



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

August 11, 2014

7:00 p.m. Town Hall Memorial Conference Room

Attendees: Newton Coryell, Roland Roberge, Tim Tenhave, Debra Huffman

Guests: Tim Adams, Don Laliberte, Sharon Hickey, Richard Maloon, Cindy Glenn, Robin Rutchik

Call to order: Chairman Newt Coryell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Since there were so many guests, the committee and guests introduced themselves.

Volunteers: Debra Huffman reported that Matt Caron has mowed around the Spaulding foundation and surrounding trails. Newt Coryell stated that next spring the committee would like to do additional maintenance at the foundation, such as cutting the trees that are growing in it (being sensitive to any historic plants), cleaning it out, and repairing or replacing the fence. Tim Tenhave stated that the committee should speak with the Heritage Commission first. Debra volunteered to call Jeanne Powell, who was tasked with working on the foundation for the Heritage Commission.

Memorial Bench for Harold Watson: Newt Coryell reported that he, Roland Roberge, Matt Caron and a volunteer from the Sno Buds installed the bench by Luke Bradish's bridge. Newt distributed pictures of the bridge. The next step is to ask Barbara Watson if she'd like to have a dedication ceremony. Newt will speak with Barbara.

Riverside Christian Church Request: Newt reported that the Town Council has chosen not to place the request on an agenda. This request will not move forward.

Trails, Trail Conditions, and Signage: Newt reported that Matt Caron and his mother started putting up the white trail markers on the Loop Trail.

Newt reported that he improved the gate near the Watanic Bowmen property and it is chained and locked.

Roland Roberge reported that he has been trying to speak with someone from PSNH about putting a gate at the Naticook Rd power line crossing, but they are not interested at this time. Roland hasn't seen any obvious ATV damage lately, and Tim Adams agreed that the only ATV he has seen recently is the police ATV. The committee will not pursue installing this gate.

Don Laliberte reported that he repaired the walkway near Lastowka Pond. The walkway again has broken slats and there is also a break in the short walkway farther along that trail. Don said he will fix the new breaks.

Newt reported that a tree is encroaching on Ryan Sullivan's bridge. He and Roland will take it down.

Newt also stated that he has mowed the trail by the Amherst parking lot up to the pond, and he has installed a sign at the Lastowka well. Tim Tenhave asked about the condition of the trail and Newt informed him that the trail is in good enough shape for a truck to go from the Amherst Rd parking lot to Lastowka Pond.

Amherst Road Parking Lot Issues: Newt Coryell stated that the committee weeded the flower plantings around the Amherst parking lot sign (with thanks to Sharon Hickey for volunteering for this) and now has to decide what to plant there in the future. Lynne Wenz's original idea of planting wildflowers was lovely, but after a few years the weeds took over. Newt would like it to look like the other flower beds maintained by the Merrimack Garden Club. There was general consensus that the plantings should be low maintenance, similar to the plantings on the other side of the parking lot entrance. Newt will contact Lynne to get her thoughts on the plantings.

Newt also reported that the pear tree near the parking lot has fire blight. Bob McCabe, of the Merrimack Agriculture Committee, has advised that the tree should be taken down immediately. The UNH agriculture advisor said that the committee could wait until spring to see if the tree needs to come down.

The apple tree near the parking lot needs to be pruned again.

The pine trees are again encroaching behind the apple and black walnut trees and need to be cut back again. Newt will speak with Adam Jacobs at the DPW to see if they can pick up or chip the brush after it is cut. Tim Tenhave asked if there are wetlands in that area, and Newt and Roland assured him that the area was not near the wetlands.

To Do List 2014:

1. **Finish marking the HHNP perimeter.** No progress. Richard Maloon and Tim Adams volunteered to help.
2. **Work on new signs with GPS/mileage:** Deb Huffman reported that this is done.
3. **Place better markers on existing trails:** In progress.
4. **Make improvements near post #14 (top of Rocky Trail):** Matt Caron has done some work there, but it really needs a culvert.
5. **Erosion on the Loop Trail, past post #2:** Newt and Roland will bring in some fill eventually.
6. **Add stone from post #2 to Ryan's bridge, and after the bridge:** Newt and Roland will work on this.
7. **Culvert behind the Taylor's old house:** The beaver are making a mess of this area. It needs a new culvert. The MCC has spoken with the new owner at Taylor's house and it seems that they will be helpful. Newt will introduce himself to them. The committee might need to deliver material when the ground is frozen or very dry.
8. **Work with the NRPC on GPS coordinates:** Tim Tenhave reported that the NRPC would like to map all the trails in town, including points of interest and permitted uses.

Tim Adams will send his coordinates to Tim T., but the NRPC is looking for more precision. Tim A. will try to GPS the bridges, the well, benches, and so on.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of June 9th, 2014, were approved as presented by a vote of 3-0-1 with Tim Tenhave abstaining. Debra will add the guests to the mailing list for the minutes.

Comments from Members: Roland Roberge asked if anyone knew why the Fish and Game Department is visiting HHNP so often. Newt stated that they are just looking at wildlife and looking for active hunting and hunting stands. To put up a hunting stand the hunter has to get permission from the MCC, according to Fish and Game rules. Roland also thanked Newt for mowing around the parking lot.

Tim Tenhave stated that it has been 12 years since the first HHNP committee met.

Debra stated that she will not be working with the MCC to organize a bear lecture. Newt provided a "bear facts" brochure and it is now displayed in the kiosk, and the general consensus was that the brochure is sufficient.

Comments from the Public: Don Laliberte asked if the committee has a 'work crew' e-mail list, and volunteered to be on the list. Sharon Hickey and Richard Maloon also volunteered to be on the list. Debra will create a 'work crew' list and send it to Newt and Roland.

Richard Maloon stated that the trails are very clean, with very little trash, and offered compliments to the committee.

Tim Adams stated that he always gets good comments from the groups he takes out on the trails. He also said that he has placed several geocaches on HHNP, and there was general discussion about geocaching and letterboxing. Tim stated that the dog waste issue is getting better.

Robin Rutchik, who lives in Nashua, stated that she is new to the area and she is working with the League of Conservation Voters, which is opening an office at 266A Main St, Nashua. She would be willing to participate in a trash pickup day or something similar.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 10th, 2014, in the Matthew Thornton room.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.