

TOWN OF EPSOM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
April 15, 2021 - 5:00 PM

Members in Attendance: Alison Perodi-Beiling, Chairman; Chad Decker, Kate Champney, Cheryl Gilpatrick, Selectmen's Representative.

Members not in Attendance: Cal Preston and Sarah ***

Other Attendees: Mike Tardiff, CNHRPC; Scott Elliott; Meadow Wysocki, Joy Sheehan

Alison opened the meeting at 5:04 PM.

Master Plan – Natural Features Chapter

Mr. Tardiff attended the meeting and spoke to Natural Features Chapter of the master Plan. Cheryl submitted questions and edits to Mike and Alison previously and Alison also reviewed the document and will be submitting edits to Mike as well. The Committee went on to discuss the abundance of information that is in this Chapter and how helpful it will be to use in trail and easement planning, as well as future purchases to protect land and bodies of water.

Town Forester Management Plan

Alison reviewed the meeting held with the Town Forester, Scott Elliott, Cheryl Gilpatrick, and Cal Preston. The Forester reviewed his plans for establishing a Management Plan for the newly acquired property that has been added to the Town Forest, as well his plans to recommend Timber Sales that would include the timber from the current parking lot area. He noted that although the wood on the new parcel is not good quality for timber harvest, the previously noted areas in the Forest will result in some good Timber Sales for the town. The group discussed the area that could be cleared for the enlargement of the parking lot and possibly adding an entrance and exit to the parking lot.

The group also discussed the need to improve the Class VI Road and what the possibilities were for that to happen. The Town would not be able to improve the road as it is Class VI, however the Conservation Commission is hoping with some volunteers there may be a way to make it improved enough to use in the winter months. That, however, would also take some volunteers to keep it plowed. The Forester made some preliminary suggestions regarding the road during the visit.

The Forester should be done with his findings soon so that the next steps can be established but the whole process will take some time.

Alison also outlined the possible trails that could be made on the new property and noted that she spent several hours with the Forester walking the land. She noted there could be a new trail established to Neville Peak and a possible foot trail on the lower ridge. She described that she is very excited now to know that the Town of Epsom now owns, as part of the land the acquired, the second Summit on Fort Mountain! Once this is all completed this could possibly be an 8-mile hike for the visitors to the Forest.

Town Forest and Road Signage

Alison discussed the current sign situation for the roads leading to the Town Forest and what signs she is proposing to the Board of Selectman. Cheryl will bring the suggestions to the BOS meeting next Monday night. The signs include Children at Play and No Turning in Driveway signs for the Tarlton Road residents. Alison also would like to order signs for inside the Forest for some of the trails as well. Ms. Gilpatrick offered to make some nice wooden signs, one for the intersection of Center Hill and Mountain Road to replace the sign that someone took that directs people to the Town Forest and the Town Forest parking 400 yards at the entrance to Tarlton Road. Alison stated if that is going to happen, she would like to put up temporary signs directing people where to go. Ms. Gilpatrick will confirm with the BOS on Monday night that this is okay in the meantime. She will also confirm with Alison before Monday night to confirm she understands Alison's request.

Ms. Gilpatrick also asked that any signage that needs to be removed and places on the Roads be done by the Road Agent and he can be contacted regarding that. If it requires BOS approval, he will contact Ms. Gilpatrick for such. She suggested the best plan of action is for everyone to try to stay ahead of the seasonal changes in the signs so anyone visiting the Forest will know where to park. Alison stated this can be difficult at times and since she is in the area its easier for her to monitor.

Earth Day (Roadside) Clean Up

Alison discussed the upcoming Road-side clean-up for Earth Day that will run from the 17th to the 24th. The trees to be handed out have been available at the library, as well as gloves and bags. These are also available at the Town office and The Road Agent has some as well. The Road Agent will be picking up all blue bagged trash and bringing it to BCEP.

Ms. Sheehan asked about some bottles of liquid that she had found roadside on Goboro Road. Ms. Gilpatrick suggested that if they are bottles that have contents that are questionable that the Fire Department should be contacted. She will let the Fire Department know the location of the bottles.

Old Home Day – Meadow Wysocki

Meadow presented an idea to the Commission members about placing painted rocks in the Town Forest, which would be painted by children at Old Home Weekend. She outlined what she envisioned for a gathering at the Town Forest, after Old Home Weekend, for the kids to place their rocks in a small area in the Forest that they and others could admire their art in the form of the painted rocks. The idea was discussed further. Ms. Gilpatrick noted this would be a great opportunity for the Conservation Commission to provide Town Forest Information at the park the day of the event. Alison stated that she liked the idea and Meadow will work on the specifics after talking with the OMW Association about the idea.

Snowmobile Club – Chad Decker

Chad stated that he had attended a Fort Mountain Trail Winders' meeting to get information on how they handle a few things. He noted that they do mark the trails but have a difficult time with enforcement. They have posted new signage at the entrances to the trails in the Town Forest. Alison noted that the Town Forrester has made a recommendation on how those signs could be better posted using some plywood and she was able to get some plywood donated. Alison also noted that at one point she contacted the State Conservation Officer about some dirt bikers that were riding on trails that were posted as no access and he handed out tickets to them for riding on the posted trails.

McCleary Fence Project

Alison discussed her plans to contact the volunteers again to start working on the fence 'clean-up' project at the McCleary Cemetery. She also noted that Cassidy Brothers would be returning to the cemetery to follow up on the work they had done to the gate to see how it is holding up and perform any work that may be needed.

Other Business

Alison asked if anyone else had anything to discuss. Being none she adjourned the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alison Perodi-Beiling