

DEERFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – September 10, 2012

Members Present: Erick Berglund, Serita Frey, Herb McKinney
Members Absent: Wes Golomb, Kate Hartnett, Dave Linden
Guests: Phil Bilodeau, Alex Cody, Denise Greig
Visitors: Charlie Bouchard, Kathleen Sullivan and Jared Thistle

Americorps Volunteers

Scheduling: Denise Greig, coordinator for the Americorps volunteer project, went over the tentative calendar for the group's work schedule. Six of the volunteers will be arriving on Wednesday with two additional group members scheduled to arrive later in the week. The schedule is flexible, allowing for inclement weather and availability of town volunteers. Denny Greig reminded the members that the goal was to get volunteers to join the work groups.

- Orientation of Americorps volunteers (9/13) New Hampshire and the Town of Deerfield
- Great Brook (9/20 & 9/21) – Schedule with Jack Hutchinson before 10/2
- Arthur Chase (9/24 & 9/25) – Coordinate with Kate Hartnett & Jo Anne Bradbury
- Late October - Peg King Park (Schedule with Kate Hartnett) - Additional trail & DCC work as possible
- Cemetery Maintenance/Painting: Early October (as weather permits) – Fill in between other projects
- Classwork: GPS (9/20) - Wetland Mapping (10/5) – Wetlands Meeting (10/8)
- Boisvert easement work (10/22, 23 or 24)
- Freese Pond work (10/17)
- Dowst-Cate Trail Clearing: Phil Bilodeau to confirm with Denny Greig (10/17 or 10/22, 23 or 24)
Bridge building as time and experience level allow – Does not anticipate need for constant supervision

Freese Town Forest

Parking Area: Serita Frey questioned if this was too complex a project for the time available. Erick Berglund noted that Charlie Moreno had a scaled-down plan that would entail having the volunteers clear an area to serve as a landing and rough in a logging road to be used for the cut called for in the forest management plan rather than create a finished parking area which would be damaged by the logging operation. A parking area for 6 to 8 vehicles would eventually be situated farther in, with motorized access beyond the lot itself to be controlled with the placement of boulders. Charlie Moreno should be contacted and notified to preliminarily flag the areas to be cleared. This project would be left till later in October.

Kiosk/Signage: Michael Green will need the status of the parking area to move ahead on the kiosk. Herb McKinney questioned whether it could be designed, pre-fabricated and stored until the location was finalized. Denny Greig asked if signs for the other town forests would be computer-generated or cut by hand. It was suggested that hand cutting the signs was not the best use of the group's limited time.

Medallions/Blazing: Serita Frey reiterated that the medallions should not be attached until the easements for the town forests were recorded; however Frank Mitchell could move ahead on Freese. Herb McKinney explained that the medallions should be attached at the corners, some distance apart from one another. He will also procure paint, in an appropriate color of his choosing, in advance of the scheduled date for marking the trails. Herb McKinney and Frank Mitchell will be available to oversee this project.

Dowst-Cate Town Forest & Park: Phil Bilodeau, point person for Dowst-Cate, noted that the bridge at reference point #1 on the Planning Board trail map, was deteriorated and that other "bridges" consisted of logs across swampy areas which were probably rotted and gone. Mr. Bilodeau indicated that he could possibly secure lumber required for the repairs but that chain saws would need to be supplied. Since the trails were well-traveled and foot-worn, no gravel would be required and brush could simply be sawn and pushed aside. Markings should be simple.

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Edyth Boisvert Parcel: Frank Mitchell is on board with the previously discussed work consisting of trail maintenance and erosion control to further prevent the road from washing out.

Funding: The question of funding the bridge rebuilding at Dowst-Cate was raised with Erick Berglund indicating that funds could be provided from the operating budget to supplement any donated lumber; however he expressed concern over DCC's ability to support the cost of any required heavy equipment for grading the landing at Freese. He asked if the expectation was that all funding was to come from DCC. Alex Cody noted that he would take responsibility for providing the funds to cover the manpower, equipment, supplies and costs of equipment use for all projects related to his department(s), from his budget. Serita Frey expressed the assumption that costs related to DCC work would be covered by the DCC. According to Denny Greig, the cost of food and housing is being borne by the town. Lacking a quorum, authorization for the expenditure of funds for the DCC projects will be brought to a vote of the membership at the October 8th meeting.

