

## Andrews Community Forest

Monday, September 14, 2020 – 7pm – minutes

**Present:** Jesse Crary, Cecilia Danks, Ellen Kraft, Caitlin Littlefield, Tyler Merritt, Jim Monahan, Nick Neverisky, Amy Powers, Wright Preston (chair)

**Public:** none present

**Appointed minute taker:** CL

**Amendments to the agenda:** none

**Public comment:** none

### **Discussion of RFP(s) for trail designer and ecologist**

*Background: TM, JM, CL had gathered to create trail designer RFP; they elected to combine trail designer and ecologist RFP into one. Reasoning included ease of management and ability of “teammates” to self-select and ensure they would be able to successfully collaborate. Joint RFP was shared with committee. WP expressed concern about lack of independence. In response, CL generated single RFP for ecologist. Both documents (joint RFP and ecologist-only RFP) were reviewed by committee.*

Concerns regarding independence were again expressed during meeting – in particular, that ecologist would be on pay-roll of trail designer and that ecologist’s assessment and recommendations may be compromised. Others on committee pointed out that sub-contractor relationships are common across sectors/disciplines and that independent parties frequently submit joint bids on RFPs, with disbursement of funds going to separate parties.

Committee elects to move ahead with a joint RFP so long as ecologist and trail designer are on equal footing. Committee aims to achieve the following via a sub-committee (determined post hoc to be CL, CD, JC, JM):

- 1) A single, collaborative RFP for a trail designer and ecologist to bid on jointly.
  - a. Will include names of trail designers and ecologists for each to pursue partnerships
    - i. Not recommendations, but simply compiled list – though we want to spread RFP broadly
  - b. Make it abundantly clear that the two individuals/teams will work collaboratively but also independently ensure the best interest of the town and the forest.
    - i. Several committee members would like to see two contracts (and separate payment) with the town to ensure independence; but indicate that we’ll entertain all strong proposals
  - c. Throughout, make it abundantly clear that the two are equals – the spirit of this is as co-PIs.
    - i. Include this in rubric for evaluation – there is to be equal footing
- 2) Revisit wording about Trail Concept Map. After all, the map is not writ in stone. We should be after the *spirit* of the concept, not what is precisely laid out in those maps (see p. 27 in ACF Mgmt Plan)

- 3) Final deliverable is not a concept map but an actual trail network – including spatial data and flagged route.
  - a. Also ask that trail designer describe scope of work for trail builders (e.g., what sections can be built by volunteers, by machine, by professionals?)
- 4) Revisit wording re: ecologist’s tasks – the following paragraph is critical but still tbd:
  - a. The hired ecologist’s effort may include but is not limited to reviewing, synthesizing, and filling gaps in existing ecological assessments, natural community and habitat sensitivity maps, and records of on-the-ground observations”

JC makes a motion that the committee pursue a collaborative RFP (as above) ensuring that the ecologist and the trail designer have equal footing. Vote: 8/0/0 (AP had departed at 8pm and so was not present for vote.)

The committee will review the final draft at the next meeting (Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>). The committee will plant to present to the Selectboard on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> – unless it is unnecessary for us to do so, pending Josh Arneson’s response to inquiry.

**Meeting adjourned:** 9:20pm