

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
7:00 p.m., Thursday, November 12, 2019
Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room

Present: Jim Tasse, Chair, Emily Helliesen Day, Bruce Moore, Zach Matzkin,
Philip Saucier, Mitch Wacksman

Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

1. The minutes of the October 24, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.
2. Mr. Tasse opened the meeting to citizen comments and recognized eagle scout candidates in attendance.

Nick Leschey, Eagle Scout candidate, made a presentation to establish/rehabilitate a trail connecting the new Aster Ln neighborhood to Cheverus Rd. He will widen the Aster Ln end. In the middle section of the trail are large boulders, which he will fill in with gravel or pea stone. He will remove the debris on the Cheverus Rd end. An abutter, Mike Hollowell, said he had permission to transplant birches from the town open space onto his property. Nick will also construct 4 benches to be placed here and on the Spurwink Ave scout projects (Pollack Brook). The trail is about 250' long. He will installed 4"x4" posts and trail head signs at each end (\$16.82). He estimates his crew will spend 12 hours over two days and will do the work in the spring, 2020. Materials costs for 4 benches is \$1,031.94. He showed a drawing of the bench design, which uses 2" x 6' boards and galvanized screws.

A.J. DiNinno, Scout leader, offered that the Gilda project [located on the western end of Riverside Cemetery] has a good spot for a bench, as well as placing a bench on the Cheverus end of this trail.

Mr. Tasse asked if some of the boulders could be removed and Mr. Leschey repeated information from Mr. Hollowell that there are a lot of rocks there. The Conservation Committee asked if the scouts are willing to build one more bench. Five benches would be installed as follows: Pollack Brook trail (2), Aster Ln connector (2), Gull Crest (1).

A motion was made by Mr. Tasse to approve the project, including funding for fill (est. \$150), construction of 5 benches, transplant permission for birch trees, posts for trail head signs with fund authorization of up to \$1600 and unanimously approved.

Jake Goodwin, Troup 23 South Portland eagle scout candidate made a proposal to build a 44' long bridge over a muddy portion of trail located near the end of Tiger Lily Lane. Ms. O'Meara explained that this area had already been evaluated at the Conservation Committee's direction by her and the Town Engineer. State permitting is needed because the area already is subject to a permit as part of the Cross Hill Subdivision. The committee agreed to hold on the permit in favor of the trail capital improvement program project where a consultant would be selected to evaluate all trails for boardwalk needs, etc next Spring.

The Conservation Committee considered other potential projects and suggested an invasives species mitigation at the Town Farm. Ms. O'Meara explained that the project could include some coordination and technical assistance from the USFWS to remove invasives from the copse located in the center of the field. Mr. Goodwin liked the project idea and the Conservation Committee voted unanimously to approve the project.

3. Greenbelt trail management. The committee discussed continuing efforts to remove trees from the trails after the October storm.

Mr. Matzkin described the needs of the Scott Dyer trail. He will meet with Chris Thompson on site to identify where the trail should be mowed to connect directly with Scott Dyer Rd.

Mr. Wacksman recommended that additional erosion control mix be added to the Town Farm trail, specifically extending it another 40' and adding more to the trail surface.

4. Signs. The committee reviewed and revised the proposed trailhead rules sign. For the next meeting, the committee would like a mock-up of the sign in 2 sizes, 17" x22" and 11"x 17".

The committee discussed the request to add to the sign the limit of 3 off-leash dogs. Instead, the committee asked staff to send a letter to area dog walking companies about the rules and limitation.

5. Pollack Brook trail/burial ground. The Conservation Committee reviewed the draft Pollack Brook Burial Ground sign. They would like a final mock-up to review at the next meeting.

Mr. Tasse noted his coordination on-site with Eagle Scout candidates Chris Choi and Tim Gilda. Staff will prepare a report summarizing eagle scout contributions for submission to the Town Council.

6. Storm damage. The committee noted excellent progress in cleaning up storm damage on town trails. The Loveitt Woods north trail access has a large tree blockage. Ms. O'Meara visited the site to confirm the tree is on town property and asked the tree warden to remove it. The committee agreed that it's a good opportunity to reach out to the abutters about formalizing access with a license.

Committee members noted the damage done to the Great Pond boardwalk which will likely need a new section of boardwalk

Chris Schorn, CELT Stewardship manager, was asked about damage on CELT trails. He said volunteers are working on clearing.

The committee discussed ways to ask for volunteer help with trails. Town ordinance allows for a volunteer to clear the section of any tree laying on a trail without seeking permission. The committee noted leaf blowing of trails has occurred and is often done by bikers.

7. Sahrbeck/Cox trail. Mr. Tasse has provided digital trail location information to Ms. O'Meara, which will be used to update the greenbelt trails map. Town "G" signs should be added to the Sahrbeck trail and CELT will add signs to the Cox trail portion. Chris Schorn said he would coordinate with Jay Cox.
8. Other trails. Mr. Tasse said he is continuing to work on the Loveitts boardwalk replacement and that we should ask Public Works to pick up the unused lumber.

Mr. Wacksman said the Outer Loop Trail [Gull Crest] needs about 20 boards replaced. An abutter has offered to install the boards and we can buy them and store at Public Works. A motion was made to buy 20 hemlock boards which passed unanimously.

The committee discussed an email from Caitlin Jordan regarding trespassing on Alewives Brook Farm from public trails. The committee would like more information about what is occurring. It noted that individual permissions granted by the property owner may severely compromise the town's ability to discourage trespassing. The committee noted that the farm has posted signs on the Route 77 side and the same signs should be posted on the side where trespassers may be entering. It was noted that there are several downed trees on private trails which may

curtail the problem. The committee will ask the property owner to attend the next meeting.

Mr. Matzkin noted the wetness on the Scott Dyer Trail and the need for a boardwalk. Staff noted there may be a disconnect between where the trail is located and where the town easement is located. The committee directed staff to pursue a license for the trail location.

9. Water body naming project. The committee wants to create a definition of a "significant" water body. Ponds that dry out in summer should not be included. Ideas for assigning a number to each identified water body, online naming suggestions and school involvement were supported. The committee will continue to work on the project next month.
10. Next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 11th.