

## MINUTES

### Sanbornton Conservation Commission

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 6:45 PM

Meeting Place: Old Town Hall, 19 Meeting House Hill Road, Sanbornton NH

Present: Chair Brad Crosby, Ray Masse, Dick Ayers, Dave Perry, Selectman Bob Lambert, Karen Bordeaux

Guests: Don Noyes, Jeff Martin (Megwood Solar)

Chair Crosby motions to approve the draft minutes from the 08/10/23 CC meeting. Ray seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING -6:45PM**

**Trails Cleanup Workday:** Ray provided a map showing all the trail work that has been completed to date, as well as recommended future work. Of note, Taylor Road trailhead still needs significant poison ivy and bramble removal. The parking situation there should be improved also, allowing hikers to pull cars further off the road. The Green Trail will also need work improving some wet and soggy areas.

**Logging of Town Forest:** Discussion regarding logging areas of the forest to help improve the trails as well as wildlife habitat. The Scenic Vista could use some clearing to improve the views. Ray suggests waiting at least a year before doing this work. Chair Crosby agrees, and suggests the topic be re-visited at another time for further discussion.

**Cost Estimate for Trailhead Work:** Chair Crosby received an estimate from contractor Howard Jones for the proposed trailhead work, to include some clearing, poison ivy removal (Taylor Road), and filling/grading of washout areas. Original bid of \$6525 included material to be brought in by contractor. Chair Crosby verbally received an updated bid of \$4100 from Howard Jones for labor only, as fill material is already being provided. Ray proposes adding the expansion of the trailhead parking on Taylor Road to the scope of work. Karen suggested adding the removal of boulders in the field near the Green Trail to allow for brush-hogging in the future.

Ray **MOTIONS** to authorize the following: “not to exceed \$10,000 for Town Forest Trailhead work, Green Trail clearing boulder removal, and expansion of Taylor Road parking to come from Town Forest Maintenance Fund”. Karen seconds the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Chair Crosby will discuss with Howard Jones for a revised cost proposal, and invite him to the next Trail Work Day to walk the site.

**Insurance/Liability:** Ray’s research indicates that anyone using the land is doing so at their own risk. The landowner/easement holder (and therefore the Town) is protected, as specified by RSA 212:34 and RSA 508:14. Tree stands have been documented in the Town Forest. Ray will look into regulations regarding removal if needed.

**Upcoming Trailwork Days:** Chair Crosby recommends a Trail Walk day (without maintenance work) to document areas that need work, including signage and blazing. Another Trail Cleanup day was also decided:

Trail WALK Day: Wednesday Sept 20<sup>th</sup> at 3PM, meet at Eastman Hill Trailhead.

Trail Cleanup Day: Sunday Sept 24<sup>th</sup> at 10AM, meet at Eastman Hill Trailhead.

## **REGULAR CONSERVATION COMMISSION BUSINESS – 7:30PM**

### **New Business**

**Megwood Solar Project:** guest Jeff Martin representing Megwood Solar was present and provided some quick facts regarding the Solar Project proposed on Johnson Road. The 1-megawatt solar array will be located on an existing field, which will require minimal site work and prep. Approximately 8 acres will be fenced. A trench will need to be created for underground cables.

The perimeter fence will consist of 6 inch x 6 inch wire that will allow small animals to travel through the site. Chair Crosby asks about allowing larger animals passage by keeping bottom of fence straight over natural swales and topography. Jeff states the fencing is for public safety (keep people away from the equipment), and he will have to discuss this with Martha, the lead on the project.

Karen asks about the project timeline. She is aware of an agreement the landowner has with NH Fish & Game, including a grant, to maintain the land for wildlife habitat, which spans 5 years. She wonders if the landowner plans on keeping the property open to the public. Jeff will bring this back to Martha for further discussion, as they are hoping to initiate the project well within that 5-year timeline.

### **Old Business**

**Newsletter:** Dave provided a draft of the summer newsletter, which highlights the ongoing trail cleanup work as well as his “bird of the month” the yellow-bellied sapsucker. It was recommended to include a blurb about the upcoming 100-acre land donation, no names or identifying details necessary. Ray and Dave will work on finalizing the draft for publication soon.

Karen asks about current circulation methods for the newsletter. As of now, it is posted on the CC website, Facebook, and printed copies are left at various venues. The cost to mail the newsletter exceeded \$1000 in the recent past, therefore it was decided this route was not feasible at this time.

**Town Boundary Report:** Priorities to be addressed include encroachment onto the property by neighbors, and the discrepancies of town property boundaries along the western edge of the Town Forest. It was recommended that a surveyor formally document the property edges to avoid future issues, especially the trailhead on Taylor Road. Chair Crosby will start soliciting bids for a formal survey to address the areas of concern. Ray will simplify the areas of encroachment (mostly along Dr. True property) for easier discussion at the next meeting and prior to notifying landowners of encroachment violations.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

Jordan Tedeschi