

Town of Farmington
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 9, 2020

Commission Members Present:

Laura Bogardus, Chairman
Bill Fisher, Secretary
Dave Connolly, Selectmen's Rep. (6:15 p.m.)
Michelle Elbert
Tom Sorensen
Richard Ballou (6:30 p.m.)

Commission Members Absent:

Randy Orvis, Vice Chairman
Larry Fitzgerald, excused

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Bogardus called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Public Comment: None

4). Review of Minutes:

August 12, 2020- Public Meeting Minutes – No errors or omissions

Motion: (Fisher, second Elbert) to accept the minutes as written passed 4-0.

5). Old Business:

a). McCarthy Trail Update- Mr. Fisher said he stopped in at Home Depot but was not able to see the store manager but did get a contact person and is going to see him tomorrow night. He said he planned to discuss if Home Depot is still interested in helping complete the cutouts for the trail and if so when someone might be available.

Chairman Bogardus said that she and Mr. Sorensen went out to the trail to look at the post holes and they may be able to remove the cement with a posthole digger but it will be helpful if Jim Horgan can get an auger.

Mr. Fisher said he would like to get into the old fire station where the cutouts are stored, take pictures of them, measure them and determine the number of postholes needed and then decide where they will be installed on a map to make sure they get everything drilled and done. Ms. Bogardus said they found most all of the postholes at the trail and some of the spray-painted markers were still there.

Mr. Fisher said he has a new set of posthole diggers if they wanted to try using them.

Ms. Bogardus said she e-mailed Goodwin Library Children's Services Supervisor Kayla Morin-Riordan and she has not completed the signs depicting children's stories that will be posted along the trail. She said Mrs. Morin-Riordan will e-mail her when they are ready to be put up

and then they will walk the trail and decide where to put the story boards.

Mr. Fisher added that he also needs someone to help him take the wooden portion of the trail sign down and put it into his truck.

Ms. Bogardus said the next time they are there they may be able to take it down and bring it to him.

Mr. Fisher suggested setting up a team to clear the holes, a second team to put the concrete and the posts in and another team to install the placards and the story boards. He said they would need to figure out how to brace the posts until the concrete sets or wait until the next day for the concrete to harden before installing the story boards and placards.

Ms. Bogardus then thanked Mr. Fisher for all of his help with this project so far.

b). Town Forest Sign Repair – Ms. Bogardus said they talked to man who is doing the community service and also contacted the Police Dept. to see if there is anyone else who may need to perform community service because this project may take more than this individual's allotted 8 hours.

Mr. Sorensen it will cost approx. \$295 for materials which includes 3 cans of timber oil for the 3 signs, one can of enamel paint, one roll of flashing, bleach and a brush. He said he could not find anyone with mobile equipment to power wash them so it will have to be done with a bucket and a brush.

Ms. Bogardus said the guy they talked to is willing to do this and that she and Mr. Sorensen can fill in any gaps if they are unable to find somebody else. She said she was most concerned about getting the flashing installed to cover the ends of the signs.

Mr. Sorensen said if the roll of flashing doesn't work he will go with a different material that is actually cheaper than the roll of flashing.

Mrs. Elbert asked about the lettering on the signs.

Mr. Sorensen said they are lightly engraved and almost look like they were hand whittled.

Mrs. Elbert asked if the letters need to be painted.

Ms. Bogardus said yes and the sign inside the forest has a lot of lettering and will be time consuming.

Mrs. Elbert asked if it is work that needs a good painter.

Mr. Sorensen it needs at least a decent painter for the lettering and the oil application and cleaning part is pretty easy.

Mr. Fisher asked if the oil is colored.

Mr. Sorensen said it is a natural color but colored oils are available.

Mr. Fisher said the signs he did are dark brown and yellow and suggested using the same colors for these signs would make them stand out more and match the rest of the signs.

Mr. Sorensen said these signs are currently clear pressure treated wood and that mahogany colored oil is available at the same price as the clear oil.

Mr. Fisher asked if paint will adhere to the oil base.

Mr. Sorensen said it will stick to it but it has to dry for a week before the paint for the lettering can be applied to it. He said his initial plan is to have the community service person help with cleaning and staining the signs and he will do the lettering.

Motion: (Elbert, second Fisher) to spend \$295 on the supplies to repaint three signs passed 4-0.

c). Scruton Farm- Ms. Bogardus said a few weeks ago Mr. Orvis represented the Con Com at an event hosting Sen. Jeanne Shaheen at the Scruton Farm. She said the event was to recognize the farm's new conservation land status and to talk about dairy farming and conservation issues. She said hopefully Mr. Orvis will be present to give his report at the next meeting.

d). Ronci Property – Ms. Bogardus said at the last meeting the members talked about the Ronci property located on River Road when Mr. Orvis suggested putting in a picnic area there after potential plans to put in a handicapped access fishing area on the river were dropped because the proposed area gets washed out each spring.

She said she spoke with Assessing Clerk Kelly Heon who said she can't find any evidence of the property being under a conservation easement, no restrictions were put in the deed and the Town is the sole owner so the Con Com may be able to install a picnic area there.

Mrs. Elbert asked what that would entail.

