



## VERMONT URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

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VT Urban & Community Forestry Program  
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### Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Council Meeting

June 12, 2019

Shelburne Volunteer Fire Department

#### MINUTES

Attending: Richard Amore, Jane Brown, Cecilia Danks, Danielle Fitzko, Kate Forrer, Joanne Garton, Ann Hazelrigg, Emilie Inoue, William Jewell, Gwen Kozlowski, Lee Krohn, Jenny Lauer, Melissa Levy, Bob McCullough, Nicolas Meyer, Ginger Nickerson, Sara Packer, Tim Parsons, Elise Schadler, Warren Spinner, Jared Ulmer, Bonnie Waninger, Susan Witham (VTrans guest)

#### Welcome and Council Business

Cecilia welcomed the Council members and introductions were made.

- **Review/Approve Minutes:** The minutes from the March 13, 2019 council meeting were reviewed and approved (Lee Krohn moved, and Bill Jewell seconded.)
- **Reappointment letters and Executive Committee Nominations**
  - Two new people will be needed in September for the Executive Committee. Tell Richard Amore, Elise Schadler or Cecilia Danks if interested.
- **Council Ask: Bio Review/Update**
  - Please review and give updates to Elise Schadler.

#### Updates

- **Federal Program Updates**

Elise Schadler presented highlights from May's NMSFA Meeting in Dover, DE

- Budget: For the third year in a row, the President's budget zeroed out UCF. This year, UCF did receive 1 million additional funding. But this zeroing out sends a message.
- LSR Grants: These can no longer be used by urban areas, as their focus will now be strictly rural. The population limit is 50K, which in Vermont is not a problem, but this rural focus needs to be kept in mind when writing grants.
- Workforce Development: The emphasis on workforce development often focuses on loggers, but could be extended to arborist courses in prisons, for example, to provide training for greater employability upon release.
- Health: Park prescriptions are becoming more popular. The Arbor Day Foundation is expanding their education program to include schools and hospitals.

- **Legislative Session Update**

Danielle Fitzko reviewed pertinent legislation and activity from this past session.

- Rural Economic Development: S.160 focuses mostly on Agriculture, but did involve forestry, especially with carbon markets. This will be in workgroup this summer.
- Workers' Comp: Sam Lincoln, FPR Deputy Commissioner, has been focused on the rural forest economy, including reducing the cost of Workers' Comp in Vermont and increasing participation among loggers. He is also working on logger training, safety and education.
- Promoting Wood Heat: Focusing on a tax incentive to 2023, concentrating on the installation of automated wood boiler systems.
- Act 250 Revisions: Conversations and work started; will continue again in 2020.
- Wetlands Rules: Statutory exemption for forestry operations may move forward next year.
- Clean Water: S.96 targets forestry; block grants will be contracted out focusing on achievable targets (example: % reduction in phosphorus load from a particular buffer). Could an urban focus be on credit for street trees?
- Tree Wardens: No movement this year, will try again.

- **EAB Updates**

- Flight Season: Started June 1.
- New Confirmed Find: Bristol—a street tree. This is the first find in Addison County. (FYI: The Town of Bristol has no plan in place for EAB.)
- Difficulty in Identification: It is hard to find EAB until it's very advanced!
- Wood Damage: After one year of infestation the damage to the strength of the wood is already substantial.
- Infestation Curve: National Grid reports that EAB infestation is a bell curve: a few trees, a few more, then it explodes, and you have mass-mortality.
- Counter Measures: Vermont will be releasing bio-controls (wasps) soon.
- Federal Funding: Money for EAB has gone down fast.
- Define our Role: What is our role in the future? Municipalities are asking for help.

## **Revisiting Council Priority Areas (2016-2019)**

Three priority areas were defined by the Council:

1. Train and support UCF leaders including Tree Wardens and tree boards.
2. Identify and promote conservation of community greenspaces such as town forests, village greens, and parks.
3. UCF educational programming for educators, homeowners, municipalities, green industry professionals, and volunteers.

UCF staff led three break-out groups to assess what the Council has accomplished in these areas, whether the priority areas are useful, and next steps.

Summaries:

1. This is an important focus that should continue. Goals for coming months:
  - Complete Tree Warden contact list
  - Plan in-person Tree Warden conference this fall
  - Online training programs
  - Integrating trees into community plans
  - Encourage more mentoring among Tree Wardens
2. This is an important focus that should continue. Goals for coming months:
  - Focus on how town forests and village greens are connected – they are not islands; “Corridors and Commons”
  - Supporting resources already created, like the Green Streets Guide
  - Train the trainers: how to use the online toolkit that is available
  - Look for health partners
  - Plug in to events already happening in towns
3. This is an important focus that should continue. Goals for coming months:
  - Focus on “How To” trainings for seasonal and temporary employees (such as how to trim a tree)
  - Assist and train tree advocates to speak to their towns
  - Create an annual marketing piece (like the one we did with Small Mammal)

## **Program Conversation**

- **Feedback Based on Written Program Report**
  - Grant, Town Forests: The LSR Town Forest grant got funded. Keith Thompson and Kate Forrer will work on this. Kate will develop a training educational model.
  - Grant, Storytelling: The LSR Storytelling grant also got funded. The goal of this grant is to improve Forestry communication.
  - Rural Roadsides: Joanne Garton is still working on the Rural Roadside Vegetation project.
  - EAB Outreach: Ginger Nickerson is doing many EAB outreach events and Forest Pest First Detector trainings.
  - Job Opening: Elise Schadler’s old job will be posted by July. At least one council member will be needed to sit on the interview team.
  - Event: Caring for Our Home Grounds: 2019 Commons Conservation Congress, September 21, 2019, Mt. Abraham Union High School, Bristol, VT. For more information: <http://familyforests.org/2019-conservation-congress-taking-care-of-our-home-grounds/>

- **Focus Share by Ginger Nickerson: Black Ash Workshop Conference Highlights**
  - Black ash (also known as brown ash) is not an urban tree.
  - It is important in wetlands; it often grows in swamps and along waterways.
  - Black ash is a cultural keystone species for many Native Americans. It is used to make baskets in the Northeast, as well as parts of the Midwest and eastern Canada.
  - EAB prefers black ash, and often attacks it first.
  - Ash trees can “simmer” for 4-6 years before showing signs of infestation. Just because EAB isn’t visible, doesn’t mean it isn’t there.
  - Because of this, consider using a 30-mile radius from a known infested tree as far as treatment area recommendations go.
  - Girdled trees are more effective than traps to detect EAB in a new area. But once EAB has heavily infested an area, girdled trees are no longer effective.
  - Areas in the Midwest have tried to inject ash trees with insecticide and then girdle them, causing the EAB to ingest the insecticide.
  - Some black ash should be injected with insecticide to preserve seed supply.
  - When a wetlands area loses its black ash, it stops being a forested wetland—other trees won’t grow there.

**Walking Tour outside led by members of the Shelburne Tree Advisory Committee!**

**Meeting Adjourned**

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Montpelier**

