

**FAYSTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
AUGUST 21, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

Attendees: Lisa Koitzsch, Corrie Miller, Geri Procaccini, Gene Fialkoff, Akhil Kaplan

ACTION ITEMS BEFORE NEXT MEETING

1. **Everyone:** Think about future projects, specifically the Boyce property project, and what aspects of FCC projects are of the most interest to you and how you can best assist in moving forward.
2. **Everyone:** Consider being a member of our Stewardship Committee as it may be best suited to your talents, interests and time constraints.
3. **Everyone:** Whenever time permits, cut down knotweed at the McCullough Barn property.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lisa made a move to approve the minutes from July 10th meeting. Corrie seconded, all approved.

FCC MEMBERSHIP

Lisa: We have 5 regular positions and 2 at-large positions on the Commission. Ned will become an alternate and Lisa will take his regular position since as Chair, she should not be an at-large member. The Commission still has one at-large position vacant. Terms are 3 years. Because we have a heavy lift ahead with Boyce Rd project and limited Conservation Commission positions, a stewardship committee could be created to allow members who are mostly interested in hands-on projects to switch from full time Conservation Commission members to Stewardship Committee members. This would allow members to focus their energies toward projects of interest, expertise and commitment ability.

Akhil: Actively recruit someone with experience in land management and grant writing to FCC.

Corrie: Clarification that the FCC can recommend candidates who will then be appointed by the SB after an interview process but that we can't invite commissioners ourselves. Consideration should be given by current and possible future members as to whether the FCC or Stewardship Committee is a better fit.

Lisa asked that everyone considers finding potential new members, who will especially be able to help with the Boyce Road Project.

BOYCE PROPERTY PROJECT

Lisa: The biggest issue at hand for the FCC is the development of a management plan, which is the responsibility of the FCC as per the Select Board.

Corrie: There has been more evidence of use on the property recently such as litter and evidence of a firepit. There could be a problem in the future of overuse and abuse that we need to consider when developing a management plan. One issue is easy accessibility to the property.

Akhil: Other than the "no trespassing" sign, there are no other warning signs such as "pack-it-in-and-out"; "no fires", "no motorized vehicles", etc. Signage could help deter miscreants.

Geri: Maybe the road could be overgrown and turned into a trail to slow traffic through the property.

Akhil: Dirt bike riders have been using the property; and the pond is a big draw. Akhil also brought up the issue of rule enforcement.

Lisa: Both current landowner and former owner have expressed an interest in keeping the land open.

Corrie: There is a perception that the open areas are functioning meadow, even though they aren't due to heavy brushhog regime. Education may be key to getting residents to understand what makes a meadow functional habitat with healthy soil and/or the value of forests and allowing at least some of the meadow to grow back to woodland.

Lisa: The Boyce landowner is working with the Vermont Land Trust and the Select Board in finalizing the transfer of land to the town of Fayston. When the property transfer occurs, there has to be an interim management plan in place. Liza Walker said the VLT will help the Town work on an interim plan.

Akhil: The interim plan should be very restrictive, in order to give the FCC, in cooperation with the community, time to work out the details for the final management plan.

Corrie: has a friend who is interested in researching the property's history by talking to residents and exploring the cellar holes, should CC or SB ask for that support.

Grant funding for town forest management planning doesn't seem to be as readily available as it once was in Vermont and Corrie and Lisa have talked with Liza about options.

Akhil: FCC should get a copy of the interim plan before our next meeting.

Lisa: FCC needs to determine what our duties are concerning the Boyce property, along with the SB. A steering committee could consist of one member from SB, 2 members from FCC; and Liza Walker of VLT.

Lisa: Corrie was a Field Naturalist graduate student at UVM and reached out to UVM colleagues for advice/assistance to preserve the property. Corrie said she had 2 responses and still waiting for a couple more.

Gene: Turn the property into a perma-culture project and we could contact Ben Falk, a perma-culture expert, for assistance. Corrie said that whatever management is done on the property would need to be part of a community management planning process.

Corrie: it would be helpful to hire a consultant to organize all aspects of getting the management plan together.

FAYSTON COMPOST PROJECT

Geri: presented information she collected on various composting plan possibilities. Details of that discussion are here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Khfkul7NuKUHL9VJB4LIQZxweEHm9NAMUHwZvfaQghQ/edit>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lisa: 9/5/19 - Biodiversity event at Flatbread that will include a Keynote speaker from UVM, a break-out session, and Information stations.

The 3 town conservation commissions will work together as one information station. Akhil offered, if his schedule permits, to help with this.

Corrie: We should all encourage people to come to public meetings; and start a sign-up sheet for public meeting announcements.

Lisa: will ask Liza to print out map of all conserved lands in Fayston.

OTHER BUSINESS

Corrie: Warren knotweed project - The Warren Conservation Commission hired a student crew to dig up knotweed at several sites around the town. On several other sites, the WCC is mowing continuously. Jito Coleman is educating participants about best practices for knotweed control.

Gene: We need to approach the SB with a request to increase the conservation budget.

Lisa: moved to elect Corrie treasurer of FCC. Akhil seconded; all approved.

The next FCC meeting will be held at the Fayston Town Hall on Wednesday, September 18, at 7PM.

Minutes submitted by Geri Procaccini