Ms. Bogardus said it may involve putting in concrete picnic tables but she wasn't sure of all the details.

Mr. Sorensen suggested they could be anchored to the ground or a tree or if they are movable they could be pulled back away from river and chained up during the winter.

Mr. Fisher said if the tables are kept at least 40' back from the river they will be fine.

Chairman Bogardus asked if the Ronci property goes right up to the bridge or if it ends a little bit down from the bridge.

Mr. Fisher said he didn't know where the boundaries are located.

Mrs. Elbert asked what the ground is like there and if it has to be mowed or maintained.

Ms. Bogardus said the lot is wooded.

Mr. Connolly arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Bogardus asked him about the boundaries of the Ronci property.

Mr. Connolly said it is a 3 acre lot that runs from the river to River Road and then pointed out the boundaries on a map.

Ms. Bogardus said the property does not go as far as the bridge.

Mr. Connolly said the property is not under an easement and control of the land was given over to the Con Com by the Selectmen a number of years ago.

Ms. Bogardus asked if he thought there was enough space away from the flood plain area to put in picnic tables as suggested by Mr. Orvis.

Mr. Connolly said yes and suggested they ask Mr. Orvis to look at the site again. He said at one time they were considering putting in a parking area there with a path leading to a boardwalk going over the flood plain to the river.

He said there would be enough room for a small parking area, maybe for 3-4 cars but because it is on the curve of the road they should check with the DPW about the line of sight for an entrance there.

e). BH Keith Assoc. – Ms. Bogardus said she heard from Forester/Consultant Barry Keith about whether or not the log landing had been seeded as discussed at their last meeting. She said Mr. Keith said that it has been seeded but he has not been back to see how it is doing. He wrote that with the project timing and the poor soil conditions it will need a fall over seeding and he will look into it she said.

Mr. Connolly asked if they were both talking about the same log landing.

Ms. Bogardus said she was talking about the log landing at the Town Forest where they just finished logging.

Mr. Connolly said there are 2 log landings and the one Ms. Bogardus is referring to is at the Abbott's Grant section of the property. He said the Waldron's area looks fine and he wondered if Mr. Keith realizes she was talking about the log landing at the Abbott's section.

Mr. Sorensen said it has been a year since the work was completed there and the area should have been planted last fall and then followed up on it in the spring not fall to fall.

Mr. Connolly said they would have gotten an invoice for the seeding if it had been done.

Ms. Bogardus said she did not recall getting an invoice for the seeding work. She said she would wait to see what Mr. Keith says after checks on the site but she did not think that it was done.

Mr. Connolly agreed and said that even in a drought you would get something there if it was done. He asked if she had discussed the parking area with Mr. Keith.

Ms. Bogardus said she has not done that yet because she has not been able to find the original scope of work for the project. She said the parking is mentioned many times but she couldn't find the contract details and asked Mr. Connolly for help in researching the information.

Mr. Connolly suggested that she highlight where she sees it mentioned and then go back to the meeting minutes around that time period.

Members then updated Mr. Connolly on the discussion about the McCarthy Trail and the Town Forest that took place before he arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Connolly said there is a folder upstairs in the Con Com files on the McCarthy Trail which contains a letter he gave to the Manager at Home Depot presenting the project to them.

Mr. Fisher said he didn't think there was any problem with the store and that it was a matter of employee turnover and that the new employees were not informed of the project.

f). Pollinator Pathways – Mrs. Elbert said she spoke with Marghi Bean and found that this is not a national project but is a NH project they are trying to implement. She said the group is looking for opportunities to get information out to the public and that Hay Day would be the perfect opportunity for that. She said Ms. Bean would like a Con Com member to talk to other Con Com's about it but she does not have the time to do so.

Ms. Bogardus said the group has a lot of materials and suggested that they should approach

other commissions as they did here and that would help get the word out about the program. She suggested they keep it in mind for any events where the information could be made available to the public.

Mrs. Elbert suggested they could also post information about it on their Face book page and that she will check with the library to see if they would want to do something with the group. Mr. Ballou arrived at the meeting.

g). Emerald Ash Borer – Ms. Bogardus said she asked for an update on the project going on at the French property and learned that the project is going well so far and there have been no issues. She said a write-up updating the project would be provided to the commission and they will conduct the last parasitoid (larvae that live as parasites and eventually kill the host) release on Thursday. They will then fell a portion of the experimental trees in mid-October and peel the bark back and check the larvae. They would be willing to make a presentation when the project is completed she said.

Mr. Connolly said the Selectmen would also be interested in that presentation. He suggested that she speak with the Town Administrator about a good time to get on their agenda.

Ms. Bogardus suggested having the presentation at a Con Com meeting and invite the Selectmen to attend.

6). FYI:

Notice of Intent to Cut Wood/Timber: Tax Map R64, Lots 011 and 012, Route 11, lot size: 38 acres, area to be cut: 10 acres.

7). Upcoming Dates:

Next Con Com Meeting-Wednesday, October 14, 2020

8).Adjournment:

Motion: (Fisher, second Sorensen) to adjourn the meeting passed 6-0 at 6:35 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

Laura Bogardus, Chairman