

Readfield Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 8, 2021, Town Office

Present: Bruce Hunter, Jerry Bley, Tim Sniffen, Marty Hanish, Greg Leimbach, Andy Walsh, Stephanie Donaldson, Lisa Garside  
Excused: Brent West, Greg Durgin

RCC Meeting Minutes - A motion was made by Tim S. and seconded by Bruce H. to approve the May 11, 2021 meeting minutes as amended; unanimously approved by RCC members.

**New Business**

New Ballfield at Fairgrounds Property – Sean Keegan (Recreation Cmte.) provided the RCC with an overview and concept plan for a proposed softball field at the Fairgrounds property. The proposed ballfield site is located immediately south of the existing baseball field in an area of mixed shrubs and herbaceous vegetation. A shallow drainage swale (wetlands, 7,800 sq. ft.) extends through the proposed ballfield site. The project would require a significant amount of fill to bring the ballfield up to a proper surface grade and would require filling the wetlands. The new field, as shown on the plan, would terminate adjacent to the MacDougal Trail with a steep slope ranging from 6-16 feet above existing grade. Existing drainage across the site would be re-directed to the west of the new ballfield and into existing wetlands adjacent to the MacDougal Trail. An existing stand of trees would be removed. The project also includes a basketball court whose location on the concept plan is tentative. Mr. Keegan noted that most existing ballfields in town are designated for use by school sports or are in poor condition. An estimated \$50,000 will need to be raised to construct the field. The Recreation Committee is anticipating that construction will begin in the Fall of 2021 and that the field will be ready for use in 2022.

Bruce H. requested additional specifics regarding site drainage. Jerry B. asked if existing culverts are sufficient or need to be replaced. Tim S. raised concern about the visual impact of the large quantity of fill and tree cutting needed to build the new ballfield. Mr. Keegan indicated that the existing trees would be replaced with new plantings. Tim S. suggested that the RCC review the Fairgrounds Management Plan for recommendations and information relative to projects affecting the character of the property. Andy W. recommended that options to building a new ballfield be explored; i.e., can any existing fields in poor condition be restored? Greg L. suggested the group review the RCC's mission statement. Lisa G. would like to see and evaluate alternatives to the current proposal, including restoring older ballfields. Marty H. and Bruce H. suggested a site visit to observe current site conditions and to discuss the proposal.

Honeysuckle removal, Town Forest – A workday to remove invasive honeysuckle shrubs is scheduled for Sunday, June 13 at 9:00 a.m. Attendees to meet at the town office and then drive to the town forest.

Comprehensive Plan Revisions – Bruce H. updated the group regarding the CP update, indicating that the committee will begin working on the agriculture and conservation sections (Greg L. has made good progress on the agriculture section).

Farming and Agriculture in Readfield – Bruce H. dropped off a map showing existing farms, agricultural lands, and tree growth properties in town to Ben Slayton, owner of Farmer's Market Gate in Leeds.

Long Range Plan for Town Conservation Properties – discussion postponed until we talk about the Open Space Plan.

Thanks to Jerry B. Marty H., Greg D., Stephanie D., and Tim S. for completing the drainage improvements on the trail at Torsey Pond N. P.!

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.  
Submitted by Andy Walsh on July 11, 2021