

BOYCE HILL STEERING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
July 7, 2021

PRESENT: Corrie Miller, Pete Colgan, Karrie Thomas, Sally Dwyer, Woody Dugan, and Chuck Martel

MINUTE TAKER: Lisa Koitzsch

1. Woody moved to approve the minutes from June 16, 2021. Sally seconded, no further discussion, all in favor, motion was approved.
2. Public input (5 minutes) – No members of the public were present.
3. Goals for today’s meeting: Re-engagement post public forums.
4. Future meetings – in person?
 - a. Public meetings now require one person to be present in a public space. Chuck will ask Patti to clarify if this is applicable to Steering Committee.
 - b. Town has purchased an OWL system and a large screen television that would allow people to attend both in public and via Zoom. Lisa and Chuck will test the system at the next SC meeting.
5. All discussed the recent “over” mowing of the area around the pond, the vernal pool near the property’s entrance, and the viewpoint at the top. Some concern for precedence and the impact on neighbors. For future reference, the mid-summer trail mowing is not feasible for Sugarbush, but they will likely help with the late fall mowing that is more widespread.
6. SC discussed meeting with the Select Board at their August 10th meeting to hear their input on property’s potential before embarking on formulation of the management plan. Important to give the SB a recap of activities to date, present survey results, and provide a broad overview of SC thinking - preserve the character people love and add to the ecological integrity of the property.
7. Viewshed Analysis:
 - a. Corrie explained that a viewshed analysis helps in determining how and how much to manage over time to maintain certain views. All agreed this would be a good tool for helping to craft the management plan.
 - b. Another helpful tool is to begin mapping out possible management strategies: see what a wetland buffer would look like, etc.
8. Corrie raised the idea of meeting less frequently (possibly every three weeks) and working more in between meetings. Karrie commented that up until now it has been helpful to meet more regularly but going forward it may be better to meet less frequently. Pete stated that if meetings are more spread out, we need a collective commitment and an accountability to accomplish assigned tasks.
9. Discussion re: SC in-person meeting to collectively discuss where each member stands on the broader issues and to begin building a consensus. Would be helpful to have this meeting facilitated and have someone take notes. All agreed to using large-scale maps to help delineate management recommendations. Karrie suggested it would be helpful to have a SC walk on the property before/after the in-person meeting to help synthesize the public forum and survey input received with the information gleaned from experts.

10. Management Plan:

- a. Discussion re: working on the Request for Quote (RFQ) from a consultant to help facilitate/write the final management plan. A subset of the SC can work on this document, and all should contribute any ideas they have before next Wednesday, July 14th.
- b. Pete will review Town Forest Planning kit to get sample RFPs before July 14th.

11. Survey

- a. Closing date is July 20th. Pete will forward data to SC members once the survey has closed.
- b. Approximately 210 survey responses to-date.
- c. Analysis – community vs. science perspective. Review comments/suggestions for “nuggets of wisdom”.
- d. Summary plan – presentation of pie charts for applicable questions. Survey responses can be reflected in an appendix to the management plan.
- e. Pete showed a sample of Word Art relating to a few survey questions highlighting words used in survey responses.

12. Stewardship

- a. Boundary markers
Create subtle yet visible boundary markers to place in strategic areas around property especially near noticeable access areas to private land – Town Land Boundary? and perhaps a graphic? Chuck suggested something rustic and small. Karrie: green with white letters? Placement should be for visibility when people leave the property so that they are aware they are entering private property. Abutters should be responsible for posting their own land.
- b. Cellar hole
Would be nice to clean the brush in and around the cellar hole in a lasting way – both for safety and to preserve cultural history. Perhaps put a filter cloth on the floor of the cellar hole and use gravel from the crushed stone pile nearby to create a floor for easier maintenance. In the future, the stone steps could be repaired. It will probably require annual maintenance to keep the brush at bay and would be a good project for a stewardship team of volunteers to adopt. An interpretive sign could be planned.
- c. Volunteers
 - i. Lisa and Woody will create a google form to survey volunteers on type of work interested in, type of tools they have, availability, etc. The stewardship list of to-do items will be updated on Google Drive.
 - ii. Select Board is reviewing the Volunteer Liability Release document.

13. Other Business

- a. Chuck brought up possible municipal planning grants and the SC discussed having Josh Schwartz help with this.
- b. Discussion re: reaching out to recreation partners and asking them about their interest and ways they might want to be involved. Important to give a one-on-one opportunity. Karrie suggested that this conversation come after the SC has discussion about priorities and possible approach to management. All agreed to think about how to actively engage user groups regarding their thoughts, ask questions, and to also express our concerns and constraints.

- c. Discussion re: if and how to approach conversations with neighboring landowners re: possible future access.

NEXT MEETING: In person on July 28th 6:00 pm at the home of Sally Dwyer.