

Andrews Community Forest Management Committee

Minutes of March 23, 2020

This meeting was conducted remotely, with the Chair, Geoffrey Urbanik, at the Town Center conference room with a remote option for the public and members.

Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Chair; Wright Preston, Vice-Chair; Cecelia Danks; Caitlin Littlefield; Peter Halvorsen; Jim Monaghan; Tyler Merritt; Ellen Kraft; Rob Peterson

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

Parking Lot Expansion: Peter Halvorsen provided several draft sketches on how to expand the existing parking lot. He had consulted with the Town's Highway Foreman Peter Gosselin who felt that the changes could be managed in house as opposed to hiring a contractor. The plans included a place to park and turnaround a school bus. Details were discussed and Wright Preston urged a waiver to the highway setback to provide for more parking. It was agreed that Peter Halvorsen would submit the sketch preferred by the committee for a zoning permit, however, if it turned out that a site plan was required, a waiver for setback would also be asked for.

Forestry Action: Geoffrey Urbanik noted that Ethan Tapper had submitted some sample contracts but still hoped to get going this year. He had not had time to develop one for the committee's review.

Invasive Species: Peter Halvorsen noted that the state has guidance on use of herbicides for invasive plant management, however, in developing the Invasive Species Management Plan he still needed to check with Vermont Land Trust on how they handled these issues. In a related event, due to the State of Emergency and school closure, the activities with middle school classes would not be happening in the Spring, at least. If in the fall, perhaps the idea could be better developed. Caitlin Littlefield explained that she was working on a deer density map, that could perhaps be modified for invasive mapping. Cecelia Danks noted that in the Fall she might be able to have some labor from students for an afternoon project on this. Peter Halvorsen explained he had hoped to map out 100 foot square blocks that could be systematically attended to for invasive management. He noted that hopefully some areas would be handled before logging, since logging tends to spread invasive plants by movement of equipment and logs.

Lower Trail RFP: Geoffrey Urbanik noted that the RFP was issued and the RiseVT grant would be invoiced. A pending Conservation Reserve Fund application would fill in the rest of the funding gap for the lower trail construction. Jim Monaghan noted that due to the situations, the completion deadline should be extended to August 1st.

Approval of Minutes: Jim Monahan offered a motion to approve the minutes of February 24, 2020 and was seconded by Caitlin Littlefield and the motion carried 9-0.

Other updates and concerns: There was discussion on the video conference format, which was to remain for the time being.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.