50% of wetlands. Charlie Hohn (wetlands program of State of VT) might be a good resource.
- Jeff:
 - Recommendations are pretty broad brush.

- Look at watersheds from the headwaters of the watershed and then enter developed areas. Where are wetlands and forests within this lense?
- Steep slopes ordinances?
- We should keep our focus narrow.
 - Stephen:
- Where are these wetlands? High up or low down?
 - Rebecca:
- We don't know about all the little wetlands out in the woods and how they are affecting the system.
 - John:
- We should be careful around regulatory recommendations.
 - Stephen:
- We already have a ridgeline protection ordinance, which has some ancillary beneficial effect for flood resilience.
 - Jeff:
- Discussed the idea that simply conserving land as it is won't necessarily make things better, but rather will prevent flooding from getting worse.
- If you are making a culvert in perennial streams that are on a larger scale, then the state has to get involved and do a hydrologic study and be able to withstand a 100-year flood.
- Municipal roads general permit
 - Rebecca:
- A reason for figuring out more about exactly where wetlands are is that as development pressure increases.
 - Stephen:
- We should decide where are the areas where are that priority places for preventing future development.
- John: says that any action like this *will* have some amount of detrimental impact on some landowners.
 - Stephen proposes that we use the FEMA maps, slopes that are above a certain grade, and also elevation in order to create some set of rules that could delineate rules for future development.
 - Jeff discusses the Putney wetland zoning ordinance.
 - Rebecca says that we should look at steep slopes ordinances in other towns/states.
- Looking at the maps:
 - Jeff: Are there areas in town where there are perennial problems for road washouts or other flooding?
 - John: There are 85 buildings in the FEMA flood hazard area.
 Tatiana asks how close to reality this mapping is.
 - Rebecca: NRCS data shows that VT is getting much wetter.
 - Stephen: We need to decide whether we are focusing on inundation flood damage or erosion flood damage.
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7. **Other Business:**
8. **Date of Next Meeting:** July 25th, 7:15
9. **Adjournment**