

ACF Meeting Minutes 12/8/20

7pm via zoom

Those in attendance-

ACF Committee members:

Jim, Tyler, Nick Neverisky, Ellen, Jessie, Amy Powers, Wright, Cecilia,
(not present, Caitlin)

Residents of Richmond present-

Peter Halverson, Kevin Bassett, Stephanie, Ethan Tapper, Rod West, Irwin Langer, Marcy
Harding, Andy

Select Board Member- David Sonder

Public Comment

Peter-

What was the function for the gate?

Cost, aesthetics, value, etc. Overall, concerned the committee didn't think this through well
enough.

Kevin B

Does Not like the appearance and feels it is unwelcoming and has a "keep out" feel

Stephanie-

Wondering about horseback riding opportunities and what this gate means for equestrian folks
Horse and mtn bike interactions curiosity

Ellen-

Gave background to the gate:

-increase ATV use

-vandalism

-ground freezing

-the gate was free and available

-duty to uphold management plans that say no ATV use

Nick-?

good use of town money to use something donated

David Sander-

Public meeting laws- no emails of more than 5 people (½ plus 1 person)!!

Peter-

Major dislike was that it didn't feel welcoming for people! ADA compliant gates? If people are
the main 'users' of the forest, the gate should have people's accessibility in mind.

Are horses allowed? Stephanie wants to suggest horse friendly gates.

Management plan= no horses

Conservation easement = yes to horses? Something to explore as we plan for more trails / traffic in the forest.

Ellen and Cecelia ask “Are we in agreement that we need to do *something* about ATV traffic in the forest which is not permitted by the conservation easement and may or may not be related to the vandalism”

Unanimous Yes

Discussion

Discussion on where / why the ATV use.

Tyler suspects traffic from the East

Wright thinks from the west

Peter asked if neighbors were contacted or if they knew anything of the ATV use

Has anyone seen the police report ? No. We think it was filed by Ethan and Tim.

There was a sense of urgency due to the logger, Tim, raising concerns over his equipment being vandalized - his point person is Ethan, who brought this to the committee’s attention and urged us to take action.

Jessie wants to make sure we are working with facts and not hear-say

Wright and Ceclia both have seen ATV tracks.

*VELCO uses ATV’s.

Cecelia withdraws motion and it is approved regarding the motion of “needing to do *something*”

Tyler makes motion to keep the gate open until we figure out what to do and if we see ATV use we can/ should close the gate

Wright Seconds

Ellen thirds / opens discussion-

Keep gate open until April 15th unless there is ATV use and we need to close it.

Will work on signage and welcoming folks to the forest.

Education piece

Official vote- unanimous!

Motion to draft and send a letter to the FPF on the situation and get this out to the public asap.

Wright second, Ellen opens Discussion

Amy, nick, and Tyler and Jim will work as a subcommittee to do this education and outreach.

VOTE:

Unanimous say “ay”

General Discussion

Wright says he is the energy behind the gate install to protect the logger and the interest of the forest.

Peter H.
Suggest using game cameras

Wright~
Says logger is now using game cameras to protect equipment.

Generally folks think gate is too big

Solutions proposed by Tyler~
Move gate further down the path to a wider area with a 3rd post for people to walk around on the right or left
Pete would take this as a 2nd choice- 1st choice would be a walk around.
Likes the location idea of moving it down further towards the culvert~

Jessie suggests keeping it closed because we dont' have an answer to the ATV problem
Amy suggests keeping it closed and widen and add a sign

Tyler- suggests gate open when there is a snow pack- ATV's wont go there anyhow due to snow.

We have an opportunity to educate the public as to what the expectations are

David Sonder from SB- lots of emails with false and conflicting info- wants us to get out good information to the public about why and what we are doing.

Is there a need for the gate?
Where are the ATV's coming from ? Nobody knows?

December 15- April 15th gate to be open

Wright would like to have a meeting (publicly warned) at the gate site

- 1) Leave it there
- 2) Move it a little ways
- 3) Move it down towards the culvert
- 4) Take it down completely

****If any point we see ATV use in the forest, we can close the gate****

Put signs all over the place- welcome, expectations, etc.

Need to know the size of the signage that would not trigger a DRB permit or ZA permit

Jim-

Education and outreach about forest expectations

Want the least restrictive environment- how can we get folks into the forest?

Communicate with individuals and powerline companies about welcoming and expectations~

Ask the powerline to notify someone on the committee when they will be going up so we can know whose tracks are whose...

Pete- concerned that there wasn't an appropriate paperwork taken to install the gate.

Signage and letters to surrounding land-owners stating expectations to the forest.

Think that's a good way to start.- want to make sure the language is welcoming. Draft will be worked on and presented to committee at next meeting.

Ellen initiates motion to adjourn meeting at 9pm

Seconded by Amy

No further comments

Unanimous vote by committee

Action items for next meeting:

- Sign and letter to adjoining land owners sub committee~ Ellen and Jessie
 - will have something written to share for discussion at the 12/28 meeting.
- Nick to respond about situation to FPF with support of Tyler, Jim, Amy
- All to read the open meeting law document by next meeting