

Boyce Hill Town Forest Steering Committee

Minutes

November 4, 2020

Present via Zoom:

Lisa Koitzsch, Corrie Miller, Chuck Martel, Pete Colgan, Woody Dugan, Karrie Thomas, and Sally Dwyer

1. Corrie moved to approve the Steering Committee (SC) minutes of 10/20/20 field visit and the minutes from 10/21/20 with a spelling correction and Chuck seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion was approved.
2. Call for public input. None offered.
3. Current management issues
 - i. Winter parking
 - A. Road crew could not turn plow around in recent snowstorm as people had parked blocking the parking area.
 - B. Several ideas presented to help mitigate this issue:
 1. Move no parking sign for increased visibility
 2. Delineate where winter parking is allowed (snowplow will need approximately 3-4 spaces to turn around)
 3. Put up other signs: parking sign with arrows, reminder sign at gate, come back another time if parking is limited, no parking after a storm
 4. Chuck will contact Josh and Stuart to come up with a solution. (UPDATE: Road crew has expanded parking area and moved the No Parking sign as of the writing of these minutes.)
 - ii. Pond embankment
 - A. Summary of visit with Shawn Patenaude
 1. Top to toe of embankment on downhill side of pond will eventually need to be cleared.
 2. No rush and work can take place over time
 3. This will be a big job and will need some implementation of volunteer help and concern for the neighbors.
 4. Idea to mitigate impact to neighbors: plant trees between toe of embankment and property line? Pine vs. other evergreens. Karrie can ask Dave Knoop for recommendations.
 - B. Summary of meeting with Bethany Turnbaugh (neighbor)
 1. Biggest concern is safety of children with increased pond visitation
 2. Discussion on ways to discourage people from walking on trail to her property: chain across trail, stakes and rope at top of embankment, mark the Town Forest boundary, stronger words on existing sign, 'private trail' sign, owner could post that portion of land
 3. Concern re: tree removal on embankment will increase noise. Relieved that no trees past toe of embankment will be cut.
 - iii. Mowing

- A. Sugarbush did a great job mowing the property a week ago. It took three days and several spots had to be mown at least twice.
 - B. Brief discussion about the discrepancy between the mowing map the SC approved and the actual mowed area – several areas that had not been discussed were mowed. In the future, areas to be mown should be flagged.
 - C. Thank you letter to Sugarbush from the Select Board and Steering Committee. Lisa will draft and Chuck will have SB sign at next meeting.
- iv. Private Property Interaction
- A. Property boundary/neighbor questions
 - 1. Fuller - sap operation.
 - a. Boundary has been flagged and shows some overlap of sugar lines onto BHTF.
 - b. Need to discuss options and then approach Fuller/Belknap. Some ideas: limit areas delineated by Natural Resources Inventory, special commercial use permit possibly for this February sugaring operation (time sensitive), discuss with Vermont Land Trust and get advice on how to approach issue, consider long-term lease similar to Scrag Forest, consider issue of precedence in final decision.
 - c. Next step: discuss with Caitlin at next meeting or the meeting after.
 - 2. Saylor - no mowing to discourage trespassers – not discussed
 - 3. Cohen/Turnbaugh – discussed above
4. Steering Committee Organization & Communications (Corrie, Karrie, Pete)
- A. New email - FaystonBHTF@gmail.com: Password given to FCC, still need to discuss how to use the email, can be cc'd on all communications re: property to keep an official record of BHTF work outside of personal email boxes
 - B. Revised file structure in Google Drive: folders have been populated; everyone has been given access
 - C. Training session on Google Drive helpful? Moving files, uploading files, etc. Karrie and Corrie willing to schedule a help session and are available for questions.
 - D. Google calendar invite – add this to any zoom meeting scheduling
 - E. Communications Plan thinking
 - 1. Pete shared a document with SC re: draft communications plan
 - a. Who, what action, what mechanisms to reach audience, timing?
 - b. Core element: project timeline – clarity over at least the next 6 months
 - c. Plan communications effort around activities
 - d. Group effort or breakout into smaller working group?
 - e. Consider Town Meeting, SB requests, Budgeting
 - f. Not just about input, but about sharing what we are learning
 - 2. What is the outcome we are working towards?
 - a. Need a deep dive into **strategic planning (project plan)**
 - b. Communications plan is based on strategic plan
 - c. Budget hinges on strategic thinking
 - d. Third party facilitation – do we plan for this?

3. Gathering Input and Information
 - a. Natural Resources – ecological value
 - b. Host of recreational uses – community value
 - c. Identify uses already with spaces in community – BHTF will not be able to be all things to all people.
 - d. Last few meetings have been a data dump – next meeting should be a quasi-strategic planning process. Karrie and Pete will come up with agenda for November 18th meeting.
4. Need input from Select Board on timeline and realistic long-term plan process. Chuck will discuss at next meeting and report back.
5. Project plans need: Time, Quality and Money
 - a. Three-legged stool concept
 - b. Starting with a sense of what needs to be delivered time wise is helpful.
 - c. Woody looked at many long-term management plans – long, sophisticated. Good resource for outline for items needed in our plan.
5. Commercial Permitting process
 - i. We have a wider range of uses that would need to be addressed.
 - ii. Woody addressed this in the draft he wrote in a more particular way to address those issues that might affect BHTF.
 - iii. Satisfy Interim needs but would not be hard to implement.
 - iv. Woody will share draft with SC. Chuck will work with Woody on this document.
6. Visit with Vermont Fish and Wildlife
 - i. Pete sent out an excellent summary.
 - ii. Andrea Shortsleeve offered the possibility for another group meeting.
7. Email needs to be sent out to BHTF email list. Lisa will draft an update and circulate it.

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020 - 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.