

Conservation Commission Minutes
January 9, 2017
5:30 PM, Town Office
DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Members present: Mark Ross-Parent, Dave Matesky, Tom Seidel, Brian Byrne, Margaret Graciano, Pam Smillie, Mike Dufilho
Hank Benesh filmed, Susan Ross-Parent took minutes

Review Minutes (Dec 5) -

- “land at end of Carter Notch Rd” - Holcolm and Milliken Easement owned by JSTF - snow shoe trails
- Do we want to add easements that have been reviewed? Yes
- Laurie Gabriel Easement reviewed

Noted: General Sherman tree fell today (not in Jackson)

- Motion to amend: Margaret seconded Dave accepted as amended

Fencing at Falls

Brian - talked with Gary Spears of Eastern Greens for fencing at Falls - will meet with him
Some contractors seemed to think that bid process was complete but CC was looking for ballpark estimates for budgeting process and getting the bidding process started. Still need to give contractors a sheet of needs/expectations so that all are bidding on the same job with same specs.

Step 1 - not a firm bid but an estimated cost

Step 2 - with a description of needs, get a firm bid

Estimate of x feet of fencing

Behind the set-back as determined by the road agent

3 discrete sections of fencing, including

One section with removable post and rails for winter plowing, another section to keep people off steep bank near stairs

Material: cedar is traditional, lasts 5 years - fits the goal of this fencing being temporary traffic control while area recovers, while looks nice for the area, fits in with the “natural look.”

Brian will walk the area with Gary Spears.

Can be finalized by Feb. 7.

We will get the amount of the final bill from the trust not the estimate price

The fence doesn't need to be voted on by the town because the selectmen have accepted the Falls plan - even with it not specifically noting a fence, it is a means to controlling erosion which is specifically in the plan.

The town will vote to move \$ out of the trust.

Selectmen encouraged us to get 3 bids.

Review of Tom's letter to selectmen to explain what CC does:

Margaret: spelling, need to explicitly explain the needs for a fence

Mark: Falls is or are?

Seedlings: table for later Pam suggests: seed needed at second picnic table

Mark: take an inventory of what actually survived even if need to order before we know

Margaret: and which species Pam: seedlings nearest paths got trampled

Get same as last year grasses? Sedges?

Tom: report encourages spreading loam and wood chip everywhere. We haven't bought loam.

Pam with loam we can create islands of seedlings

Mark: adopt an island campaign

Margaret has seedling list and March 31 deadline to order

Loam to cover roots and will hold the wood chips

Mallet plaque - email via Julie: family that donated the land would like a commemorative plaque.

Pam: who would pay for it? The trust? The family? Plaque like the one heading up to Hall's Ledge?

Tom: gist of email: will we work with them? Metal plaque on a big rock like at Hall's Ledge (or on pedestrian bridge so when you stop you see falls and plaque - Mike and Pam) How do the bridge and plaque work - who to ask about bridge plaque?

Public Comment - none

Tom: Conservation Easements - all done rpts and all in. Now start 2017 right away! But best to wait a while!

Going through the mail and old business:

Dredge and fill app for 16 A bridge near base of Switchback Rd.

Master Plan for Jackson from Planning Board.

Mark: What happened with DES and Black?

Margaret: called John F who said he'd last met with DES in late summer.

John told Margaret that it's been a long back and forth with plans between Black and DES and that the sandbagging has been grandfathered since 1950.

Margaret called Jeff Blecharczyk at DES: He disputes the "Grandfathered in since 1950" there was no snowmaking in 1950. Plan awaited from Burr Phillips. Need to find a way that works for ski area, supports water for fire fighting, and keeps water and land clean and safe from erosion. Not his plan to put Black out of business.

Mike: Tin Mtn trail discussed last meeting: property is privately owned. Needs to be pursued by Tin Mountain Conservation - facilities manager.

JSTF: distributed an incorrect map with parking at Middle Mtn while there's a No Trespassing sign, and at Tin Mountain Field Station that has better parking at base to right of driveway.

Mike asked JSTF to tell snow shoers to park at the base of Tin Mtn road - not at top near residences.

Prospect Farm

Interpretive. Signs -

Mike: spoke with JSTF to consolidate signs (they want to keep their own sign style) and they will try to get all on one sign. Looks like they have started to consolidate already.

Tom: other wooden signs have been/will be made and will use the posts in the summer.

Margaret: Mike and George Howard and Margaret worked on theme of agricultural abandonment but that won't explain Hall's Ledge or Field Outlook. Maybe broaden theme to human impact on landscape?

CC read through and commented on Margaret's drafts of the signs.

8x8 signs - 4 signs, so far

Johnson Cellar Hole at Orchard, Hall's Ledge drafts discussed.

Also - Margaret rewrote directions to Hall's Ledge for the Chamber (which distributes such information to area hotels, etc.) and for comparison brought a copy of directions that the Chamber currently distributes.

Discussion regarding creating 4 signs, or more.

George Howard was only able to find info on the Johnsons. The sign can expand on their cellar hole while still having labels for each family cellar hole and note the Baker Family who donated the land.

If we move to human impact as the theme we can add what one sees in the view from Hall's - towers on Mt. Washington, for example. (This could appeal to families with kids with things to look for.)

5 things of interest on way in and way out suggested.

Mike wonders how many people will really read the Hall's Ledge signs as it's less accessible than other areas. Maybe not worth the \$? Mark counters that it's a hiking town.

Tom: thinks add a sign at orchard since that's a major destination.

Editing ensued.

White Mountain Guide has a very good set of directions (from Rt 16 side) and mileage.

Suggestion from Mike to find the correct start to Hall's Ledge. Perhaps a turn around sign.

Tom: can update Kiosk map with all the names of the trails (hiking name and ski trail name - logging road names no longer used.)

CC members encouraged to email Margaret with further edits.

Chamber of Commerce has several walk descriptions that CC can edit/revise. Suggestions to be sent to Margaret who will do it.

Town Annual Report

Margaret wrote the Annual Report. sent via email to members.

Comments for revisions before due date of Jan. 18:

- Greatest volunteer turnout *ever*? How about "in recent memory."
- Easement monitoring: mention number we hold, and that we also compiled list, sent letters, etc.
 - 5 easements and restructured our monitoring protocol...
 - Number of work hours of members and work sessions, easement walking, report completing, etc., with vols and members
 - Trash pick up
 - Miles of twine
 - Twine fences

- Working with Bob and Pat - move to neutral: No names, Road Agent, Select Board Representative
- Split rail plan has been approved? Move to more general title of goal: traffic and erosion control measures

Gray's Inn - no new business

Meeting adjourned at 7 PM.

As always, the public is encouraged to attend and share their vision for the use of Jackson town properties. Our meetings are typically at 5:30 PM at the town office building on the first Monday of each month