GILFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes for January 19, 2021

Conference Room A and Zoom Video Conference

Under the emergency order provision related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE

On Video Conference were: Chairman- Carole Hall, Vice Chairman - Lee Duncan, Regular Members Doug Hill, and Larry Routhier

Members Absent were: Regular members Tom Drouin and John Jude and Alternate John Goodhue.

Also on the video Zoom were: Russell Wilder and Weldon Bosworth

CALL TO ORDER:​ Chairman-Carole Hall called the meeting to order 7:00 p.m.​

ESTABLISH A QUORUM:​ Carole Hall announced that a quorum was present.​

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by D. Hill, seconded by L. Routhier to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion

Trail System Sub Committee

C. Hall brought up if forming this subcommittee should be from the Conservation Commission or should we form this committee under the selectmen authorization.

D. Hill said W. Bosworth was known by many for his maps. He also said that he didn't see any reason that the selectmen have to formally create the committee. He thought that it would be up to the Conservation Commission, but it would certainly be appropriate to keep the selectmen aware of what we are doing. There is no statutory process for creating a committee. Unless someone else thinks we need the selectmen to formalize it, we should do it ourselves.

D. Hill said that he sent an email out with 5 topics that would be the starting point to consider for managing the Week’s property.

Motion made by D. Hill, seconded by L. Routhier to form a steering committee to come up with a management plan for the Week’s property. Motion carried with all in favor.

W. Bosworth had done lots of work on trails and a few suggestions were:

Dan Tinkham is the president of Belknap Range Trail Tenders (BRATTS), Hal Graham was the former president and founder of BRATTS and Les Mechanics. Those were just a few people that he can think of with regard to trails.

D. Hill said that he would reach out to Hal Graham.

We will need to figure out what trails should we not allow the mountain bikers because when they ride straight up and down it causes streams. We need help with making the trails safe as well.

R. Wilder said we should probably contact Dan first. W. Bosworth said that he could talk to Dan because he's on another committee with him. W. Bosworth suggested that we could talk to the neighboring property owners.

D. Hill said that he could out to Al Rollins as well.

R. Wilder said that from Sunset Ledge there are trails that you can find relatively easy and there is another trail that goes to the iron mine.

D. Hill said that the Conservation Land Trust did a baseline study and it’s about 80 pages and full of photos, but it seems that no one can open the email. Also, Leah Hart ​doesn’t work for LRCT​anymore but she does work for the Forest Society.

C. Hall mentioned the wind storm that caused damage on the property next door to the Weeks property. We did have Tim Nolin go out to look and he said that yes we should take those trees down. We will probably need a Forestry Maintenance plan on the land for the safety of the hikers and the environment.

D Hill said we should get T. Nolin to get a proposal to us for a management plan, it looks like a relatively easy site to harvest, But we should definitely get in touch with Tim for a proposal and a range of what we should do.

R. Wilder said that part of this LRCT is that we would be part of the management plan This property was marketed to be conserved. The general consensus is that they like the way it looks and I’m not sure doing any alterations is a good idea.

C. Hall was looking at it just to make sure that the area is safe and clear for hikers, she wouldn't want to make alterations, and really it would just be to make sure that branches and dead trees were removed from the trails.

R. Wilder agreed, and said yes you don’t want widow makers. There has been some logging behind there that he noticed when we went through there last year. C. Hall said that she thought it was the nephew.

R. Wilder said that spending money could be discussed with regard to parking and site distance and also discuss it with the to make sure of what the town would approve. Maybe the entrance isn’t the right one as far as safety goes, but things like that will be part of the planning process. You might get in touch with the town’s road agent for his thoughts on it.

C. Hall said that she will contact the Director of Public Works to get her involved.

W. Bosworth an important thing also to note is that there is a lot of pressure on Carriage Road.

D. Hill said that discussing and coming up with a good design for a smaller parking area might be a good idea.

R. Wilder said that on Reed Road they have a parking lot for about 20 cars Gilford/Alton line and that was about $50,000. D. Hill said that they had a lot of drainage to handle for that.

