

DRAFT Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday September 6
Sayward Forest on Tatro Hill Road

Meeting called to order at 5:50 PM

In attendance: Rachel Westbrook, Jessamyn West, Brendan Barden, Emily Lewis, Harrison Drapo, Ian Blackmer, AJ Follensbee

Absent; Tom Harty, Jenny Davis, Chandler Engel

Minutes from July 2022 were approved unanimously

After discussion a motion was made to recommend replacing Tom Harty on the commission due to lack of attendance and response to emails. The motion was made by Emily Lewis and seconded by Rachel Westbrook the motion was approved with a 6-0-0 vote.

AJ Follensbee, our Orange County Forester presented his forest management plan for the Sayward plot. It would include timber harvest of the red pine and Norway spruce with possibly some White pine in the softwood plot which is the northernmost part of the land closer to Tareo Hill Road. This was last harvested in 2015. He also recommended timber harvest to reduce white ash in the hardwood stand with possible harvest of some other species for crop release. Emerald Ash Borer could have a significant effect on the health of that part of the land if the ash population remains as high there. Harvesting it now would reduce the potential for damage and leave young trees which could repopulate the area and are not as attractive to the beetles.

We discussed timing of the harvest given that we are approaching winter. AJ felt it would be reasonable to plan for work next winter. This would allow him to mark the trees and have some time to plan some walks in the area for interested parties next summer. It would also minimize impact on the trail system and existing small trees.

Discussion was had regarding methods of logging and there are a few local operators who could do what is needed in the site. A negotiated sale vs putting the project out to bid would be preferable as it gives more opportunity for communication and oversight of the project. This was done in the prior harvest in 2015.

A motion was made by Brendan Barden and seconded by Jessamyn West to recommend approval of the forest management plan as presented to the select board. The motion was passed 6-0-0

A motion was made by Jessamyn West and seconded by Harrison Drapo to recommend allowing a negotiated sale of the timber from Sayward. The motion passed 6-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 pm

Next meeting will be Tuesday October 4th at 6:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Westbrook