

BOYCE HILL STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

December 15, 2022

SC Members Present via Zoom: Corrie Miller, Amy Sheldon, Sally Dwyer, Chuck Martel, Woody Dugan, and Lisa Koitzsch.

Guests Present via Zoom: Janet Saylor, Marie Saylor

1. Woody moved to approve the minutes from December 7, 2022, and Sally seconded. There was no further discussion, all in favor, motion was approved.
2. Marie and Janet Saylor attended the meeting to express their concern about the maintenance of their spring line. They have reached out to Bob Newis for help finding the exact location of the line connecting the spring and their house as he worked on it approximately 30 years ago. They understand that maintenance of the line is their responsibility, but they asked the Committee if they would consider keeping trees from growing along the line especially if the area is designated a 'regeneration' zone. They will continue to do a little research on the line's location and how to maintain its integrity. Lisa will send them a copy of the Deed that mentions the easement.
3. Management Plan
 - o Amy spoke to Liza Walker regarding what the VLT easement says about cutting trees within a stream buffer (in this case, the stream on the west side of the property) to maintain a view - the Fayston Select Board has asked the Steering Committee to incorporate potential cutting into the management plan. Liza told Amy the easement is goal or function oriented vs. prescriptive. The goals of the easement in terms of buffers are shading, habitat, water quality, erosion prevention and maintenance of woody debris for in-stream habitat and do not include views. However, if cutting trees for views can maintain the function of the buffer, she anticipates that VLT would not be in opposition. She encouraged the SC to identify the general areas that trees might need to be cut in the future. SC discussed when and where cutting might need to take place, and whether this was an appropriate action to take within a protected buffer.
 - o Lisa said that while Fayston's Land Use Regulations were focused on development restrictions, there was language that prohibited disturbance of any vegetation within a 50' required buffer along streams. Corrie and Lisa strongly advocated for no cutting or disturbance within the buffer at all. Woody concurred.
 - o However, after much discussion, all agreed that language could be included in the plan to allow for consideration of cutting or trimming if deemed necessary for views while still allowing for ecological considerations and integrity and meeting the functionality goals of the easement. Areas to be cut will need to be defined and approved by the Town's Land Use Regulations and VLT.

- Amy led a continued discussion on the proposed vegetation management zones. SC members reviewed each zone and provided comments on:
 - Grouping similar management zones with big picture goals.
 - Sub-categories in some zones that will be managed in different ways but with a similar goal.
 - Suggested definition of zones: Restoration, Selective Cutting, Mostly Open
 - Restore: Let Nature take its course and restore natural communities, except for invasive species control and potential trail/glade management.
 - Selective Cutting: Intentional cutting of specific trees blocking views, occasional rotational cutting in specific zones. Create Rotational Cutting category.
 - Mostly Open: Maintain views by cutting, maintain in field and meadow conditions by various vegetation control methods.
 - Western portion of property along the stone wall will be maintained as a separate zone.
 - Connections across artificial channel.
 - Treatment of zones above and below proposed path to western edge of property.
 - Need to cut saplings growing in small triangular area between spur trail and main trail.
 - Pond embankment management. Cut outer bank vegetation, maintain path, and clear a few selected access points on inside bank (no mowing of inside bank unless there is an issue with embankment integrity).
 - Cultural features – Amy will identify locations.
- 4. Discussion on when public input on the plan will take place and how to ensure SB and VLT approval of any potential changes.
- 5. Woody and Lisa will work on the “no hunting” justifications before the next meeting.
- 6. Select Board budget meeting on January 4th to present FCC budget which includes Boyce Hill.
- 7. The next BH meeting date will be determined in early January after Amy has had a chance to write some of the plan. Lisa will send out a Doodle poll.