

Clarence Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Agenda

March 13, 2025

@Town Place

7PM Call to order and Introduction (Steve)

Present: Steve Diver, Ron Walkowiak, Barbara Maisch, Chick Biegner, Dennis Londos, Casey Diederich, Lori Sauls, Bob Altieri, Paul Shear, Robert Geiger, visitor: Owen Shifflet

Updates

- Councilman Bob Altieri
 - Willowbrook gas lamps are an owner issue and neighbors have to decide how to proceed
- Councilman Paul Shear
 - Grazing on town land, about 200 sheep with a portable electric fence. Will propose lease arrangement with farmer.
- Deer control (Dennis)
 - Good progress this year, especially in Town owned Oak Savannah area. However a problem with a nearby resident. Will wrap up by the end of March.
- 2025 Budget Update
 - Lori submitted a summary of spending and balance. There are \$228.31 in new expenses for posters, etc. for the educational displays in the Clarence Nature Center. Due to a donation by the film producer, our balance stands at \$2521.69.
 - Paul will look into purchasing tree shields and bamboo stakes.
- Grant for Mill Pond survey (at Main Street Town Park)
 - Casey and Steve to meet with Tim Lavocat, Jon Bleuer March 18th at 2PM
- March Headlamp Hike Feedback (Steve)
 - There was a scheduling conflict with International Day of Sharing which decreased turnout compared to other previous hikes.
- UPCOMING: Transcendental writing at Nature Center May 17th, 10AM-1PM. CAC is tabling at this event. Kids are making nature journals.

The status of the wood duck box on the bike path near Ransom Creek was discussed. These were installed by the Council led by Peter Wolfe and have not been maintained in recent years. Council recommended installing a squirrel baffle to deter rodent nesting. This is a good future project.

Old Business

- Arbor Day Open House Planning
 - Saturday April 26th, 2025 from 10am-1230pm. Volunteer arrival at 9AM. Bob Altieri has the nature center reserved.
 - Tree seedling preparation will take place on Friday April 25th at 5PM at the Nature Center
 - Speakers: Dave O'Donnell (Eastern Monarch Butterfly Farm) and Claire Sweeney (Wild Spirit Education). 30 min presentations.
 - Guided hike and tree identification by a DEC Forester
 - Tree giveaway (50 seedlings this year, not 100)
 - Pollinator plant giveaway?
 - Sign-up sheet: "Friends of Clarence Conservation"
- Trail markers and trail marking
 - There was lots of discussion about the sign and what it should look like. It will be \$172 for 25 round 5 inch circular signs. These will be supplemented with colored disc trail markers, which will be keyed to the trail maps, which will list colors for each trail loop. Trail marking will start at the Nature Center.

- The council voted on the sign and unanimously approved the logo design and purchase.
- Tree Planting site for 2025 (Steve)
 - Meeting for final site selection on Friday 3/28 (Cheryl, Ron, Steve, Bob A., Jamie, Rich McNamara from Snowmobile association)
 - Planting is scheduled for 4/26. Need volunteers for both planting and Arbor Day.
 - Update on tree tubes and bamboo stakes

New Business:

- Summer Community Education Ideas. It was proposed to bring in more educational sessions in the less used summer months where we have less programming. Some topics like wilding the backyard, invasives, and owl identification are some possibilities.
- Code of Conduct for Conservation Corps/Friends of Clarence Conservation -see draft attachment. The council suggested edits and recommended shortening to about one paragraph.
- Perimeter Trail. Highway cleared some of the dead trees near the trail. This section is ready to be marked and mapped.
- Trail Re-routes at Nature Center. On the headlamp hike, one dad asked who planned the trails and why can't some be extended, such as more along the escarpment. The Peter Wolf trail heads right back to the building and should follow the escarpment, which is more beautiful, a unique geographical feature and offers a way to extend the trail distance, which others have asked about. Also, if the trail is re-routed, it would not need to join the road where there is a safety issue when both pedestrians and cars are on site. All thought this was a good idea, and could be done with a volunteer corps.
- **Next meeting date will be April 10, 2025 7PM @ The Nature Center!!** Later, this was changed to the Hallock room due to a scheduling conflict.