

MINUTES

Sanbornton Conservation Commission

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, October 12th 2023 at 6:45 PM

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

Present: Chair Brad Crosby, Ray Masse (via Zoom), Dick Ayers, Dave Perry, Selectman Bob Lambert, Karen Bordeau, Gail Morrison

Guests: Don Noyes

TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING -6:45PM

- a. **Trails Cleanup Workday:** Both the trails work day and the trails walk were a success. The Virginia Hutton and Eastman trailheads were improved, and it took 2 days for Howard Jones to move all the boulders from the Green trail clearing. The site is now ready for brush-hogging. So far \$5200 of the Forest Maintenance fund have been allocated for Jones' work. There have been some issues with neighbors complaining about the trailhead work, but Chair Crosby re-iterates that we have the right to improve those areas as well as expand the parking area on Taylor road. He will confirm with Howard Jones that the parking area can be started. The blazes on the trails will need improving. This can be done at the next Trail Work day.
- b. **Trails Subcommittee Recruiting Efforts:** There are 4-5 people who have expressed interest in joining the subcommittee, but have not been able to commit to meetings yet. Bob suggests asking Trish to post on the town website to help recruit new members. Don suggests posting on Facebook too. In-depth discussion about how much info to include in these recruitment efforts. Karen suggests keeping it simple and starting with inviting the public to help blaze the trails. Don suggests a guided walk to introduce the public to the trails and what the committee does. Dave thinks more information should be provided, such as trail improvement projects etc. so potential members know what is involved. Bob suggests a "soft intro" to the committee by inviting the public on a guided trail walk. This will avoid scaring off potential members who do not want to commit to trail work but are interested in joining at monthly meetings. Chair Crosby agrees. If the required number of members are not available for the meetings, the CC will pause Subcommittee discussions until the spring.
- c. **Upcoming Trail Work Days:** It was decided that a Trail WALK Day/Public Soft Intro should be scheduled in the next few weeks. For safety (hunting season starts next week), the following date and time was agreed upon:
 - a. **Sunday, October 22nd at 10AM, meet at Eastman Hill Trailhead.**
 - b. Jordan will send invite to Trails Subcommittee email list
 - c. Dave and Ray will work on a write-up with a logo to be posted on the town website

REGULAR CONSERVATION COMMISSION BUSINESS – 7:30PM

Chair Crosby motions to approve the draft minutes from the 09/14/23 CC meeting. Minor edits suggested by Ray, Dave seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

- a. **FY25 Budget:** Budget due soon. Chair Crosby states the budget for FY2025 should be the same as FY2024 with some adjustments. Ray recommends additional funding (with increase of 8% to account for inflation) for mailings. Biggest funding topic is whether or not the Commission wants to allocate funds for non-Town Forest projects, such as funding for the Trails Subcommittee. This could be added as a new line item or an alternate to the “MISC” line item. Ray suggests allocating a small amount, which is not required to be spent if the Trails Committee cannot be established. Per Ray, FY2024 budget was \$3,491, and FY2025 will be \$5,185, which includes a \$750 increase as well as hours for a recording secretary if necessary for the Trails Subcommittee. Brad motions to vote on the proposed FY2025 budget amount of \$5,185:
 - i. **Chair Brad Crosby – yes**
 - ii. **Karen Bordeaux- yes**
 - iii. **Dave Perry – yes**
 - iv. **Dick Ayers- yes**
 - v. **Gail Morrison – yes**
 - vi. **Selectman Bob Lambert- yes**
- b. **Board of Selectman Meeting Input Request:** An issue with usage at the Town Beach was brought up at the previous night’s meeting and was presented to the CC for input. Limited parking spots at the beach results in cars parked along the roadway, which poses a safety hazard and blocks emergency vehicle access. It was proposed to use a clearing on the Dr. True property nearby as extra parking. Karen states this clearing has been used as a log landing during timber harvests and would need to be closed to the public during such activities. Chair Crosby believes this wouldn’t be a problem since logging is done on a 10 year rotation. He supports the idea of “roughing in” the clearing and making it accessible for extra parking. Karen has concerns about the public abusing the site and its impact on the land (trash etc). Ray suggests asking the Recreation Commission to help with trash removal and general site upkeep, as they already take care of the beach. Chair Crosby confirms that the property easement has no restrictions because it was a tax deed. It was decided that a site visit should be completed before finalizing the plan, and Karen stipulates that if the extra parking does not ease the roadway parking issue, then it should be closed off again. No date for a site visit confirmed.

Old Business

- a. **Newsletter:** The fall 2023 newsletter is complete and hard copies have been distributed to the Library and Transfer Station, and will be posted on the Town website. Dave will leave more at the Town Office and local school. Dick suggests writing an ad in the local paper informing the public that the newsletter is available via email. It was also recommended to post on several local Facebook pages.
- b. **Tree Stand RSA Changes:** Still some confusion regarding the new changes, specifically when tree stands need to be removed. RSA states all stands need to be removed by Dec 31st, but also includes section about allowing stands in the spring. Brief discussion about hunting regulations on town property. There is at least 1 tree stand in the Town Forest, and several in the Dr. True

Property. Chair Crosby will determine where these stands are located and plan on having them removed after Dec 31st.

- c. **Town Boundary Report:** Majority of the encroachment on town property occurs on the Dr. True Property, and include a shed, propane tanks, tables etc. Chair Crosby suggests setting a date to walk the property to identify the encroachments and determine next steps. It was determined that a letter should be sent to abutters in violation before moving forward with legal action. This will be discussed in further detail in JAN 2024.

Other Business

- a. **NH Association of Conservation Commissions:** Annual conference with educational workshops will take place Saturday Nov 4th in Pembroke NH. The Commission encourages members to attend, and the registration fee will be reimbursed. Dave and Jordan are interested in going.
- b. **Letter:** Letter of Resignation from the Conservation Commission received from Dick Ayers. Departing remarks of goodwill and thanks provided by Chair Crosby.
- c. **Hermit Lake Draw Down:** Bob reminds everyone that Hermit Lake will be drawn down at least ½ of its normal depth on Oct 16th in preparation for fixing the dam. Water levels will be returned to normal in the spring. Information for residents is posted on the town website.

Meeting adjourned at 9PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 9th.

Respectfully submitted,

Jordan Tedeschi