

Conservation Commission Minutes:
DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED
8.3.2020

Notes taken from Jacksonflicks video, Hank Benesh posted the zoom video of the meeting
<http://www.jacksonflicks.com/jackson/conservation-commission/2020-con-commission/con-commission-832020.html>

Present: Jeff Sires, Ken Kimball, Ben Halcyon, Pam Smillie, Dick Bennett (Selectboard), Tom Seidel, Mike Dufilho

Citizens attending: Hazel Dufilho

July 2020 Minutes approved

Jackson Falls - public comment at August 11 Selectboard meeting, sign-ups for speaking, citizen committee. Parking issue to be researched with the state as Carter Notch Rd is a state road.

Discussion: parking zones at Falls were full, handicapped zone with 3 cars (1 with sticker), hoping Jackson PD will continue to enforce parking rules there. Mixed observations at different points of time of the number of cars and people and areas where they are parking: ski touring parking on Valley Cross, across from Wentworth, illegally along Carter Notch. The use will not go away and controlling the amount of parking available is the best tool to control the use of Falls. More fencing to control parking to replace cones (that are moved by people looking for parking space) Fence cannot block plowing. The current fence is on town property and measured out from state road and plowing. Julie Atwell is checking into parking rules with the state: currently, signage is permitted by the DOT. Anything more needs to go through the DOT. Historic perspective: the Falls parking area is probably not regulation and may need to be changed. Dick reports that selectboard is pursuing the parking issue: citizens invited to comment on parking, alcohol use at Falls, ordinances in a town park (Falls is not designated as a town park.) An ordinance could be brought specific to Falls. Compare to the no-smoking ordinance on town property, buildings, parks, etc. Question: how to enforce parking, alcohol ordinances with the current size of the PD? Must consider all ramifications and enforcement issues. Suggestion: start with putting it on the Falls signage. Question: is this an alcohol use issue or a trash issue? Discussion: broken glass dangerous, litter left behind issue, setting up for the day drinking, dangerous on slippery rocks. Also: crowd control if no alcohol permitted, leaves it for families. A quick review of ordinances listed on the town website there is no ordinance to make Jackson Falls a park that would place it under the ordinance in place, or create one specific to Jackson Falls. Will work with the town attorney to work up an ordinance for alcohol, tobacco (firearms) products prohibited. Hearing and town vote needed. Peter Malia, Jackson attorney, said that one committee would be needed to oversee the Falls. Would the town need to hire a Falls ranger to enforce the ordinance?

Ken suggests the CC work up language for the ordinance to be presented at the next election. He will work on first draft for the group. Steps: first draft by Ken; CC comments; vetted by town attorney; selectman and add to town vote.

Jeff suggests adding wording to new Jackson Falls signs that are in the works: "Please, no alcohol or tobacco." This can go on the sign without an ordinance for starters.

Could a Falls ranger be along the lines of a lake host or vols at Pinkham Notch AMC: volunteers who engage with visitors, explain rules, educate, etc. Is there a Valley-wide group looking at the same issues in the greater area? Forest service has model of backcountry rangers.

Jackson Falls Kiosk/education signs - based on Appalachian Trail Conference signs, cost for kiosk between \$1100-1700 for materials to build it in AT-style, 2 posts and small roof. Signs are additional cost: Mike researching sign material used by the Forest Service. Printer: Minuteman. They will have format, border style and logos. The signs would be backed and covered with plexi glass in the kiosk to protect them from weather and vandals. Additions to draft for sign: "Please no alcohol and tobacco." "Park in designated areas only." Inset of whole Wild and Scenic River. Size: 2x3 feet. Map on one side with designated paths and parking marked. Mike will gather quotes for the printing and bring it back to next meeting. Materials quotes - Jeff will look into it (will ask Brian for help.)

Thank you to Fred Henry, Doug Albert, Bob Santoro for their donations and help with installing new sod at the Falls. Thank you also to CC members and families who helped at work sessions.

Prospect Farm/Forest Management Plan - Jeff did request funding from selectboard to have Tim Nolan do the blazing and Rick Davis to do the mowing in September. Clarification on knotweed spraying at Prospect Farm - who will carry it out: the town. Dick did talk to Pat Kelley (Road Agent) about the stump dump - Jackson Highway Dept doesn't use it so would not impact them but other local private contractors do use it so out of courtesy would ask them about the impact on them if the stump dump is closed. The town is not obligated to have a stump dump for private contractor use and at this time it costing the town. Model available for the town: Forest Service does not allow private contractors (JSTF in this instance) to bring in machines without inspection for invasives. How does the town enforce this? Ken will research the legality of the stump dump for bringing a recommendation to the selectmen.

Spraying at the stump dump; in the past the town had contracted already for the roads to be sprayed and the stump dump was added to that list. The town does not plan mitigation (spraying) this year. Electric Company will be spraying right of ways. Town forester Tim Nolan found it in his survey but Ken suggests hand-pulling this year and add it to a town-wide spraying job next time. Stump dump weed-pulling - CC members please go up and pull knotweed.

Updates to General Management Plan - Ken will work on draft and get to committee and will present to full CC in September. Tom reminds CC that the keys to the locked gate leading to the stump dump are available and control of these should be laid out in the Forest Management Plan.

Wildcat River - Water Quality project - pursue water testing with Jackson Grammar School. Mike will follow up.

Grey's Inn - no new news.

Conservation Easements - Jeff and Tom will look into conservation easements at town hall to organize and to share the info with Ben who will be taking over from Bill Terry. Tom and Pam will work on letter to landowners on town letterhead. Tom has the electronic version of the letters. A courtesy call to landowners, meet them, walk the boundaries. Some landowners go away for portions of the year, try to meet them while they are in town.

Wetland permits - no new news. JSTF will be submitting for a permit to DES for a trail (Keeney) over intermittent stream.

Jeff presents: FYI: early work on Hamm House (on dirt section of Dundee Rd.) is a property on Dundee Forest Management project. Jackson Historical Society is interested in restoring the house. Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is working on the project. Jeff has a document describing the house preservation plan and history.

Public Comments: none

Also: Julie Hoyt inquired: CC can update the meeting time on the town website. CC agrees to keep the remote meetings at 7 pm, 5:30 pm when back in person.

September 14, 2020, next meeting.

Mike reminds the group that the meetings should continue to have a waiting room with a password.

All in favor: meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ross-Parent