Miscellaneous/Inclement Weather Projects: Denny Greig reminded the members that the Web Page and Volunteer List Serve projects should be thought out in advance and ready to go on short notice. The framed conservation maps should also be readily available to be hung in the lower level of GBW by late October.

Visitors: Charlie Bouchard (190 North Rd), Kathleen Sullivan and Jared Thistle presented their proposed plan for a therapeutic horse riding facility on approximately 98 acres of land at 185 North Road (Map 405 Lot 84). The parcel is owned by the Katherine Williams Trust with a conservation easement held by the Town of Deerfield and an executory interest by Bear-Paw Regional Greenways (*See Rockingham County Deeds - Book 3400 Page 39 – nhdeeds.com*). The burden of enforcement is on the town, by and through the DCC, per the referenced deed. As such, members have agreed to perform a site visit on Thursday, 9/18 at 4 PM to judge whether any of the specifics of their plan would, in any way, violate the allowed, non-commercial/industrial restrictions set forth in the conservation easement deed. The parties were instructed that this matter would need to be presented to the Planning Board as well.

Proposed activity is expected to include land clearing/leveling for paddocks, construction of trails (consisting in part of existing logging roads), and dredging of a wetland to accommodate a fire pond intended to supply water for a fire sprinkler system. Both Erick Berglund and Serita Frey registered an objection to the dredging and cautioned that dredging activity of a wetland of any size would require a permit and determination from the DES. Ms. Frey also acknowledged the need for the entire DCC membership to make an informed decision on the proposal after a thorough review of the easement deed. Erick Berglund will speak with Dan Kern of Bear-Paw regarding the proposal and extend an invitation to accompany DCC members on the site visit.

Approval of Minutes: In the absence of a quorum, approval of the minutes of the August 20th meeting was tabled until the October 8th meeting.

Financial Officer's Report: On 8/31/2012 the operating budget had a balance of \$1383.21. No figures were available for the balance in the conservation fund.

Town Forest Protection Project: At the request of Phil Bilodeau, Serita Frey explained that the easement deed was in the process of being written/created with Bear-Paw having won the publicly-noticed bid to *establish and maintain the conservation easements on 8 town forests*. It was noted that surveying, as needed, had been completed and that logging would be performed according to specifications in the forest management plan. Erick Berglund explained that Bear Paw would be responsible for monitoring and enforcement of the

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easements, ensuring that the terms of the easements were being met. These terms will serve to protect the property from development, and outline those activities deemed to be in the spirit of the easements.

Phil Bilodeau expressed his hope that Charlie Moreno's forest management plan was within the scope of the easement. Serita Frey explained that the forestry plan was independent of the easement. Erick Berglund suggested that the proceeds from the first cut could be used to reimburse the DCC for costs incurred. Further discussion related to the forestry plan resulted in the following clarifications:

- A timeline needs to be established for Mr. Moreno
- The DCC and Forestry Commission need to continue to cooperate on the forest management plan
- Alex Cody should act as the single point person for Mr. Moreno
- Mr. Cody will update Serita Frey on the progress of activity

Matrix of Uses: Herb McKinney presented a preliminary matrix of uses for the town forests patterned after the one used for the Freese Town Forest. Serita Frey noted that it would not be formalized until the easement was in place and that there would be "holes" until more input is received. Additional points made were:

- Use the Freese uses as a starting point and add/remove uses on an individual basis by parcel
- Hunting must be on the list of approved uses
- No taking of firewood
- Should be consistent with the forest management plan
- Should be available to the public
- After creation of the first draft, post in the Forum and hold a public hearing
- Important to include *scientific research*
- These are public lands, owned by the town, and as such the DCC should be cautious to maintain the good will of the residents by being transparent

Correspondence: We have received a letter from Southeast Land Trust along with a copy of a *Notification of Trail Development or Maintenance Activities* submitted to the DES Wetlands Bureau for a trail project on the *Howard Swain Memorial Forest, Map 416 Lot 41 – Nottingham Rd - Deerfield, NH*. Also included were copies of a data check report from the *Natural Heritage Bureau*, a survey showing the location of the work, photos of the location, a topographic map, aerial photograph, and an outline of the stone ford design. The correspondence appeared to be informational only and required no action on the part of DCC.

Adjournment: 8:55 PM

The Next Meeting is presently scheduled for October 8th.

The draft minutes were prepared and submitted by Judy Marshall. Final revisions to these minutes will be contained in the minutes of the following meeting, after approval by the Deerfield Conservation Commission