

Conservation Commission Meeting

Tuesday July 12,2022

Present: Harrison Drapo, Chandler Engel, Brendan Barden, Ian Blackmer, Rachel Westbrook

Absent: Jessamyn West, Tom Harty, Emily Lewis

Called to order at 6:03

June minutes were approved 3-0 with 2 abstaining

Ellis Lot:

Management Plan: Brendan was in touch with AJ recently about the management plan. AJ is waiting on input from Donna Foster at VLT to finalize the forest management plan there. He may recommend thinning of the hardwoods there which may be allowed for wildlife management. Discussion of using funds to hire out for mowing or possible grazing service with management of pollinator habitat and invasives in mind.

Horseback Riding: We had some feedback on our survey about whether horseback riding was permitted at Ellis. It is not prohibited but is not on our current list of things that are permitted. People do ride horses on adjoining land/trails. We discussed improving trail safety with signage about trail etiquette and possibly updating language about permitted use for all town forest properties.

Action items: Brendan will follow up with Donna Foster re forest management and reach out to ROC regarding trail etiquette signage

Sayward :

AJ should have the management plan finalized by 7/15 and did think it was possible to move ahead on timber harvest/thinning this winter. Chandler raised the question of whether site improvements such as expansion of current parking could be done as part of the logging.

Brendan reported that Ridgeline did have a trail work day there recently which he was part of. They were able to create some bog bridges and a stream crossing with wood from fallen trees on the site.

We may want to have our next meeting there, possibly with AJ in attendance to view the site.

Board Membership

Terms have been updated for several members, but the website does not reflect those changes. Brendan sent the updated information to Jessamyn for updating the site.

Jenny is still planning on returning to her role but is not able to attend meetings currently due to work duties. Ian will take minutes for August and Rachel will do September.

Brendan will reach out to Tom and see if he is still able/willing to serve on the commission.

Other business:

Rachel raised the issue of invasive management at Ellis. We could consider reaching out to RTCC to see if it might be a good ongoing project for them. Further discussion at next meeting.

Adjourned at 6:43

Rachel Westbrook