

WILMINGTON BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

August 11, 2025

Committee Members Present: Cheryl Rothman, Bev Butler, Kathleen Comeau, Adele Mattern, Anne Saracino, Elaine Ahnell and Carol Sewall.

The meeting was called to order by Cheryl at 8:00 a.m.

Visitors, Public Comments: Patty Small from Chimney Hill filled the members in on her work to help eliminate the invasive Japanese Knotweed. She has information from those working on it in the Mad River Valley area and their grassroots efforts to eliminate it and educate others. 'Adopt the Knot' groups have been formed. Because it thrives in wet areas it is damaging/eroding embankments along waterways and will eventually damage roads and get into pipes. If the roots break up they will travel downstream and spread. The repeated floods in Vermont have added to its spread. Currently repeated cuttings is the only method to help eliminate, but she has no definitive answers on what to do with what she has cut and stored in large plastic bags. She spoke to Marshall who recommended taking the bags to the transfer station but there is no plan beyond that. If the cuttings are allowed to dry they can eventually be burned. Using chemicals will work but that is not recommended as it grows so close to waterways. Biological controls are in the works. Areas where it has been reduced are bare as it takes over and eliminates the native flowers and plants. Possibly the town would be interested in planting native wild flowers or plants in the areas where it is removed as well as taking an interest in educating with an awareness campaign. Members suggested something be put in the Deerfield Valley News along with a short paragraph on the town website. Patty will continue to gather information from sources working on this problem and share that information with Kathleen to then be shared with the Committee.

Approved Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of June 9, 2025, by Anne, seconded by Bev and approved by all.

Route 9 Bridge Replacement: There are no current plans. Possible VTRANS pedestrian bridge to River Bank Park has been discussed but again there are no plans to date other than the Committee will be involved in some way.

Landscape Program: Members will meet on August 25 to work at Gateway at 8 a.m. Not all can make this date so members will stop by when time permits to work on their area. Adele has done some pruning already, the spirea is in need of being cut back and the forsythia should be pruned after blooming next spring. Keith is planning to do a good prune at Gateway in the fall. Adele mentioned that the pergola area needs attention and she plans to spend some time there.

Elaine had reached out to Martin in June about the holiday roping and he wasn't sure what he could supply, but would have an answer in August. To date she has not been successful in reaching him again but will continue to try. It was recommended more lights be ordered over the case that was used last year as the trees in the pergola could use them. Bev recommended one large order should be done to include the red balls, etc. It was decided that lights would go up on October 27 and the greenery on November 10. Elaine was able to get the greenery last year from the McKinley Christmas tree farm and hopes to do the same again this year.

Barrel Program: All were in agreement that the barrels look lovely. Discussion on flowers for next year resulted in possible replacement of the yellow lantana with yellow petunia or yellow wave to have that color show more. All were in agreement that the overall colors are beautiful, the salvia is eye catching and the reduction from two potato plants to one was the right choice. Placement of the barrels for next year should remain the same.

Town Manager Report: None

Old Business: None

Next Meeting: A working meeting on Monday, August 25, 2025, at Gateway.

Adjourn Motion: Anne

Second: Bev

All in Favor

Opposed: 0

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Comeau