

TOWN OF GORHAM
CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES
February 3, 2021

The Town of Gorham Conservation Board met on Wednesday February 3, 2021 at 7:00 PM at the Gorham Town Hall.

Present were; Conservation Board Chairman Brett Johnson, his granddaughter, Cheyanne and Councilmember Keith Eddinger.

Councilmembers Lynn Klotz and Margaret Brewin joined via video/phone conference.

Also present were; Town Supervisor Fred Lightfoote, Town Board Liaison Brian S. Case and Town Clerk Darby Perrotte.

Town resident Georganna Greenlee joined via video/phone conference.

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Privilege of the Floor – none requested

Approval of Minutes - On the motion by Councilmember Eddinger, seconded by Councilmember Klotz, the 12/2/2020 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Business-

a. –Food Waste Pilot Program –

Chairman Johnson explained the Conservation Board members have been working on starting up an organic food waste recycling program in the Town of Gorham. Councilmembers have been in touch with Ryan Heberle, owner of Vermi-Green LLC located in Palmyra NY. Mr. Heberle is willing to work with the Town to help them start a pilot program at the Town transfer station.

Chairman Johnson prepared a list of items needed to start the pilot program. The Board has researched the proper equipment needed for the pilot program over the last two years.

The Board discussed size options for the roll off container to collect the waste and the fees associated with it. They discussed containers for home

collection, tools for cleaning the containers and manpower for someone to clean the buckets.

Vermi-Green has offered some prices for the Town of Gorham if they choose to utilize his business.

Chairman Johnson said the Conservation Board will start the Pilot program based on fifty volunteer residents that currently use the Town Transfer Station.

Chairman Johnson will get updated estimates for purchase of the buckets to be used by residents to collect their food waste, a bucket cleaning tool and approximate labor costs associated with cleaning the buckets.

Mr. Heberle has recommended a tool to sufficiently clean the buckets.

The Board discussed fees for the container rental and the fee for the company to pick it up each week.

The Board decided a three month pilot program would be a good start to determine how well the organic recycling program will work in Gorham. Supervisor Lightfoote recommended using the small container for three months and have it picked up every week. Even though it is two hundred fifty dollars per week for the drop fee the Board would want it picked up more often in the summer months. The Town will have lots of issues to work out but they will find out a lot once the program is started.

Georganna Greenlee joined the meeting via video conference at this time. Mrs. Greenlee is interested in joining the Conservation Board.

The Board will have to consider the amount of times a container will be dropped off and then picked up by the vendor so they can formulate an accurate fee for the service as pick up times will vary by season.

The bigger container is a tightly sealed container that won't leak when it is picked up from the Transfer Station.

Mr. Heberle suggested the Conservation Board members keep track of the buckets and track the volume that is collected.

Councilmember Brewin said another suggestion by Mr. Heberle was to limit the collection to just one day of the week.

Councilmember Brewin said the Conservation Board will have to do a large amount of work to educate the public on what can and what cannot go into the food waste container.

Chairman Johnson said Mr. Heberle offered some signage that would be helpful once the program starts.

The Board will discuss more at their next meeting.

b. Proposed Housing Development –

Chairman Johnson said he attended the last Planning Board Meeting in Gorham. There is not a formal application submitted but Chairman Johnson would like to be ahead of the project. He would like to progress with ranking/scoring the property. Ranking the property would identify the desirability of preservation of part of the property for an open space.

Councilmember Klotz said she appreciates the Planning Board giving the Conservation Board a chance to weigh in and understand what the process is. Asked Supervisor Lightfoote how the Conservation Board can be helpful in reviewing this parcel at some point.

Supervisor Lightfoote said “Once there is an application submitted, officially, the Planning Board will ask for your input.”

c. CAC -

Chairman Johnson gave a brief explanation of the difference between a Town Conservation Board and a Conservation Advisory Council.

Chairman Johnson said the Conservation Board is formally included in the review of any actions on properties listed on a Municipalities Open Space Index. It considers environmental issues and concerns. The Board’s overall intent is to preserve the Town’s natural environment.

A Conservation Advisory Council is an advisory body that is put together by a Municipality to advise on the protection of its natural resources.

Chairman Johnson said one of the goals of the Town of Gorham Conservation Board is to work on more communication and have more input with the Town’s Planning Board.

Councilmember Brewin said in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, under Existing Zoning on page 9, the Town of Gorham 2005 Farmland Open Space and Resource Conservation Plan identifies vulnerable woodlands, scenic viewpoints, scenic corridors, historic resources and it says Gorham has not adopted zoning regulations specifically to protect such resources. Councilmember Brewin asked Supervisor Lightfoote if this is something the Conservation Board should be looking at.

Supervisor Lightfoote said “Yes, at least looking into it is a good idea. There was a reason for not taking that last step at the time.”

Privilege of the Floor – none requested

The next meeting of the Conservation Board will be on Wednesday March 3, 2021 at 7:00pm at the Gorham Town Hall.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darby L. Perrotte