

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes  
August 7, 2017

Present were members: Tom Seidel, Mike Dufilho, Margaret Graciano, Brian Byrne, Pam Smillie, and Bill Terry. Guests included Annie Bordash, Joyce Allan, and Melissa Beasley. Hank Benesh filmed the meeting.

Bill made a motion to approve the minutes from July 10, 2017. Margaret seconded and they were unanimously approved.

**Public Comment**

Annie Bordash asked if we are familiar with the Quit Claim Deed. She and her husband, George, feel that it would be helpful to us to familiarize ourselves with its contents. Ernie Mallet wrote the Quit Claim deed in the early 80's and it details who is in charge of what sections of the river. Annie suggested that we ask the selectmen for a copy.

**Jackson Falls**

Tom noticed that some of the "Welcome to Jackson Falls" signs are missing. Mark has the extras at his house and we'll put more up.

Bill has been counting how many cars are parked at the falls at any one time and the average number is 33. 37 cars is the maximum that he has seen. Everyone has noticed that some of the parking areas need to be filled in because they are in rough condition and we also need to replace the wood on the picnic tables. In addition, we need to clear the check dams at the corner of the parking lot. Bill informed us that the porta potty service has been increased to twice a week instead of one due to high use. In addition, some putty has been placed on the porta potty's door hinges to minimize the noise from opening and closing. Bill also suggested a porta potty decorating contest judged by Dick Devellian to improve the exterior design of the wooden shed. Pam commented on the fact that there hasn't been a lot of trash at the falls but Bill says the company that services the porta potty has been picking up trash as well so maybe that's why.

Annie asked if we have considered a drop-off only zone for parking at the falls. Or "Jackson resident only" sticker parking.

Tom explained that we have considered all options and discussion ensued regarding all of the parking options. Joyce brought up how much money we spent on the fence and the fact that Jackson Falls is not used by residents. Three out of thirty cars parked there the other day had NH plates. She wondered why parking is not for residents only? Joyce also brought up the point of how much money the falls visitors actually spend in town. Are they really spending money supporting local businesses? Everyone agreed that this was a valid question.

Joyce told the commission that at the selectman's meeting John Allen suggested a couple of parking spots be designated for residents only. The selectmen looked into it, and because Carter Notch Rd. is a state road we cannot designate specific spots or change the parking a whole lot without state approval. Joyce suggested resident spots be placed on Valley Cross Rd.

Bill stated that he doesn't want to see increased parking spots in that area after the four spot lot near the corner on Carter Notch Rd. has already been built.

Margaret explained that our plan from Greg Howard included erosion mitigation measures and that one of them, already approved by the selectmen, was no parking on Valley Cross Rd. If we suddenly built resident only spots on Valley Cross Rd. it would feel like a step backwards and potentially worsen erosion on that bank of the river.

Joyce asked the commission how they would feel if she continued to pursue Jackson resident only parking with the selectmen.

Mike said he would likely disagree with it. Tom thought that it first requires a public town discussion to get everyone's input.

Mike said he likes the drop-off zone idea.

Melissa Beasley said she is against it.

Tom quoted the forest service's guideline regarding recreational resource impact. That when it comes to impact, it's not about the feet above the ground, but the resource beneath the feet.

Discussion ensued regarding the implications of a drop-off zone. Melissa wondered if there is an actual number of visitors that could be used to cap proper resource use.

Annie pointed out that the falls' section of river is designated multi-use/recreational, not wild, therefore it is bound to see heavier impact than other sections.

Someone suggested the idea of a steward to be present during the busy times of year to monitor where people are trampling and also educate the public about our goals there.

Melissa mentioned that at Diana's Baths they have signs that say \$100 fine with a picture of a tow truck in the "No Parking" zones. Perhaps no parking zones at Jackson falls could be enforced in a similar manner.

### **Prospect Farm**

The interpretive signs are being printed at Minuteman.

Regarding the commission's idea for a fall picnic, Margaret volunteered to write up a proposal to be discussed at the September meeting. The current idea involves something simple like a potluck in the orchard with informal games. Margaret said she would write to our selectmen representative to discuss logistics like getting a porta potty up at the orchard for the event and whether or not people can bring their own beverages.

### **Gray's Inn**

If the town sprays again for knotweed, the commission voted not to spray the Gray's Inn property.

Perhaps next year we can hire high school students who need a job to pull it out .Or it could be a great volunteer opportunity for eagle scouts, boy scouts, or a girl scouts troop.

### **Conservation Easements**

Tom will send out emails to let all commission members know which properties they monitored last year so that they can do it again!

### **Other Business**

Melissa Beasley suggested that the commission re-do the parking lot by the historical society to be a nice picnic area with river views. The commission concluded that this is a matter to be brought to a selectman's meeting first as it is not an area managed by the conservation commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Margaret Graciano