

Jackson Conservation Commission
7.13.2020 Minutes DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

VIA ZOOM

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Members present: Jeff Sires, Tom Seidel, Ken Kimball, Mike Dufilho, Pam Smillie, Ben Halcyon, Brian Byrne,
Dick Bennett from the Selectboard
Hank Benesh, JacksonFlicks.com, recorded the meeting

Review of minutes (available via ENews, on the Jackson Town website, and emailed to members, shared via google drive)moved to accept - Ken, second Ben & Tom

Ben - aye
Ken - aye
Pam - aye
Mike - aye
Tom - aye
Brian - aye
Minutes approved

Dick is a voting member on issues but not on this month's minutes as he wasn't at that meeting.

Jackson Falls

Thanks to all members for their help during the work session at Jackson Falls.

Jeff would like send a work progress update and community info about the Falls - via ENews
Group agrees that wood chips are directing foot traffic on the paths, protecting the undergrowth.

Mike gave an overview of the signs he's worked up.

Discussion about whether to use the signs to also direct people to park in the overflow parking area on Valley Cross Rd. Limited parking spots would limit the number of users at the Falls. Other parks use this strategy with an attendant to restrict overuse. Visitors are parking near the Wentworth - this could be difficult for the hotel when they open fully. Tom explains that the area in front of the Wentworth is public parking, but that Falls parking has been directed to be near the new Library and the Ski Touring lot on Valley Cross. If we don't want Falls visitors to use other lots than the Wentworth, then we need to tell the visitors to park elsewhere. The town has an easement for access to the river at that area, but it owned by the condo association. Spaces were opened at the upper end of the Falls on Carter Notch and Valley Cross in exchange for eliminating some spaces along Carter Notch further down the hill.

Parking signs needed to reinforce the pylons along Carter Notch, Valley Cross, and at the fire pond. It should be made clear that the fire pond area is not the overflow parking that they are permitted to use.

Question to Dick: is it possible to get Violators Will Be Towed to reinforce No Parking signs on Valley Cross Rd and elsewhere?

Dick - returning to discussion about the parking area across from Wentworth - it is town land. We should discuss this. Also - will work with Chief Perely to add enforcement of the no parking

zones at the Falls. Questions how many more signs visitors need to understand where to park legally. Dick will contact Chris.

Recap: Mike will send out mock-up kiosk welcome sign to CC members.

Two sets of signs: no parking signs that allow for enforcement and the welcome to the Falls sign that gives an overview of how to use the Falls. This was recommended in the Falls action plan. On the selectboard agenda for 7.14.20: brush cutting at the Falls. Dick explained: to cut brush along the sidewalk to open up the sight lines into the water for rescue. A child was swept down the Falls - they're ok - but the rescue team realized that the brush hadn't been cut in a long time. Doesn't think it will interfere with CC work on the banks farther upstream. Dick also asks about invasives plan for the Falls, especially in the sidewalk guardrail area. Pam explains that the glossy buckthorn needs to be removed to allow the growth of ferns. Buckthorn comes in first after a clear cut - so the ferns don't come up, so a clearing is ok but then the glossy buckthorn needs to be targeted for removal as it starts to come back. Also - there was a path, possibly dangerous and certainly adding to erosion, so CC requested that the area be mown only every two years. Cutting spreads and encourages the buckthorn. At this time of the summer, the buckthorn has berries so this is the worst time to cut it. Suggestion: cutting it to grade early in the season and targeting it later. Also - cutting certain areas for the sight lines, not the whole area, in order to limit enhancing the buckthorn. This could be put off until later in the Fall to avoid spreading the berries. This gives time for the selectboard, the roadcrew, and CC to decide where to cut. CC members willing to work with roadcrew to ID invasives.

Update on request to selectmen for use of Trust Funds - this has been submitted. \$1800 was set aside for the project. Money is left over from the sod so more MooDoo and soil could be bought. This fits the original request. Another request needs to be made to direct money to paying for the sign.

Prospect Farm: Forest Management Plan has been submitted by Tim Nollan. Ken did a thorough review of it with a few edits for trail names, etc., and Tim has submitted the corrected map. Have asked selectboard to pay Tim - next meeting - out of the Baker Fund. Dick addresses the usefulness of the forest management plan well beyond financial gain for the town and reminds the group that the original plan was voted on by the town at Town Meeting. Queries whether or not the new plan needs to go to the town for a vote. Recognizes that the plan covers forestry, recreation, wildlife, etc. Ken notes that the forest management plan would be a part of a whole Prospect Farm general management plan to bring to the town.

