



# Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

Community Development Department

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Planning - Zoning - Economic Development - Conservation

## **Horse Hill Nature Preserve Subcommittee of the Merrimack Conservation Commission**

### **Minutes of the Meeting**

**April 27, 2015**

**7:00 p.m. Matthew Thornton Room**

**Attendees:** Newton Coryell, Roland Roberge, Tim Tenhave, Peter Mikolajczuk, Lynne Wenz, Debra Huffman

**Guests:** Sharon Hickey, Cindy Glenn

**Call to order:** Chairman Newt Coryell called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Volunteers:** Debra Huffman did not have any updates on volunteers.

**To Do List 2015:** The committee provided a status update on the To Do list and removed some completed items. The new list is:

1. **Finish marking the HHNP perimeter.** Sharon Hickey and Cindy Glenn volunteered to help with this task. Richard Maloon and Tim Adams have volunteered previously. The committee needs to organize dates.
2. **Place better markers on existing trails:** Debra Huffman will put better markers on the bypass near Charlie's bridge.
3. **More gravel by Ryan's bridge:** Newt will do this in July.
4. **Culvert behind the Taylor's old house:** Roland and Newt will follow up with planning for this.
5. **Research improving the Loop trail from the parking lot to Lastowka Pond to make it ADA compliant:** Suggested by Tim Tenhave. Peter Mikolajczuk will research and the committee will discuss this at their next meeting. Grants from Moose Plates and slope issues are two of the items to be researched.

**Parking Lot Cleanup and Expansion:** Newt Coryell has started clearing climbing roses, other invasives, and dead trees. He will ask the town if they can provide a chipper. The committee will hold a work day on June 27<sup>th</sup> to work on this area. Debra will send out a request to the Friends of HHNP list.

Newt reported that the committee has to keep an eye on the pear tree near the parking lot. Last year it had Fire Blight. John Lastowka talked to George Hamilton to decide the best course of action. George suggested that the committee keep an eye on it for one year, and if the blight

comes back the tree should be taken down so the blight doesn't spread farther. The blight is already in John's pear trees.

Tim Tenhave asked if the committee has considered expanding the parking lot. Newt said yes, they are considering expanding toward Roland's house. Tim will look into hiring a wetland scientist to mark the extent of the wetlands in that area. Roland requested leaving a buffer of trees so he doesn't see the cars in the parking lot, and the committee agreed.

**Planter Update:** Newt stated that maintenance in and around the planter has been an issue in recent years. He suggested placing natural plants toward the rear and more controlled plants in front. He talked to the Garden Club and believes they are willing to take it on. Lynne stated that the Garden Club has their hands full and won't be taking on any new projects. She will ask the cub scouts if they might get involved. Lynne reminded the committee that there's no water at the site and suggested planting hydrangeas and grasses. The committee agreed that hydrangeas would look nice toward the back. Lynne will follow up by sending a design to the committee.

Sharon will continue maintaining the plants on the other side of the driveway. She will pick a date for a work day and Debra will email the Friends of HHNP list.

**Gas Pipeline Update:** Tim Tenhave reported that the MCC has hired an ecologist to do an environmental study on HHNP and Gilmore Hill. He will study the entire parcel looking at wetlands, various species of animals and plants, and rare or unusual habitat. He will study the pipeline area to determine impact. He has found a large number of ribbon snakes. He will be tagging and tracking turtles. He will be tracking certain species with radio transmitters.

**Trails, Trail Conditions, and Signage:** Roland Roberge and Newt Coryell will be building walkways for the wet area past post #3. They will build them at Newt's house and put them in when the land dries out.

Newt reported that he groomed the trails this winter, but the unusual amount of snow got ahead of him at times.

**Approval of Minutes:** The committee postponed approval of the minutes of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014. They will be reviewed at the next meeting.

#### **Comments from Members:**

Tim Tenhave brought copies of the Forest Management and Ecological Assessment, the Master Plan, and the Definitive Plan for members who didn't have them.

Roland Roberge expressed concern about the signs that Matt Caron put up this year, prohibiting walking on the trails during mud season. He thought it inappropriate that Matt did not consult the committee, and he questioned whether prohibiting walkers was excessively restrictive. The committee puts up signs every year prohibiting biking and horses during mud season, but has never prohibited walking. Tim stated that Matt is the MCC's trails expert, the MCC is responsible for HHNP, and they are accountable to the Town Council. It was agreed that the process for next year will be that at the HHNP committee's winter meeting they will appoint a Mud Season Advisory Group who will determine when and if trails should be closed.

Roland also reported that the bear is out again this year.

Lynne Wenz reported that John Manuele has a new fire prevention poster that he will give to her. Roland will put it up in the kiosks.

It was reported that Adam Jacobs is leaving Merrimack for a position in Goffstown. The committee expressed their good wishes, and stated that they had always had a good relationship with him and he had always been very helpful.

It was reported that the Watanic Bowmen will be having a shoot in May. Peter asked if Watanic can put up signs at the Quarry Trail near Naticook Road when they are having a shoot. Visitors who come in that way have no idea that a shoot is in progress and have walked into the middle of it. Newt will talk to John Hall.

It was noted that Newt, Roland and Tim's terms will be expiring in July.

Newt reported that proceeds from this year's snowshoe race, which were donated to HHNP, were approximately \$1,300.

**Comments from the Public:** There were no comments from the public.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held on Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup> 2015, in the Matthew Thornton room.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.