

DRAFT Conservation Commission Minutes 10.2.17

Members present: Bill Terry, Margaret Graciano, Pam Smillie, Brian Byrne
Susan Ross-Parent took notes.
Hank Benesh filmed.
Members of public: Mary Howe and Ann Garland

****With two members of the public present and no key to get into the building, the CC met on the steps and started with Public Comments, mostly regarding the brook and dam for the pond at Black Mountain Ski Area (BMSA)*

Public Comments: Ann and Mary asked the CC for clarification of the plan BMSA had reached with the state to build and maintain a dam (instead of installing sandbags each fall) on Great Brook to divert water into the pond. Their concern, among others, is that the sandbags are not removed before the ice out, if at all, and that they degrade and the sand and bag material clog and pollute the brook.

Members of the CC noted that they understood that the plan was presented but not approved, yet, perhaps still in process, but BMSA won't go farther, so that it may be "back to drawing board."

In any case, despite the length of time this has been an issue nothing will happen immediately, and for this season it's late to make a dam which delays it another year. BMSA continues to invoke the "grandfathered" status but DES does not agree.

Question ensued:

Who owns the pond -fire pond?

Who is the silent partner?

Ann and Mary noted that the water level was very low, that rocks were put in the dredged area and that these are cutting water off for fire pond. In addition, culverts were replaced by horse barn and boulders moved into brook. They observed recent dredging in channel.

Ann has tried to contact Jeffrey Belcharzack but hasn't heard back.

CC: At this point the issue seems that it should be at the state level, not the CC level.

A copy of the latest letter was discussed, and an older letter shown by Mary: this is a letter from the state outlining the dam project and current sandbagging. Plan:temporary sandbagging/dam, not to impede river during flow, to open dam for ice out. Sandbags cleaned up.

Questions: can CC or state set a deadline of this spring to build dam, understanding need to use sandbags this winter? How does this fit in the Wild and Scenic River designation?

Expense? Who is the next best contact?

CC contacted Mr. Fischera this summer- He seems to have made his decision/dug in.

Ann stated that from this chat she understands that the process is on-going and at the state level. That sand-bagging will continue this winter.

CC gives Ann and Mary Burr Phillips's (town engineer) contact info.

Prospect Farm: Margaret and Mark hung signs (3 hours) tried to place out of the way of snow groomer and mower. Thanks to Margaret to starting the plan town picnic. Hoping for next year.

Falls: New paths started at end of fence runs. Bigger plantings next year? Planting fascines (cluster)

Still parking on Valley Cross, handicapped parking - call the police? Very imaginative parking by Falls visitors.

Greys Inn - no new news

Monitoring: letters need to be worked - Tom could work on a new one with template from Julie.

Minutes approved.