

Readfield Conservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2016, 6:30 pm, Town Office
Approved October 11, 2016

Present: Jerry Bley, Greg Durgin, Bruce Hunter, Tim Sniffen, Andy Walsh
Not present: Marty Hanish, Bob Mohlar, Beth Pritchard

Minutes from August meeting were reviewed and approved.

New Business:

Ball Field Equipment Shed:

After brief discussion, Jerry Bley moved that the RCC support the Recreation Committee request to place an equipment shed in the open space behind the home plate backstop, assuming the Rec Comm. obtains all necessary approvals/permits for the project. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Bruce (?) will inform Tom Donegan.

Erosion into Maranacook Lake by stream below Main St.:

Tim Sniffen reported for the Touisset Pt Road Association that road washouts at the two stream crossings of their road have occurred since the construction of the Main St. sidewalk. The new storm drains on Main St just east of Readfield Corner empty directly into this stream. The stream has risen so rapidly in big rains that it has washed out the road at least twice in spite of the installation of much larger culverts, sending much sediment into the lake and requiring costly emergency repairs. The road assoc. is reporting the situation to Cobbossee Watershed and Maranacook Lake Assoc.

The RCC expressed concern and suggested the road association seek advice from the Planning Board. Tim will report back to the road assoc.

Old Business:

Kents Hill School workday –

We are not prepared with projects appropriate for student assistance at this time, and so will not be doing a student workday this fall. Greg Durgin will notify Kents Hill School.

Fairgrounds Ballpark naming –

Greg Durgin reported meeting with Grace Keene. With her consent he will ask the Rec. Comm. to proceed with an application to the Select Board for the name, “Keene Community Field”. Greg may work with Tom Donegan on the application. The RCC also suggests that the Rec. Assoc. consider a plaque or sign recognizing “in kind” donors to the field construction, especially Lenny Reay and his family.

Readfield Conservation Lands Account –

The RCC feels that the established purpose of the RCLA has been made quite clear to the Town, and the process for using the funds in that account is simple and has also been explained to the Town. We will continue to use RCLA funds in accord with current policy, and will continue working with the Trails Committee as we have in preparing recent budgets. No new meetings about the RCLA seem necessary at this time.

Vernal Pools Project –

Although Amy Bley had to return to college before finishing the data compilation, it is possible that the Bleys will still be able to work on the project. Update in October.

Town Properties:

Torsey Pond Nature Preserve –

1. Camera surveillance parking lot – No new developments.
2. Major bridging replacement project – Jerry has not had replies from inquiries with several organizations which do trail-related construction. Jerry suggested we draw up descriptions of the work beforehand, and then invite the contractors to review the proposed work with us on site, hopefully during Oct or Nov. Then they would be better prepared to submit bids. RCLA funds would probably be used for this construction. To prepare work descriptions, the RCC needs to visit Torsey, Fogg, and perhaps the Town Forest. Jerry Bley lead person.
3. Milt Wright reported more broken bridge planks. Some of these may have already been replaced. Milt has applied non-skid stain to some bog bridging on the Orange Trail, and is purchasing another gallon to complete the work.

Fairgrounds –

About half the loam pile has been used. More is likely to be needed for other fall projects such as the ball field access road improvement. The fields have been mowed by the Town (thank you.)

Town Farm and Forest –

1. Mowing the farmstead area and filling low stretches of the center lane with gravel are apparently still on the Town to-do list. We do not think a reminder is necessary.
2. Andy asked about fill for low areas of the Town Farm Rd near the Macdonald property line. To be discussed with Kennebec Land Trust, probably Howard Lake.
3. All trail closure signs have been removed. All trails now open.
4. The former Stehle farmhouse and property on the east side of Belz/Town Farm Rd has been sold. The remaining acreage on the west side of the road

which abuts the TF appears not to have sold. We will continue to encourage open space protection for this parcel as appropriate.

Fogg Conservation Area –

Bob and Jeanne Harris (Trails Comm. Stewards) have re-routed part of the second trail loop to avoid erosion on one steep section. Our thanks!

Mill Stream Dam Project –

1. Dam stabilization: Jerry completed an application to the Ponds Foundation (MA) for a \$3500 grant, and to Kennebec Savings Bank for a \$1000 grant.
2. Representatives of the DEP made a recent site visit and indicated likely approval of the dam stabilization. Jerry hopes to have time to do the DEP application in about 2 weeks. The DEP referred approval of shoreline vegetation work to the Town Code Enforcement Officer. Gary Quintal, CEO, indicates the current plan would be approved.
3. We briefly discussed a stone walkway along the streamside at the base of the dam. It may not be possible to make such a trail handicapped-accessible.
4. It may not be possible to get the entire project approved as soon as this fall.

Miscellaneous:

There was brief discussion of the new ownership of the Mace sawmill (By-the-Board Lumber). Can they supply us with some of our lumber such as cedar timbers?

Tim called Keith Cowling, former chair of the Torsey Pond Assoc., and reported that members of the RCC have looked into possible continuing erosion from the Bellevue Farm property at Kents Hill as he requested. We did not find cause for concern at the time we checked. Darcy Whittemore is now the TPA chairperson.

We agreed to invite David Bagley to the Oct 11 RCC meeting for brief recognition and thanks for his many years of service.

Meeting was adjourned at approx 8:30 pm.

Submitted by Tim Sniffen, acting Secretary.