

Andrews Community Forest Committee
Minutes
Monday November 27th, 2023 - 6:00 to 8:15 PM

Committee members in attendance in person: Ian Stokes, Daniel Schmidt, Chase Rosenberg, Cecelia Danks, Melissa Wolaver. Quorum obtained.

Members of the public in attendance on Zoom: Marcy Harding, Nancy Zimney, Robert Low, Sam Pratt, Daniel Wolfson, Lisa Miller, Paul Hauf. Members of the public attending in person: Wright Preston, Brad Elliott.

Josh Arneson, Town Manager, in attendance during the first part of the meeting.

Appoint timekeeper and minute taker: Melissa volunteered to take the minutes. Chase volunteered to be the timekeeper.

Approval of minutes of October 23rd, 2023, meeting: Cecilia moves Melissa seconds to approve minutes with the suggested amendment. The last item in Oct. minutes changed to be under the section titled: "Discussion of site plan."

Additions/Changes to Agenda: Wright Preston will present his work re: VELCO. Agenda item "Subcommittee to draft site plan for trails" will be deferred to a future meeting.

Posted land between Valley View Extension and the ACF: Former committee member Nick Neverisky reports that the ACF access from Valley View Extension has been posted by the landowner. He contacted the landowner, and there is no longer access to ACF from Valley View Extension because people have been parking on the landowner's property to access ACF. We should note this in future ACF posted materials/signage.

VELCO report out from Wright Preston: Two legal matters Wright is reporting on that may need town attorney. Overview given by Wright: 1930-1940 VELCO acquired 75 ROW that adjoins GMP 75 ROW. They have right to get to public highway. They want to have deeded Right of Way (ROW) from route 2 to Powerline that is 25 feet wide the whole way though for about 2,300'. The 25' ROW would impact the parking area on Route 2, and Wright suggests narrowing the proposed ROW there, so we don't lose parking. VELCO has improved the access road the past 5 years.

Proposed ROW is 1.5 acre of land they want easement for. Fee of \$8000 to town is \$3.5/linear foot. Appraiser says value might be nominal because of ROW and Easement. Would VELCO enter maintenance agreement? No, they won't. Spur to Left contains remains of bridge abutments. Concerns about people getting hurt. VELCO wants to use them in future. Do they need to use old VAST to Valley View anymore? They are continuing to use but not maintaining. Do they have the right to use? It is outside of their ROW. They will have a lot more access than they used to have with ROW. They may use it to get to adjoining parcels. Re: Maple Wind

Farm – would they be interested in giving up old farm road in exchange for easement road to access fields? Perhaps. VYCC declined to give permanent easement to VELCO. Things we want to clarify and negotiate with VELCO? If we sign, we will need to be clear that it is a multi-use road. Should they provide with insurance binder re: leftover blocks for bridge. VLT has not been involved yet, but we will need to check in with them. Road easement is junior to CE. Wright to review previous ACFC meeting minutes when VELCO presented. Wright to contact adjacent landowners re: VELCO.

Application(s) to join the ACFC from Brad Elliott:

We have an application, as well as written comments from the public, motions by Richmond Conservation Commission and Richmond Trails Committee to consider with this application. Letters from the public regarding Brad’s application can be viewed in the “packet” for this meeting on the town website. Ian reads process for considering applicants after the application process was addressed at the Selectboard joint meeting. All three committees can send recommendation for any application for the ones they think are acceptable to hold their seat. If it is only one candidate, they must send review. For Brad’s application, Ian reads summary of Trails committee and Conservation Commission review of Brad - both can be viewed on the town website. RCC gave pros and cons for Brad, and Trails did not. Brad reads his statement he drafted. Committee members ask various question of Brad, and he answers in depth questions on a variety of topics, including his views on guiding documents for ACF and he addresses his views on ACF overall. Committee members are all familiar with Brad through his attendance at ACFC meetings and his advocacy work. Committee discusses the pros and cons presented in letters for and against Brad from the public, as well as their own support and concerns regarding Brad. Several members of the public attending the meeting speak in support of Brad’s application, and several people address the negative letters sent regarding Brad. Cecelia makes a motion to recommend Brad to Selectboard, and Melissa seconds. Daniel calls the roll call vote: 1 no vote (Chase) and 4 yes (Daniel, Cecelia, Melissa, and Ian). Brad will be recommended to the Selectboard to fill a seat on the ACFC.

Proposal for a writer to help revise our Management Plan, incorporating subcommittee recommendations and other revisions: Scope of project and skills/ qualifications/ experience required. (Draft RFP and Town’s RFP template in packet). Daniel is nominated to start work on RFP and Ian volunteers to work RFP. They will work with Josh.

Proposed signage for kiosk (see packet) (1) Informational Notice; (2) Map of existing trails. Changes for rules to be posted: Hunting before dawn and after sunset per VT State regulation. Bikes only designated trails. All trails to red multi-use. Daniel proposes motion to pass trail regs and map per the changes above. Chase seconds. Daniel calls vote passes unanimously.

Next meeting: December 18th, 2023

Motion to Adjourn Daniel motions to Adjourn Melissa seconds, all vote yes.