D. Hill said that we could mow it, but not flat because that would take away valuable shrubs that birds like. We would time it just right so that we don’t impact nesting season.

R. Wilder do you have anyone to give advice on that particular field and what might be in there.

R. Wilder asked if we could talk to Lisa Morin. C. Hall said that she could do that.

Discussion ensued.

D. Hill said that the next one is trail design and we will get in touch with Dan and Hal to see what they think about it.

The other was signage, obviously that’s for another day but we will need to discuss it.

There things will be such as dogs and will they be allowed and do we allow mountain bikes.

C. Hall said that I don’t know if we have discussed allowing motorized vehicles.

D. Hill said that we can prohibit motorized vehicles, with discussion regarding the potential for snowmobiles in the future. C. Hall we need to make sure of what is allowed and not allowed on the adjoining trails also.

W. Bosworth said that regardless of what you ban or not, its enforcement that is the issue.

R. Wilder showed everyone a magnitude that he got from the iron mine. He said that he did find some information on the mine in the Gunstock Parish book.

D. Hill asked what should be done next.

1. Hall said that Katherine Dormody, Library Director said that she could put out information in her monthly articles that she sends out. We could also ask the selection of their thoughts.

1. Hill said that personally you might not be to open about it, having the library put out some information in the bulletin and inviting people to contact us might be a good idea, but I would be reluctant to just have anyone sign up for it.

L. Duncan said that J. Jude might have some interest in this as well, L. Routhier suggested reaching out to T. Drouin first because he's been really involved with it.

R. Wilder thought that he would like to have someone right in the neighborhood, how about the guy across the street and if there were any problems with him. I know he has horses.

D. Hill said that Mrs. Weeks wasn’t fond of animals over there, but she did let the neighbor bring his horses over there every once in a while. R. Wilder was just wondering because he’s right across the street.

C. Hall said that as often as she talked to Mrs. Weeks she said that she never wanted or allowed horses over there, so he must have done it on his own.

C. Hill said that the liability from a municipal view might have answered the question.

R. Wilder said that Dr. Gary Franke was very supportive of the entire thing and probably at a minimum we should let him know about it.

D. Hill asked L. Routhier if he would be interested in this as well. L. Routhier said that he would be more than happy to help, but said that he wouldn't be very strong on blazing trails, or anything like that.

They discussed BRATTS, mowing, how long of a target project, what type of birds and when they would nest, contacts, other trails and meeting dates.

Discussion ensued.

C. Hall said that whatever meetings that do happen there will have to be notes taken as to where, when and whom attended.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Tim Nolin reported out on the tree damage from the Weeks parcel and adjacent property. We need a vote for the tree(s) removal due to the storm.

C. Hall said that we should have a vote to authorize those trees to be removed that have caused the damage onto the adjacent property. It’s an insurance issue, they are currently dealing with it, but the Johnsons would like have those trees removed as soon as possible.

L. Routhier wanted to know about if this would be from the selectmen, or do we just need to authorize them to cut the trees.

Motion made by D. Hill, seconded by L. Routhier to authorize the cutting of the trees. Motion carried with all in favor

C. Hall said that she forgot to add the property on Hedgewood to the agenda. L. Duncan said that someone is already doing the work, Dean Clark of DMC Surveying will be taking care of it.

2. Site Study Review

C. Hall reported out on the meeting from this morning. There were 2 properties on the agenda

Donald Gagnon on Annis Road and the second one was for Kevin Morrissette for a boundary line adjustment and reconfiguring the shape and orientation of a pre-existing subdivision.

3. Other

The other thing is that the town will be updating the conference rooms for virtual meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE / WORKSHOPS**:**​Saving Special Places in April (Virtual)​

MINUTES:

November 17, 2020

Motion made by L. Routhier, seconded by D. Hill to approve the Minutes of November 17, 2020 Motion carried with all in favor

December 15, 2020

Motion made by L. Routhier, seconded by D. Hill to approve the minutes of December 15, 2020 as amended. Motion carried with all in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by L. Routhier, seconded by L. Duncan to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Hart, Technical Assistant