

Readfield Conservation Commission Minutes

December 8, 2015, 6:30 p.m., Town Office

Present: David Bagley, Jerry Bley, Martin Hanish, Bruce Hunter, Tim Sniffen, Greg Durgin, Andy Walsh

Excused: Bob Mohlar

Meeting Minutes – Readfield Conservation Commission (RCC) members approved the November 11, 2015 RCC meeting minutes.

Old Business

Mill Stream Dam Project – The highlights of the joint RCC and Readfield Trails Committee on-site meeting on Dec. 5, 2015 were discussed. Twenty-one people attended, including RCC/RTC members, neighbors, and interested residents. Jerry B. led the onsite meeting, which included (1) describing all potential project components while touring each applicable section of the project; (2) requesting input and other ideas, and (3) developing consensus on each project component.

Some general findings of the on-site were discussed including (a) providing visitor access to the top of the dam for viewing; (b) installing historically appropriate railings for safety; (c) leaving large trees on the dam intact (shorter-lived trees, such as poplars, may be removed); (d) removing invasive shrubs, and (e) avoiding or minimizing new plantings. How the railings would be installed and who would do the work was discussed. Greg D. contacted Larry Dunn and Jerry B. recommended John Cushing to estimate project costs. Jerry B. will meet with abutters of the project to notify them of the plan.

Next steps include presenting a definitive project plan to the Select Board for approval, submitting a PBR permit application to DEP, fundraising, and securing trail easements on private property. RTC will likely handle trail easement work. The greatest project costs will include excavator work and railings/installation, which is estimated to be \$5,000 or less. Other project costs include benches and wood chips. Most of the project costs associated with work (excavator, railings) will be on the town property portion of the project. Martin H. mentioned the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments as a possible source of funds for trail work.

Ballfield Governance Agreement – Greg D. indicated that a meeting with Ballfield Committee will be scheduled this coming week, to include members of the RCC, RTC, Recreation Committee, etc. Tim S., Bruce H. and Greg D. expressed interest in attending. Issues for discussion included the Ballfield Governance Agreement, gate lock, poison ivy, etc. The Ballfield Governance Agreement needs to be completed.

Fairgrounds Property - Jerry B. will contact Karen Peterson regarding whether the new loam storage site proposed by Jerry B. will meet with the Cemetery Committee's approval. Some funds remain in RCC's budget to cover this task. Greg D. will follow up with Gary Keilty (RTC) regarding the new culvert placed in the drainage swale (near property's southern edge) and what RTC's plans are for this area. RCC agreed that this is not a suitable location for storing the loam.

Vernal Pools – RCC briefly discussed the vernal pool spreadsheet and the Maranacook student who has agreed to help finish compiling the data (scanning forms, etc.). Greg D. will contact the student concerning availability to meet. Bruce H. suggested having Dan Meyer summarize his database efforts. Jerry B., Tim S. agreed to help transition the project to Greg D. and Andy W., who will work with the student. A meeting will be scheduled in mid-January.

Belle Vue Farm – No updates

RCC Membership – Martin H. announced a possible conflict with a teaching opportunity. Martin will know more by the January RCC meeting.

Town Conservation Properties

Town Farm and Forest – Jerry B. updated Adam Harkin of the 30 Mile River Snowmobile Club in Wayne regarding abutter permissions for snowmobile use of the Town Farm Road adjacent to KLT's MacDonald Woods. Howard Lake confirmed that the Draper family and the Kennebec Land Trust have given permission for snowmobile use of the Town Farm Road. RCC had earlier agreed to the club using the Town Farm Road if permission was granted by other abutters. The Select Board will need to approve final access.

It was also noted that the Stehle property (near the Belz Road gate to the town forest) has been sold. Signs have been placed to keep snowmobiles off the access road. Since RCC does not have authority to allow access beyond the Town Forest boundaries, the Stehle family, or new property owners, will have to approve access from the Belz Road gate.

Torsey Pond Nature Preserve – No updates

Fogg Conservation Area – Funds are available in the RCC budget for water bars on the new loop trail. Installation of the water bars on steep sections of the trail will be done by RTC or others.

Fairgrounds Property – Three or four check dams were installed in the drainage ditch above the ripped section near the MacDougal Trail. RTC believes this is sufficient for now. They may want to seed the ditch with woven mats.

Meeting adjourned approx. 8:25 p.m.

Submitted by Andy Walsh (Secretary)