



OLD VALUES - NEW HORIZONS

WINDHAM FORESTRY COMMITTEE

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www.WindhamNH.gov/committees/forestry-committee

Minutes for August 12, 2016 (DRAFT)

Community Development Meeting Room

Public Invited to Attend

1. Call to Order at 1:05pm

- a. In attendance, Wanda Rice, Norm Babineau, Jim Fricchione (Jim Fr.), Brian McFarland.
- b. Jim Finn (Jim Fi.), excused absence

2. Next Meeting Date and Time: September 16, 1pm in the Community Development building.

Reports on Action Items from Last Meeting

3. Approve July Meeting Minutes. Norm motioned to approve. Brian seconded. Norm, Wanda, Brian and Jim Fr. vote to approve. Motion passed 4-0-0.

4. Pollinator Habitat Planting Project on Landing Status

- a. Norm and Wanda nearly finished raking the site. Overall, in good shape with raking and might do one last rake.
- b. Discussion about wording for the sign to be posted to inform no walking or riding over the cover crops. "UNH Planting Study Area" seems to be the best phrase.
 - i. Norm, Wanda, Jim and Brian vote to approve

5. McIlvaine Town Forest Entrance and Informational Signs Status

- a. Final Town Forest sign is completed and have 4 good copies. Signs will be attached to ½ inch plywood and attached to trees after predrilling to prevent the signs from splitting.
- b. Signs will be placed at Osgood Street, Settlers Ridge Road, Bayberry Road, and Weston Road.
- c. Jim Fr. attempted to remove the current Bayberry Conservation Area sign, but was quite difficult. There was discussion whether to install the new sign over the old sign. Committee decided to remove the old sign, but to wait until the new sign is designed and made. Jim Fr. will take a picture of the old sign and send to everyone along with the dimensions (e.g., size, number of boards, etc.) in the next few days
- d. Wanda will look into other options and costs for the new Bayberry Conservation Area sign (e.g., a sign made out of cedar)
- e. Tree farm signs – Norm has one of the tree farm signs. The sign is huge and probably cannot be used right now. The discussion to decide on specific location for the sign will be talked for the future.

6. Illegal Deer Hunter Activity Update

- a. We reviewed a few versions of a draft letter to inform the owner of the tree stand about no cutting trees and no baiting deer out of season.
- b. While it is the Committee's charge to protect the resources of the Town Forest, enforcement is done by the Conservation Officer, the sheriff, or the town police department
- c. There was also a discussion whether or not to even post the letter, because the activities have stopped. Alternatively, we could invite the hunter to share his/her experiences of hunting in the Town Forest. For example, is the hunter seeing deer, moose, and/or bear? What are the traffic patterns of these animals and what size of game is the hunter getting? If the letter is drafted and posted, the letter could be more generic and be posted to all tree stands in the Town Forest.
- d. Public Comment: In bylaws, mention the Committee will report illegal activities to appropriate authorities (e.g., Fish and Game, etc.). Also, public attendee saw moose scat at the Town Forest.
- e. Norm will revise the letter with a friendlier generic approach for our next meeting.

7. Recent ATV Use Update

- a. Wanda went out this morning (Friday, August 12th) and caught two kids riding an un-registered ATV in the Town Forest. Wanda informed the kids that it is against NH state law to ride without permission.
- b. There was a discussion around what is our recourse? In addition to the two kids caught, there were several others photographed on ATVs. The Conservation Officer recommends we refer incidences to the town police department.
- c. OHRV notice was updated on the Town's website and also, an OHRV notice was published in the Windham Independent over the last two weeks.

8. Forestry Webpage Review and Update

- a. Norm updated the Forestry Committee's webpage and this was reviewed. Updates include:
 - i. Removed old forest management notice
 - ii. New 2015 Annual Report was posted
 - iii. 2016 hunting notice was added
 - iv. New OHRV notice was posted

9. Volunteer Release of Liability Form

- a. Dave Sullivan is okay with the form, but people still could be official town volunteers
- b. Wanda motioned to use the form, Norm seconded. Wanda, Norm, Jim Fr. and Brian approve use of volunteer release of liability form. Motion passed 4-0-0.

10. American Forest Foundation Donation

- a. Committee would like to make a donation to the American Forest Foundation, but will hold off for the time being

New Business

11. Long Range Plan Review and Update

- a. Should start thinking about Warrant Articles
- b. Review WFC Project Planning

12. Fall Trail Work

- a. Weston Trail, stone wall work, easement improvements.
 - i. Do residents know about easement?
 - ii. How get authority to work on easement? Ask Conservation Commission? Ask Town of Windham? Board of Selectmen? Norm will reach out to Dave Sullivan.
 - iii. Upon getting authority to work on easement, then do friendly outreach to abutters with a letter or talk to them in person about cleaning up the regrowth of brush on the easements.
 - iv. Continue clearing Weston trail brush
- b. Start new trail from Osgood to Weston.
 - i. Maybe start in Fall, once hot and humid weather subsides
- c. Bridge over water toward Settlers Ridge by utilizing the bridge to nowhere
 - i. This could be a Scout's project
- d. Possible partnership with New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) to develop trails in the southern half of the property.
 - i. Public attendee Steve Pierson visited the Town Forest with Matt Caron, President of the Southern NH Chapter of NEMBA.
 - ii. Steve and Matt like the lay of the land and would like to make mountain bike trails in the Southern section of the Town Forest, where the terrain is "high and dry." The trails would not be done on the skid trails. Everything would be hand built (i.e., no heavy machinery) and would be pretty much all volunteer work (i.e., would likely take 2 people a total of 1.5 days to complete the trails). The trails would be sustainable (e.g., avoid wetlands, be maintained, etc.) and would be narrow trails to prevent access for ATVs. The volunteers would not be making the cellar hole trail, but might be able to provide some free advice and some free volunteer hours.
 - iii. Mountain bike trails are inclusive and similar to hiking trails, but have some unique features such as banks around the curves
 - iv. One major issue is that Steve and Matt need to better understand where the borders are of the Town Forest. Wanda, Steve and Matt might go back to reflag and show approximate boundaries.
 - v. Plan would be to get proposed trail with parking from Simpson cellar hole and then go to Selectmen with the proposed plan. Parking may require 4-6 cars at any given time and this could be a possible Eagle Scouts project.
 - vi. The next major issue for discussion was access. Access could possibly be done from the North along Spears Hill Road (a discontinued road) if the Simpson cellar hole route is not possible.

- vii. Next step is to take another look at the access points and terrain viability for mountain bike trails. Wanda wants specific plans before going to the Board of Selectmen. Steve will reach out to Matt and schedule another hike with WFC.

13. Begin work on bylaws. State regulations apply, but for anything else we need rules for the property. Brainstorm new bylaws suggestions.

- a. Preliminary discussion of bylaws.
 - i. Allow camping, but permission required. Fires would be prohibited.
 - ii. Add dog owner responsibilities (discussed leash laws)
 - iii. Hours of use (dawn to dusk)
 - iv. Include enforcement and who grants waivers
 - v. No hunting or trapping restrictions; except no target practice
 - vi. Reviewed fines, proposed adjusting all fines up to \$100

**Jim Fr. left early at 2:45pm. Brian motioned to adjourn, Norm seconded. Motion passed 3-0-0.
Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm**