

Andrews Community Forest Management Committee

Minutes of February 24, 2020

Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Chair; Wright Preston, Vice-Chair; Cecelia Danks; Caitlin Littlefield; Peter Halvorsen

Also present: Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper; Invasive expert Jon Kart

Chair Urbanik called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Forestry Action: Ethan Tapper further discussed a plan to harvest timber in the northeast section of the Andrews Forest in accordance with the new Forest Management Plan. His plan was to utilize one logger between three properties – PRELCO, the Andrews Forest and VYCC. Each property would need to have its own Forest Management Plan, forester and they could utilize the same logger. He noted that VYCC's FMP was out of date and would need to be renewed, and he was consulting with them on how to get that done. PRELCO, represented by Wright Preston, was prepared to move forward. Mr. Tapper believed that the timber harvest on the ACF could happen without the other two entities, however, he felt that a logger would be more interested in the combined job as it was more timber overall harvested from the same general area. The timber would be removed from all properties via the ACF farm road, although route details were still being worked out. Mr. Tapper hoped that this could start in August and may take two seasons. Some members believed that after one season there may be public opposition, and Mr. Tapper hoped to counter that with education on forest management practices. Mr. Tapper offered to provide some sample agreements or contracts to help the committee and Selectboard decide. The committee was overall in favor of the plan and this would come back on the next agenda.

Invasive Species Issues (plants): Jon Kart noted that there was invasive mapping for the ACF in place, and Peter Halvorsen said that he wanted to see a more detailed map of the invasive areas that would inform decisions on how to proceed with removal activities. He was working with Camels Hump Middle School teachers on educational activities and a density map would help with this. Mr. Halvorsen was especially interested in removal of bittersweet and barberry.

There was some discussion on the use of herbicides. Mr. Kart said there were two common ones, triclopir and glyphosate. A professional applicator might charge \$15,000 for a substantial removal effort. It was uncertain what support there would be in town for this activity, and the committee itself was uncertain on how they supported the use of herbicides. Mr. Urbanik suggested the full committee should be present before a poll was taken on the committee's position. This issue would be taken up again on the next agenda.

CHMS Activities: Mr. Halvorsen briefly updated the committee on the CHMS educational activity, which may or may not happen this year.

Parking lot discussions: Mr. Halvorsen provided sketches of parking lot designs that included space for a school bus to park or turn around, as well as formally designating parking spaces. The expanded parking lot was not significantly larger than now, due to constraints from wetlands, ledge and highway right of way. There was more discussion on proceeding. Mr. Halvorsen believed that only a zoning permit was required prior to beginning this work, while Mr. Urbanik cautioned that the zoning administrator's opinion was that a site plan was required. It was agreed that Mr. Halvorsen could submit the zoning permit but should have a discussion with the Town Manager and zoning officer prior to submission. Since the Town was the owner of the property, the Town would have to agree to an appeal if the zoning permit was denied. This would be taken up again at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.