

WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – August 24, 2020

Present: Carol Macleod (chair), Debbie Scranton, Ralph Nimtz, Jane Quigley

Guests: None

Called to order @ 6:34PM, July 25, 2020 minutes approved as written, Roll Call taken. No additions or deletions to Agenda

Gateway to White Rocks acquisition from Fernfield Farms (Ice Bed, Hartsboro Roads)

Betsy McGean, direction of Philanthropy for the Trust of Public Land, was supposed to come August 13 to view the project and talk about raising of public funds. Much of

The \$1,000,000 needed will be from public funds and foundations, but 20% of the money needs to be raised privately, and we were asked to participate in raising private money. We had planned to walk the trails together, see the location of a future parking area. However we were not notified of this visit.

B.. McGean will come up with a job description for the Fund-raising Committee.

All commission members present were not interested in participating in fund-raising.

C. Macleod will put forming a fund-raising committee on Front Porch Forum for interested townspeople. Shrewsbury has completed their Lottery Road Wildlife Conservation Project, and chair W. Duda will be Emailing us their fundraising brochure, and the Vermont Land Trust's 'Raising Money for Local Land Protection Projects.'"

Bike Trails with Jumps/Obstacles _ Meeting with VLCT on July 2, 2020, Follow-up Letter of July 20, 2020, Selectboard

C. Macleod and R. Nimtz (none came from Recreation) met with Wade Masure, joined by town administrator, Sandi Switzer. At this time, only the Rim Trail near the bike jumps, the bike jumps, and the path to The Klock bench were inspected.

A follow-up letter to S. Switzer, from Wade Masure, reads as follows:

"Following up with you regarding my visit to Stone Meadow on 7/20/20. The focus of this was to look At the walking trails in the area of the bike jumps and offer recommendations for this use.

It appears that the existing trails are designated more of a walking type trail and not for multi-use
The existing trails should be used for hiking/walking use only and not a mixed use with
Mountain and/or bike jumps.

The bike jumps should be removed from the existing trail system.

The use of bikes should be on designated trails designed and maintained for that use only,
Ideally separate from other trail users.

If not already in place, signage should be installed indicating the trails are for walking/hiking only

In the 8/3/2020 Selectboard minutes we read "N. Tift acknowledged VLCT's Wade Masure's recommendations

Related to the bike jumps at Stone Meadow. B. Duchesne indicated Recreation and Conservation should Be working in the direction of separating bike trails and jumps from walking and hiking trails."

D. Scranton and C. Macleod attended by Zoom the Selectboard meeting on 8/17/2020. Direct quotes from the Selectboard minutes follows:

Carol Macleod was seeking clarification regarding a directive (above) from the Selectboard about bike Activities at Stone Meadow in response to VLCT Wade Masure's recommendations. She asked if all bike Activities should be separated from walking/hiking paths or just the bike jumps.

B. Duchesne responded bike trails should be separated from hiking trails based on Mr. Masure's report.

N. Tift said the bike jumps were problematic. J. McClallen said he thought the main trail from the parking Lot was suitable for bikes, but he added there should be no bikes on the rest of the trails.

C. Macleod said the Conservation Commission was working on a plan that would allow interested parties To construct bike jumps in an area south of the current jumps that was separate from walking/hiking Trails.

D. Scranton said bike enthusiasts who attended the Conservation Commission's meeting in June were Asked to develop a map or proposal featuring jumps and trails so the Selectboard could visualize their Plans. (No plan has been submitted, per the town).

B. Duschesne indicated bike trails ran parallel or were separated from hiking trails at Pine Hill Park in Rutland.

C. Macleod said the Conservation Commission would be meeting again next week and will keep the Board up-dated.

A discussion followed among conservation commission members on the Selectboard directives quoted above.

One area that could be problematic was the elimination of any bike use on the walking paths, as Non-motorized use has been allowed, and even encouraged, from when the WCC started improving And enlarging the trail system, and is in all the brochures, town signage at Stone Meadow.

We will need to meet with the Recreation Committee on not only bike use on paths, but on finding

An amicable solution for future bike jumps. Per Wade Masure's recommendations, the two bike jumps that currently cross the Rim Trail should be removed. So the Rim Trail isn't used from the Waldo Lane parking area to the bike jump area, perhaps a different access could be made from the Boys Camp Road, or further south on Waldo Lane. W. Masure thought the southeast area, which has no hiking/walking trails, would be the best place to expand development of the bike jumps. All bike jumps should be at least 20 feet from walking trails.

We would like to attend the next Selectboard Meeting on 09/08/2020, and hopefully will have met with The Recreation Committee before then to get their input and ideas.

Updates/Next Steps at Stone Meadow

Based upon an Audubon plan, the copse of trees was cleared at literally one fell, rather than a three year sequence of clearing for wildlife habitat improvement. One plan would be to have the area re-grow and reclaim itself naturally over time. Other options include hiring a tree service to put the downed trees into piles, or at a minimum, to clear one walking path that has been covered. We will meet at this copse in the fall when the vegetation has died back.

We have two receptacles at the main trail area on Waldo Lane for recyclables and for dog poop bags.

We have decided to no longer provide doggy bags, as people use them and leave them on the trails.

D. Whitmore and C. Macleod have mowed the trails and by the parking area with picnic table. Thank you!

Budget:

There is \$3685 in CDs in the Community Bank account, which was funded by donations from the Vermont Country Store from the numerous community hours put into Stone Meadow by Marc Pramuk.

As of July 1, 2020, our new funds from the Town of Wallingford are \$2500.

Anticipated expenses in the coming year will be possibly hiring tree work cleanup. Also J. Quigley has expressed a keen interest in becoming a beekeeper and we will need to replace the hives after there were infested, acquire bees, and hopefully have a successful honey harvest to once again sell at the town Office next year.

Joint Meeting with the Recreation Committee To be determined regarding the trail system, bike jumps

Work Meeting Saturday, August 29 at 10:30 at the Waldo Lane parking lot, to walk south on Waldo Lane to see if

There are possibilities for other access points to a future bike jump expansion in southeast corner of the park.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM. Next meeting is Monday, September 28 at 6:30 at Town Hall. Masks required.

Submitted by Debbie Scranton

Approved: 09/28/20