

Readfield Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2018, 6:30 p.m., Town Office

Present: Greg Durgin, Jerry Bley, Tim Sniffen, Martin Hanish, Greg Leimbach, Bruce Hunter, Brent West, Andy Walsh

Absent: Robert Mohlar

A motion was made and seconded by Readfield Conservation Commission (RCC) members to approve the December 19, 2017 RCC meeting minutes as amended.

The **Augusta Water District Property** at Carlton Pond was added to the agenda by Greg L. and briefly discussed. The District may sell the property at some point to help fund other District priorities. The reservoir serves as a back-up water supply for Augusta and is not currently operational. Recreational trail development was not deemed compatible with the water supply protection goal of the property.

Old Business

Proposed RCC Budget Review – RCC members briefly discussed how money allocated for the “farmstead invasives treatment” line item will be spent. The focus of invasive treatment in this area will be around the old town farm foundation. The Budget Committee will review RCC’s budget on January 18, 2017.

Trail Infrastructure Replacement Project Status – Jerry B. will contact DEP to determine whether an Individual Permit is needed for any increase in the footprint of the proposed viewing platform (i.e., where the duck blind is currently located). A RFP (request for proposals) will be issued for local contractors or skilled trail builders to complete the work. DEP has required that work in/near wetlands be done between July and September to minimize impacts to wetland resources.

Vernal Pool Inventory – Bruce H. may finish the final spreadsheet data input. No further discussion.

New Business

Winter Projects – The Outer Loop Trail, linking the Jones Brook Trail and the Inner Loop Trail, will be relocated, with a footbridge crossing of a small stream/wetlands. Jerry B. will talk with Howard Lake and Jean-Luc Theriault (KLT) regarding the status of this work and whether lumber should be transported to the site this winter.

Review Open Space Plan – Tim S. discussed the need to review the goals in the Readfield Open Space Plan and the Comprehensive Plan (available on Town website). Brent W. volunteered to review the Open Space Plan and Tim S. will review the Comprehensive Plan for later discussion.

Proposed Solar Panel Project – Marty H. described the proposed solar plan by ReVision Energy. The Select Board had a preliminary discussion about the plan. The current plan would site the solar panels at the Fairgrounds property, north of the ballfield access road. ReVision Energy would install the solar array at no cost to the town for the first seven years. The Town could then purchase the facility once a profit is realized (7 or 15 years?). The Town is interested in the project to reduce its carbon footprint and energy costs. RCC members expressed concern about the project's location on a town conservation property.

Properties

Draper Property Update (next to Town Forest) – Jerry B. provided a status update, indicating that the landowner is not interested in selling the property. NEFF (New England Forestry Foundation) has the right to acquire a Conservation Easement on the property, which connects four, existing conservation properties (Readfield Town Forest, Rosmarin Property, MacDonald Woods, and the Stehle Property). The Draper family reserves the right for a building site and has recently expressed interest in having a second building lot. NEFF is looking to finalize details and proceed with the project. The provision of trail access will be important on the Draper Property in order to connect with existing trail networks.

Fairgrounds Property – Remnants of the grandstands were removed from the property and placed in the upper cemetery for later disposal. The work was completed by RCC members Jerry B. and Greg L. with help from a community service worker.

Readfield Town Forest – The forest management plan for the Town Forest indicates that 2018-19 tree cutting is slated for the woods near Jones Brook.

Torsey Pond N. P. and Fogg Farm – no discussion

Meeting Adjourned at 8:05

Submitted by Andy Walsh (Secretary)