**Present:**

**Committee Members: Kate Lindroos Conlin, Alain Peteroy, Shelia Kelliher, Larry Flaccus, Bob O’Connor, Mark Phelps**

**Board members: Dicken Crane, Emily Boss, Whit Sanford**

**Others: Glen Ayers, Agent Lisa Hayden, Assistant Sophie Argetsinger**

1. Call to order at 4:04 p.m.
2. Vote to approve Nov. 2, 2021 minutes was unanimous with Mark and Sheila abstaining.
3. Public comment was moved to later in the agenda due to a guest speaker.
4. Emily Boss, Director of the Massachusetts Woodlands Institute, discussed the Western Mass Wood web site, a resource for finding local wood in a region somewhat broader than the Partnership. Their goal is to update the directory with more businesses and including different types of materials available. A local wood month had been planned for June 2020 but was delayed due to the pandemic. MWI would be interested to work on these kinds of events with the Partnership. In response to a question, Emily said a requirement for graded lumber can be a stumbling block for sourcing structural elements locally.
5. Potential webinars (partnering with Education, Outreach, and Research Committee): Sheila noted there is some overlap between the different committees. Whit suggested working with various committees and a possible program coordinator to host events like the Local Wood Month. Dicken noted that it doesn’t have to occur in just one month. Kate suggested creating a long-range program guide – there was a suggestion to tie events to the seasons.
6. Forest Conservation license plate update: The idea of a Woodlands Partnership license plate featuring Northwest MA was discussed as a revenue source. EOEEA manages the themed license plate program and would need to approve of the idea. After paying a fee to get approval of a special plate, then 400 people would need to sign up to buy it before it could be produced. Selling the plates can help educate people about the MTWP. The oldest white pine in the state is in Charlemont. Dicken has drawn a possible plate. Sheila noted that people do travel for river recreation and rafting could be a theme or draw for the region.
7. Public Comment: Glen Ayers stated that Charlemont got an ARPA grant for $500,000 for outdoor recreation. A lot of funding may become available and he said that forest conservation should be related to climate, such as wild carbon conservation restrictions, such as the work of Northeast Wilderness Trust.
8. Discussion of prioritization mapping for the Partnership Plan in terms of what kind of

woodland conservation the MTWP wants to promote or seek grants to accomplish. Do we want parcel-level GIS maps in the new Plan – or a recommendation to develop them

related to Partnership goals? Or do the local land trusts have enough priority projects in

the pipeline that the MTWP would just support them?

Kate suggested the Committee and Partnership should not do work that’s already being done. Alain agreed, noting that land trusts like NEFF, BNRC, Mass Audubon, Fish & Game and DCR all have various conservation priorities they are working on based on their missions. If the Partnership went through a GIS study, the same forested blocks would emerge as priorities. Dicken suggested a practitioner’s guide to forest practices that can help educate on steps people can take to benefit the climate. Every forest is different so appropriate action or lack of it may vary, and we can all learn a lot more about what can be beneficial for forest health and resilience. Demonstration forests being funded by some current grants are a way to help landowners understand how they can participate in climate priorities. Dicken suggested that climate change is presenting a new paradigm for what conservation means. For land that is already conserved, we still need to learn how to care for it. Bob suggested that maybe there could be a different kind of forest conservation plan for the region related to how to deal with climate, which might vary by town, and how landowners could be part of the climate movement.

1. There was a suggestion to continue the discussion at the next meeting. Kate said if members want to pursue a project for next fiscal year, to send suggestions to her. Mark made a motion and Kate seconded to adjourn – motion was unanimous at 5:47 p.m.