

Andrews Community Forest Management Committee

Minutes of June 24, 2019

Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Chair; Wright Preston, Vice Chair; Marcy Harding; Cecelia Danks; Ellen Kraft; Tyler Merritt; Rob Peterson

Also Present: Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester; Adam Piper, Vermont Land Trust

Most members met at the Andrews Forest at 6:00 PM to review the proposed layout of the lower connector trail and area of the footbridge. Wright Preston and Tyler Merritt led the walk and discussion. The location of the trail and foot bridge were approved by those present. Cecelia Danks had placed sample information items on the kiosk at the entrance, including maps, flora and fauna information and other useful items, which the board members looked at for comment later. Following the trail walk, the group returned to the Town Center Meeting Room for the rest of the meeting.

Chair Urbanik called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

B. Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester

Ethan Tapper presented a first draft of a Forest Management Plan for the Andrews Community Forest. This was not the same as the overarching Management Plan for the property, but specific to management of the health of the forest itself through silviculture. This would satisfy objective C in the Management Plan. Mr. Tapper explained how he had walked most of the forest and taken inventory of the areas which had been timber-harvested over the past forty years or so and how they had been managed. Choices could be made on how to manage these in the future for better forest health and maintenance of animal habitat. For instance, in some areas the understory was monocultured as Beech trees, and in other areas the deer were concentrating due to their preference of food trees. Future forest management could take these factors into account in management practices.

The Committee discussed the plan. Mr. Tapper asked everyone to read the draft and comment back to him. His plan was to share with the public, finalize and present to the Selectboard in the fall.

C. Adam Piper, VLT

Adam Piper introduced himself as the liaison for the Andrews Community Forest Committee, and primary contact for questions surrounding the conservation easement as it relates to activities in the forest. The group discussed whether VLT needed to sign off on certain items such as agricultural leases. Mr. Piper said that if they were listed as allowed in the Management Plan as approved by VLT then VLT approval wasn't necessary but it was always good to keep VLT in the loop for proposed activities. There was some discussion about how to proceed with approval of the proposed expansion of the parking lot and what other issues might need approval. The group thanked Mr. Piper for his time at the meeting.

D. Approval of Minutes

The February 25, 2019 minutes were approved by Marcy Harding, Rob Peterson, Ellen Kraft, Wright Preston, Cecelia Danks and Geoff Urbanik. The March 25, 2019 Minutes were approved by the same. The April 29, 2019 minutes were approved by Wright Preston, Marcy Harding, Geoffrey Urbanik and Ellen Kraft. The May 2019 minutes were deferred to the next meeting.

E. Kiosk Map discussion

Cecelia Danks discussed some of the items for the kiosk, in particular, how to show a map of the property and what would be included. The student who first created the draft map was still available, although not for long. It was agreed that the VAST trails would be shown, the preliminary trail would be removed, and no sensitive ecological areas or skid trails would be shown on the kiosk map at this time.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.