

Wentworth Conservation Commission (WCC)

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting

August 2, 2022

Place: Wentworth Town Office
Time: 10:05
Present: Tuula Pihlajavesi, Vice Chair
Ilse "Izzy" Mercier, Secretary
Birgitte "Deda" Wilms, Member
Arnold Scheller, Select Board Ex-Officio

Vice Chair Tuula Pihlajavesi called the meeting to order at 10:05.

1. No changes to agenda.
2. Minutes of July 5, 2022 were approved by B. Wilms and seconded by I. Scheller with the South Wentworth parcel of Town Forest location corrected. That parcel is at the intersection of North Dorchester Road and Rowentown Road.
3. Discussion on 7/5/22 tour with Jim Frohn, County Forester and 7/8/22 tour with Alex DeLucia, AMC Trail Development.
All present thought the tour with Jim Frohn was informative with good suggestions. Findings of barb wire and charred wood suggest that there is both an agricultural and fire history to the property that could be researched.

The tour with Alex DeLucia gave the Committee much to think about. It was suggested a follow up call to Alex be done to request written correspondence with his thoughts on the 7/8/22 Town Forest walk, his enthusiasm on the project, and various levels and cost of having AMC involved with the project and the benefits of being associated with AMC in regards to funding opportunities.

Discussion involved the use of summer hiking trails being perimeter trails, only crossing the logging roads to connect trails. Logging roads will be used for forestry management every 10-20 years which would result in hiking trail restoration so limiting summer trail use would be cost effective. Snow covered winter trails could use the logging roads for snowshoeing and cross country skiing without restoration costs.

Tuula has offered 100 30-40 pound mulch hay bales that can be used on the Town Forest project. These will be stored and tarped on the parcel of Town Forest on Turner Road for future use.

4. North Dorchester Road parcel Map 12 Lot 2 1.1 acres
Deda's observation of the parcel is that it has value and would be a way to generate income. The land is at the intersection of North Dorchester Road and Rowantown Road. It has road and water frontage, area of large boulders and a flat area higher than the brook. If Deda were the realtor she would have to recuse herself from any voting regarding the property due to conflict of interest.
Questions raised of items that would need to be researched: is it in the floodplain, is there a right of way for the powerline, is it a buildable lot, choice of realtor, suggested pricing. To sell, WCC would need to present a plan to the selectman for approval to market and sell. This plan should state the process that will be used for marketing, how the funds would be used to develop the Town Forest in keeping true to the mission statement, and include the rationale for selling.
5. Turner/Buffalo Road Town Forest Parcel
A 1 hour walk about is scheduled for August 23, 2022 at 10.00 am.
6. Observations in Nature
The lynx may have been a bobcat but it was reported with tufted ears, bobtail and longer legs. Wildlife is active with sightings of momma bear and three cubs, a young lone bear, 2 herons fighting mid-air, a mangy, lethargic looking coyote, flocks of turkeys with chicks, deer, skunk, groundhog and barred owls.
7. Other business
The committee would be interested in the fall to take Arnie up on his woodland tour. The Historical Society has replaced pews with a table so if the Committee would like to use the space arrangements can be made.
I Mercier attended the 7/26/2022 Selectboard meeting to report on the meetings with Jim Frohn, County Forester and Alex DeLucia, AMC Trail Developer.
Town Funding discussion: An article requesting funding at March town meeting needs to be into the Town Office by December. Community awareness prior to town meeting provides transparency and educates them to the mission and goals of the Wentworth Conservation Committee. Opportunities for a poster board informational presentation could be the last Farmer's Market and Christmas on the Common.
8. No visitors present.
9. Meeting adjourned at 10:54.