Action items on the plan to start with:

Boundary markings - blaze color suggested: orange to differentiate from hiking & ski trails. Payment from the Baker Fund to Tim for the blazing work can be submitted to selectboard.

Motion to recommend use of funds from Baker Fund to pay Tim Nollan per quote in his submitted plan, \$749, for remark town property boundaries in orange at Prospect Farm - Ken Second - Brian

Dick - aye

Pam - aye

Mike - aye

Tom - aye

Brian - aye

Jeff - aye - Dick will check back with minutes if needed - email not needed.

Stump dump end - to limit introduction of exoticss/invasive species - there is knotweed there, now. Ken asks Dick how to proceed with the recommendation in the forest management

plan to move the stump dump to another place, and does the town have to provide one? Dick will check on the rulings and ask Road Agent Kelley about alternatives.

View enhancement - see discussion, below.

Timeline to general management plan: Ken will continue his efforts on this: aiming for August to get it to subcommittee members Mike and Brian, and to present to CC in September.

Mike notes that there are now no parking signs on the private land at Prospect Farm. Suggests a reminder in ENews to let people know that there is public parking available and not to park on the private land. Brian has spoken with the landowner who explained that he just wanted to be clear where the private land is and that there is no parking there. Ken reminded the group that the Jackson Ski Touring Foundation (JSTF) has permission to use the ski parking lot for winter use and not necessarily for summer use. In the long term, if there is increased use, CC should consider increasing the number of parking spaces. ENews: that the official summer parking area is at the beginning of the Bog Brook Rd.

Concerning erosion on the roads noted in the forest management plan, Ben asks about JSTF's contribution to road maintenance to control erosion. Ken offers to discuss this with JSTF. Tom notes that this should also be a discussion with the selectboard to decide if the town wants to maintain the roads that in the past were maintained by the loggers working there over time.

View enhancement: who will pay for this, the town or JSTF? It has been hired out to a contractor in the past, and part of the town's annual mowing (the orchard, the trail to Hall's Ledge.) A question to consider: which viewpoints do we maintain going forward: the view just before Hall's Ledge, some cutting at Hall's Ledge, and along Orchard Trail before the old car, cellar hole clearing, etc.?

Motion to hire for the annual mowing of orchard, Hall's Ledge Trail and view sheds, cellar holes on Hall's Ledge Trail- to be paid for by the town -Tom

Second - Mike

Dick - aye

Ken - aye

Tom - aye

Pam - aye

Brian - aye

Ben - aye

Jeff - aye - will send email to Dick with the request.

Tom amends - to cut after bird nesting season.

Ken - requests that town treat the stump dump for invasives sooner than later.

Jeff will add these to the email for Dick.

History of stump dump invasive treatment: cut and burn and one chemical treatment

Forest Management Plan recommendations will remain an agenda item from here on out.

Wildcat River - new to the agenda.

Jeff would like to consider doing more there: water quality monitoring, for example. Also - Kevin Bennett has documents that show that CC has responsibility to monitor the Wildcat River water quality - a sedimentation test. Board agrees that a return to monitoring, involving the Grammar School and the community would be a good community project.

Grey's Inn - Brian notes that the town has done a nice job mowing. Signs may be missing.

Brain will take care of a downed tree.

Conservation Easements

Tom and Pam continue work on the letters to landowners before the annual inspections. Thank you to the town for doing this in years past. Ben is invited to monitor the easement that Bill Terry used to cover.

Wetlands Permits

Jeff received a statutory permit notification for forestry that was denied due to missing information. CC doesn't need to review it at this time. Ken alerts the group that a wetlands permit will be coming soon from JSTF.

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

Jeff will send video to Hank.

Next meeting: August 3, 2020, 7 PM

Assume CC will meet on zoom

Motion to adjourn - Brian

Second - Tom

Dick - aye

Ken - aye

Pam - aye

Mike - aye

Tom - aye

Ben - aye

Brian - aye

Jeff - aye

Thanks to Jeff for running the meeting and setting it up, to Dick for attending. Please water new plants at the Falls.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ross-Parent

7.29.20