

Veterans Memorial Park Needs Your Vote (On [Warrant Article 7A](#))

Please vote YES to fund *Habitat Restoration of Veterans Memorial Park with Native Plants*.

What is the funding source? Conway's Community Preservation Committee voted to recommend funding this planting project. We now have the opportunity to vote on using existing Community Preservation Funds to revive the ecological health of Veterans Memorial Park.

What would the funds cover and why? The funds would be used to remove diseased trees, and to install native plants, including small trees and numerous shrubs along the rear property boundary, leaving existing lawn as grass. By choosing plants indigenous to Conway, we are preserving Conway's unique character while restoring habitat for birds, butterflies, and other beneficial native wildlife. For park visitors wanting to learn more, there will be plant labels and signage to help educate our community.

Will this affect my taxes? Voting yes will NOT affect your tax bill. Community Preservation Act funds already exist for projects like this.

Why are the funds directed to the Open Space Committee? This project was initiated by *Pollinate Conway!*, a volunteer-based group that is not a town committee but shares common goals with the Open Space Committee. The Committee has agreed to be the fiscal agent if the town votes to fund it.

Who will maintain the newly installed plants? The Open Space Committee has voted to provide some limited funds for initial maintenance by paid professionals. Supplemental maintenance will be handled by volunteers. Additional funds will be needed in the form of grants and donations. Community Preservation Funds cannot be used for maintenance.

Background Information: In Spring 2023, *Pollinate Conway!* proposed to the Conway Select Board a plan for planting native trees and shrubs at Veterans Memorial Park, town-owned land across the street from Conway Town Hall. At that time, several large evergreen trees that provided screening had recently been removed from the site due to safety concerns. Aside from regular lawn mowing, other plants at the site appeared neglected. The Select Board unanimously approved the proposed plan.

Over the past year, *Pollinate Conway!* rallied groups of Conway residents to make much-needed improvements at the park. We pulled and removed truckloads of invasive plants. Over the spring and summer, 20 volunteers applied sheet mulch (layers of cardboard and wood chips) over the intended planting area to smother poison ivy and weeds. It took a small army to move and spread the approximately 30 cu yards of wood chips donated by neighbors.

Although the park is a small parcel, adding a diversity of native plants can make a BIG difference ecologically. Combined with the pollinator garden recently installed on the library island, this project expands support to our local birds and insects. And people will find it more pleasant to visit, too.

Learn more about *Pollinate Conway!* and find resources about native plants. On the Conway town website, visit the *Pollinate Conway!* page under *Open Space Committee*. Scan the QR code for quick access.



Interested in volunteering or making a donation? Email us at PollinateConway@gmail.com