

Readfield Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 15, 2019, Town Office

Present: Greg Durgin, Marty Hanish, Bruce Hunter, Greg Leimbach, Tim Sniffen, Jerry Bley, Andy Walsh
Excused: Brent West, Bob Mohlar (emeritus)

Pulling Stones Trail, Abutter Concerns – Chris and Per Olson, Dave Erb, and Maureen Kinder, residents of Old Fairgrounds Road, attended the meeting to express concerns about the proximity of the proposed Pulling Stones Trail to their residences. Chris Olson, whose home is located nearest the proposed trail, voiced concern about visitors coming too close to her home. Ms. Olson stated that the area has been a “hang out” for kids in the past and that kids have come onto her property. She also stated that the pulling stones may not be in their original location. Greg Leimbach noted that the proposed trail is sited in the original area where the pulling stone events took place. Ms. Olson suggested that some of the pulling stones be placed along the existing trail (MacDougal Trail) or in the cemetery with an interpretive sign.

Maureen Kinder and Dave Erb were concerned about the lack of abutter notification regarding the trail proposal. Mr. Erb was also concerned about unleashed dogs and dog waste on the Fairgrounds property, suggesting that signs be posted to remind visitors that dogs be leashed (unless under voice command) and pet waste be disposed of properly. In summary, the abutters supported interpretive signage regarding the history of the pulling stones but opposed the proposed trail location as they believe it may bring visitors too close to private residences on Old Fairgrounds Road. Jerry Bley indicated that the Readfield Conservation Commission (RCC) will discuss the proposal with the Selectboard (SB) and will only proceed with SB approval. RCC recognized abutter concerns and will discuss any proposal with abutters before proceeding.

Following the meeting with the abutters, RCC considered the following options: 1) take no action on the proposed trail, 2) present the trail proposal to the SB and let them decide how to proceed, 3) move the pulling stones to a new location and erect interpretive signage; and 4) build the trail as proposed (no gravel) and place “no trespassing” signage to discourage users from approaching private property. A motion was made by Jerry Bley to *“not continue with further construction of the pulling stones trail at this time and to consult with the town Historical Society about options (e.g., moving pulling stones to a new location). If moving forward with the project, RCC will bring options to the SB for their consideration. Abutters will be contacted after RCC consults with the Historical Society regarding options and will be notified before the SB is contacted if RCC chooses to proceed with the project.”* The motion was seconded by Greg Leimbach and approved unanimously by RCC members. Jerry Bley will convey the intent of the motion to the abutters via email.

RCC Meeting Minutes - A motion was made and seconded by RCC members to approve the July 9, 2019 RCC meeting minutes as amended by Greg Durgin.

New Business

Carleton Pond site visit is scheduled for Friday, October 25, 2019 at 8:00 a.m.; meet at Route 17 gate parking.

Torsey Pond Memorial – Milt Wright, KLT steward for Torsey Pond Nature Preserve, has requested that a memorial located at the corner of TPNP (adjacent to Rt. 41 and the horse farm) should be removed. The memorial, erected in the early 2000s, is not visible from the preserve trails or the parking lot, and appears to be degrading with time. Given the sensitivity of the issue and the lack of visibility of the

memorial, RCC chose to take no action. Jerry Bley suggested that if Milt chooses to pursue the issue, he and an RCC representative should meet with the Town Manager first, share our respective positions, and seek the TM's guidance on how best to proceed. Milt may also seek to have KLT make a formal request to based upon its interpretation of the conservation easement.

RCC has \$400 budgeted for new signage for the TPNP trails; signs will be wood with painted lettering.

Town Forest – An RCC workday to remove brush from the town farm foundation is scheduled for Sunday, October 27, 2019 from 9:00-noon. A field visit to the winter 2019-2020 harvest area is scheduled for October 18, 2019 at 3:30. Tim Sniffen will attend and suggests that RCC inform the contractor about needed road work, including the access road near the town farm (muddy section) and the center lane (Loop A), which will need geotextile fabric placed beneath the gravel fill to elevate the road grade. Also, will need to know if the road work should be done outside of the winter.

Tim Sniffen mentioned that RCC has \$200 budgeted for field maintenance. Jason Shaw, resident of Belz Road gate farm, has offered to mow the area. RCC agreed to hold on this. Also, RCC will request that the logging contractor move the large rock in the field to facilitate mowing.

Old Fairgrounds Parking Lot – The steep slope between the parking lot (northerly side) and trail has been filled to smooth the transition for walkers. The boulders have not yet been moved to separation between the new trail and the parking area. The former MacDougal Trail entrance off the southern side of the parking lot will be blocked with boulders but the trail itself will not be removed. Bruce Hunter will contact Brent West regarding any updates.

A Kents Hill student workday is scheduled for October 21, 2019 to add gravel to low spots along the Fairgrounds trails. Jerry Bley will flag the areas where gravel is needed. Greg Durgin will coordinate and attend the workday.

Meeting adjourned approx. 8:45 p.m.
Submitted by Andy Walsh