

## WINTHROP CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### Notes for meeting of February 12, 2024

**Members Present:** Amy Hughes, David Cook, Jeff Toothaker, Corinne Michaud LeBlanc, and Jill Ippoliti. Also present -Dawn Emerson, Town Planner & Staff Liaison

**1. Read and accepted minutes from the last WCC meeting, January 15, 2024.** Jill will send an electronic copy of the minutes to the Town Office for posting on the Town's website.

**2. Day of Caring.** All agreed that working on invasive plant removal with high school students has been beneficial the past 2 years. All are willing to participate again this year. We anticipate hearing from this year's Day of Caring Coordinator in April. *Jill will check in with WHS if we do not hear from them by mid-April.*

**3. Discussion of WCC duties and membership.** This was our first opportunity to meet Dawn Emerson. She will be our staff liaison. Her role in terms of the WCC is to provide updates on the WCC activities and discussions to the Town Council. As Town Planner Dawn is working closely with the Town Manager and Winthrop Planning Board. She will keep the WCC apprised of reports and actions pertinent to our charge. Members of WCC will be emailed notices, agenda and materials regarding proposals before the Planning Board. The WCC can meet to discuss and, where appropriate, provide information and make recommendations to the Planning Board in a timely manner.

The Town's website is being brought up to date and we are encouraged to post information of interest to the community. WCC now has 5 members. The Town Council's newly adopted Committee Roles, Responsibilities & Processes provides for all Town committees to have no fewer than 7 members.

**4. Town website postings.** February is Brown Tail Moth Awareness Month. Corinne will look for information on the Bureau of Forestry website and develop text for a posting on Winthrop's website with links to information on detection and removal of BTM webs. *Amy will check with Bailey Library regarding pruning saws for loan.* We discussed adding information on Invasive Plants when the growing season begins.

Postings on the Town's website and Facebook page can be used to solicit applications for new members. *Amy will contact Deb Nichols, Executive Assistant, in the Town Office to discuss how to add postings to the WCC page within the Town's website.*

**5. Comprehensive Plan Update.** The Comprehensive Plan Update is expected to be finalized in March or April. *Dawn will forward to WCC members the final draft of sections in the Plan with*

*reference or relevant to the WCC's charge.* The final Plan will be reviewed by staff at the Municipal Planning Assistance Program within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Town zoning must be consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

**6. Community Resilience Partnership (CRP) grants; other funding sources.** Those who attended or listened to the January 22<sup>nd</sup> Town Council meeting felt that the Council was not supportive of using the CRP grant program to fund an Open Space Plan (OSP). The Cobboosee Watershed District presented a proposal at the Council meeting regarding water management at the southern end of Annabessacook Lake. If Winthrop partners with Monmouth in submitting a grant application, it is likely to be for the maximum amount for grants under CRP. *Jill will ask CWD if Monmouth and Winthrop are partnering on a CRP grant application.*

We briefly discussed other funding sources. *Jill and Dawn will explore other options for funding an Open Space Plan. Dawn will look into grant programs within the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT).* MDOT has funds to improve municipal stream crossings and another program for other infrastructure improvements to promote resilience to climate change.

**7. Next meeting:** A meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 11th.

**8. Budget for WCC.** We are aware that most municipal Conservation Commissions have a small budget for printing and other expenses. An allocation of \$2,000-3000 would give the WCC the ability to develop and make available educational material e.g. a map of Town-owned land and other land open to public recreation.

Jill Ippoliti  
Secretary  
Emailed for review 2/14/24