

Andrews Community Forest Committee
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 28, 2023
Minutes

Zoom recording started. Welcome, Roll call, confirm quorum, appoint Minute-taker and Timer for this meeting. Committee members in attendance: Daniel Schmidt, Chase Rosenberg Cecilia Danks, Ian Stokes, Julian Portilla, Melissa Wolaver. Public in person: Brad Elliott. Sam Pratt. Zoom: Jeff Forward, Daniel Wolfson, Robert Low, Nancy Zimny, June Heston.
MW is minute taker.

July 31minutes – IS moves to accept July minutes with the addition of his name to 7/31 meeting attendance, which had been omitted. JP 2nds. Passes unanimously.
Discussion to identify ACFC Chairperson(s) and vote to forward to Selectboard.
Cecilia and Ian will be co-chairs through September meeting. JP makes the motion and MW seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Report on Aug 14 special Selectboard meeting with ACFC. (Minutes and recording available at SB page at Town website).

Actions emerging from joint SB/ACFC meeting:

- Recruitment process aligned with both ACFC by-laws and town practices. Whole town will be invited to make submissions under the current by-laws and town practices. Our committee will review and pass on all candidates to Selectboard – even Trails and CC seat submissions. Opening should be posted by Duncan on FPF soon.
- Keeping lines of communication open between ACFC and SB. Possible quarterly report, or whenever there's something worth sharing. Minutes are now recorded with time stamp.
- Review and possible revision of by-laws to be considered in the future. By-laws will be followed for current open seats. There may be a consideration to change them in the future.
- Assistance by Richmond town professionals. Ian and Cecilia met with Keith Osborne. He offered to help assistance on several fronts and will be happy to review items for our committee.
- Resources to hire additional assistance on a one-time basis. Can we bring in people to bring on people not on committee to help? Yes, we are allowed to do this per Keith Osborne. For instance, people with specific skills sets could sit on sub-committee. DS: Has a friend in the field of management planning that might be an option for contracting out. Josh A. said he would help us with process of getting bids etc. IS: For instance, we could use help with mechanism for sub-committee reports getting incorporated into management plan.

Public Comment: Jeff Forward: Thanks to the committee; states that the town has procurement policy with \$ threshold. We may need help to write RFP. Josh could help us use this format. Discussion around whether bids are solicited first, then RFP approval by CC, then approval by Selectboard.

Recruiting new members: Review procedure (in packet) to review applicants and act on TC and RCC recommendations at September meeting. Strategic plan to recruit? Applications need to be in by 8/31. DS will write FPF post. CD is considering drop off committee due to her personal commitments. Has served since 2017.

Public Comment: Jeff Forward: Encourages social media post and public notice in a more welcoming way than the listing on the town website. Jeff doesn't think we can circulate google doc on recruitment. because of open meeting laws. Brad Elliot: Reviews by-laws for recruitment.

Filling other voids left by ACFC member resignations.
Identify responsibilities that need new assignments: Trail Stewardship Committee, Liaison to Velco, Communications, Land Acknowledgement/ Indigenous rights, and engagement.

Someone to work with Chase on TP? He has finished draft. Next step will be committee discussion.

Maple Wind liason - drop farm road for Velco Rd. Cecilia has contacted Wright Preston to possibly work on this. He has a lot of experience in this area. Maple Wind would use access road and Velco rd. Cecilia will talk to Wright about what he is offering to do.

Communication/social media. Someone should be monitoring gmail-Ian currently has. Ian will investigate town access to see if we can post directly. Daniel will volunteer to be interim director of communications Ian will talk to Josh about town website. We may pursue official voice for FPF.

Subcommittee reports:

A. Trail Stewardship Plan (Chase R.)

- Updates on progress by subcommittee: TSP was kept short and specific but does cover many bases. Tried to identify all the reroutes, put in existing logging roads, and skid roads as part of not maintained trail route. Question about what to do on farm road for now. Chase imagines TSP as guide we reference as we make plans over time. CD has a few things to add. JP: Seems like this could be a place where professional hire could integrate. IS: Hopes to see this as an instructional tool. CD: Ex: Monitoring will be transformed into plan with consultant. DS: Consultant could help with gaps and where we need help with more of a guiding document and template for management plan. IP: Blending hunting closure with trail closures to be Nov 11 to April. 1. Aligning closure with hunting closure, for fewer rules.
- Discussion of unresolved topics by full ACFC: CD: Land Acknowledgement and what to do after? Return language to the landscape. Main suggestion: name things like Abenaki would have – animals. Naming trails with Abenaki animal names. Interpretive signs – Radiate Art has given us rights to use theirs.
- Public comment: Brad Elliott: What if it trails committee and CC comment on TSP and add. Maybe recreation committee as well.

B. Comprehensive Management Plan (Melissa W.)

- Updates on progress and identification of key issues by subcommittee: JP: We are still working on some language. Ian has met with David Sunshine notes forwarded and can be incorporated into plan. JP will meet with VYCC. DS: Needing someone to bring sub-committee parallel processes together. JS: Think there is a good deal of overlap – possible to combine most items.
- Planning for review of draft by full ACFC: We will go through item by item at next meeting. Agree we will look at both drafts at next meeting. Bullet points about what each sub-committee is expecting outside person to do.

Discussion of timeframe and process for public review & comment on both subcommittee reports and finalization prior to incorporation in revised CMP: The two sub-committees might combine documents before next meeting.

- Assistance in adding revisions to MP prior to review by TC, RCC and VLT
- Assistance from town planner Keith Osborne
- Additional mapping needs – we need to identify these.
- Public Comment: Brad Elliott: buffers issue – there is a lot to discuss there. Upper trails plan encroaches on buffers. More has been learned since 2018 about zones of influence. 2018 and 2022 talk about “aspirational” buffer which is violated 75% of the time. The TSP has not designated a buffer number.
- Daniel Wolfson: Plan to discuss SOS connection is a very important topic and needs further consideration.
- Nancy Zimny: CMP sub-committee topic of Benefits of recreation – Nancy brought it up related to conservation not just recreation; but somehow this topic got shortened to just the benefits of recreation. Non-mechanized: Paragraphs are confusing – look at 2nd line. This is a truncated quote from CE. Nancy will submit written paragraph.

Cecilia moves to adjourn and Daniel seconds. Passed

Next meeting: Tuesday September 26th.