

BOYCE HILL STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

October 26, 2022

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

1. Sally moved to approve the minutes from October 10, 2022. Woody seconded, no further discussion, all in favor, motion was approved.
2. Public Input - None
3. Pete provided a brief update on the Boyce Hill TF Education Project. Brad Long reported that three proposals have been received by the MRV Planning District in response to the RFP and will be reviewed soon. The project is funded by a grant from the Rural Resource Commission.
4. Discussion of this Fall's mowing.
 - The Town mowed the main trail and transition areas with the side arm mower. Sugarbush used their flail mower to mow the rest. It took approximately 4 days to complete.
 - Several committee members expressed their concern that despite the care the SC took to map out this year's mowing plan, more mowing occurred than anticipated in several noticeable areas— for example, there was increased mowing within proximity of the Saylor spring and the natural spring above it, an area most of the SC want to protect from cutting.
 - Suggestions that future mowing is conducted using a brush hogging contractor, better communication with the person doing the cutting, and possible use of flagging to delineate sensitive areas.
5. Select Board Meeting – November 9th at 6:00 pm
 - Chuck communicated his, and the SB's concerns, about the draft vegetation management map the SC is currently working to refine. Some of the issues raised:
 - Are buffers really required – and if so, how big should they be? Is a 100' buffer necessary?
 - Is the SC following the terms of the Conservation Easement? Or are they moving beyond these?
 - Should the property be maintained in the state in which it was received? The SB thinks the SC is moving too far away from the original intent of maintaining the property "as is".
 - The map shows too much reforestation, especially on the western side, and there are not enough upward views. There are areas that could be mown more intensively.
 - Lisa, Corrie, and Karrie expressed concern about the SB's assertion that the original intent of leaving the property was "as is" as all felt strongly that this was

not the case. Had it been, there would have been no need for a Steering Committee or a public process. The SC is balancing a set of values and goals to create this management plan (views, hill farm feel, and trails, as well as wildlife habitat, soil health, and water quality) and comparing raw numbers and statistics does not adequately address the complexity of the task at hand.

- Karrie suggested a site visit with the Select Board after the meeting and Pete will send out a Doodle Poll to set this up.
- Pete, Lisa, Woody, Corrie, and Amy will work on a presentation for the Select Board meeting and Pete and Amy will present. What we have done, where we are right now, and where we are heading.

6. Management Plan

- Continue review and discussion of the draft vegetation management map dated 10/14/22.
- The SC reviewed Woody and Pete's suggestions by reviewing each of their marked-up maps.
- Corrie presented recommendations from the Conservation Commission including:
 - People-centric goals such as hill farm feel/cultural history, the views, and recreational aspects, need to be in balance with the conservation values of wildlife, habitat connectivity, water quality, and soil conservation.
 - All aspects of the property will need to be managed in some form, even the areas designated as regrowth.
 - Review of the proposed vegetation map in detail.
- Pete stated that he agreed with the compromises Corrie had presented on behalf of the FCC. Sally urged the SC to consider Janet Saylor's proposal.
- Some of the areas still engendering disagreement among Steering Committee members were the western portion of the property along the stone wall, the open area above the Saylor property, the artificial channel, and the area between Boyce Road and the main trail.
- Amy will update the map and send out to SC along with annotations for different vegetation management zones.

7. Next Meeting Date – TBD after the Select Board meeting.