

MINUTES
Sanbornton Conservation Commission

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, October 13th 2022 at 7:00 PM
Meeting Place: Town Offices, 573 Sanborn Rd, Sanbornton NH
Present: Ray Masse, Dave Perry, Chair Brad Crosby, Gail Morrison

Gail Morrison made a motion to approve the minutes of 9/8. Chair Brad Crosby seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

a. Discussion of boundary contract/Timber sale agreement – Town Forester Jon Martin was in attendance; Chair Crosby asked when he plans on doing the boundary work and Jon responded that he is short on help right now. Chair Crosby stated that some of the work should be paid for from the Forest Maintenance Fund and some from the Conservation Fund. Dave asked if Jon can map the corners of the lots using GPS and Jon responded Yes. Dave asked if the Commission chooses the color for blazing and Jon explained that it will save some money if red is used again and red also stands out. Ray noted that the Selectmen's names are on the contract and he will ask them at their next meeting if they can sign it.

Chair Crosby explained that there is an overlook that was cut by Jon years ago but should be cut again to maintain the view. Jon stated that this will not be a problem and he is looking for the right logging crew for this job since maintaining the existing hiking trails is very important to the Commission. He recommends doing a negotiated bid rather than an open bid because not all logging crews will do a good job at preserving the trails. Dave noted that the big stone wall that borders Steele Hill's land is important and asked if any trees could be lifted off the wall; Jon stated that this may be an added hourly expense if a chainsaw is used. Jon added that he will have the crew protect cultural resources like stone walls as much as possible and he will try to use past skid trails so that unnecessary cuts aren't made.

Ray noted that 55 of the 180 acres will be harvested; Jon explained that if a forest stewardship plan was written for this land he would have a better idea of what trees need to be harvested in the future which would cost around \$5,000 to \$7,000. Ray stated that the advantage to this would be knowing if there is something that could be forested and Jon agreed; Jon added the existing forest plan is 20 years old and no longer applicable. Dave asked if harvesting 55 acres will make the land look barren and Jon responded that it will not look barren and he will try to balance making the Commission money while leaving as many trees as possible. Ray asked if the Commission should consider harvesting more acreage and paying for a forest plan now to create a healthier forest long-term. Jon responded that he can cut a small entry and then let the Commission see it and then decide if they want to expand later.

Ray Masse made a motion to allow Jon Martin to proceed with looking for a negotiated bid sale for the Town Forest on Eastman Hill, recognizing that aesthetics and preservation of the trail system are tantamount with the harvest. Chair Brad Crosby seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Trail maintenance – Chair Crosby completed the Drumlin Trail sign for the Mitiguy easement; Nancy Mitiguy has spoken with Aaron Abbott and he has mowed some of the trails.

c. Black Brook update – Ray stated that unless the Town can find State or federal funding it will not make the headway that Winnisquam Watershed Network has been discussing.

d. ALE training – Ray provided information to members earlier in the month about an upcoming Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) training, specifically the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) component, on November 2nd. Chair Crosby said he may be able to join.

e. Conservation acreage – Dave stated that he was tasked with coming up with a list of conservation land acreage in Sanbornton per Gail for the Master Plan and asked if common land should be included. Ray and Chair Crosby both stated that they don't believe this would qualify because it can't be used by the public; Chair Crosby added that he thinks just easements and owned Conservation land should be included in the list, but common land and land in current use should not be. Ray suggested that Gail get more information from the Master Plan Committee on what they expect.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 10th at 7pm at Old Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Audry Barriault