



Mason Conservation Commission Minutes – D R A F T

May 14, 2014
7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

In Attendance

- Bob Dillberger
- Liz Fletcher
- Bob Larochelle
- Barbara Devore
- Anna Faiello

Voted unanimously to accept April minutes.

Met with Emily Messer about improving the trail on the Florence Roberts Forest as an equine conservation project for a Pony Club ranking. The north side of the trail is currently too steep for safe horse passage and Emily's interested in making it more accessible for horses. Unfortunately, that portion of the trail is constrained by a swampy area to the south and the property boundary to the north, but Liz suggested switchbacks might be an option. We also discussed adding a new trail on the southern part of the property. Bob L will mail a copy of the topo map to emmesser16@academy.edu.

Discussed proposed timber cutting on E-1 (McGarvey, conservation easement). Liz voiced some concern over the location of the logging deck; it's unclear where it could be located without affecting stone walls on the property. Agreed to ask to have replaced any portion of stone walls removed to allow access for logging equipment.

Received letter from Mr. Jim French (mentioned on last month's minutes), grandson of Charley Crathern, about C-27 (15 ac.), officially offering the parcel as a gift to the town for conservation purposes, to be given in memory of Charley Crathern, long-time Mason resident and town clerk (see page 2). The property is strategically located adjacent to North Bronsonland, and we're very happy to recommend that the town accept this generous gift. Liz so moved. Passed unanimously. Bob L. will convey our interest to Mr. French via email and pass on to the Selectmen Mr. French's letter and our recommendation.

Received four checks from Bill Downs in the amounts of \$922.15, \$29.32, \$2,281.54, \$1,613.83, all in payment for the Greenville Rd. view cutting. All four to be deposited in the General Conservation Fund. Also received an official "Report of Wood or Timber Cut" from Bill Downs. Bob L. signed the "Report" and put in the Selectmen's mail box for processing. Note: town agreed in August 2012 to waive timber tax for this cut.

Barbara reports Bob Bergeron says the new trail gates are done and ready to install.

Regarding access to the Quarry land, we discussed ways to deal with the water over the only viable emergency access: the old road into the quarry off Scripps Lane. Agreed we should engage the town engineer (Dennis Labombard) to assess what's needed here to keep the stream from flowing along the road. Bob L. will contact him about this work and ask him for an estimate for his services.

Removed about half the logs from the quarry proper this past weekend. Liz posted signs about regulations (to the extent we can do so without an ordinance). Thanks to all our volunteers who brought their muscles and heavy equipment. A lot of heavy wood was moved in the interest of safety and recreational delight. Looks like 1-2 more days of work to finish up. Tentatively chose June 14 as the next day to continue the task.

At Barbara's request, Bob D. agreed to an encore performance of the NRI presentation as a refresher and for the benefit of our new members on the Planning Board, ZBA, and Selectmen. Presentation is scheduled for the evening of Wednesday 5/28 at 8:00 PM. Barbara will coordinate the logistics.

Re. management plans, agreed to invite Dimitri Gounis, professional geologist, to our next meeting. Dimitri's interested in donating his expertise to our conservation efforts, and we'd like to discuss how he can be of service.

Bob L. reported he'd been contacted by PSNH about an old well on B-17-1 (part of the power line right-of-way). PSNH volunteered to fill in the well and we all agreed to allow them to do so. (Currently, it's a hazard.)

Mr. Robert LaRochelle, Chairman

Mason Conservation Commission

Mann House

16 Darling Hill Road

Mason, NH 03048

May 1, 2014

Dear Mr. LaRochelle,

We own a tract of land off Greenville Road (Map C/27) which has been in our family for many years. The property was bequeathed to us (his daughter and grandson) some thirty years ago by Charles Crathern, longtime Mason resident and town clerk.

We understand that significant acreage was donated to the town by Mr. Bronson Potter, and that our land abuts some of the Potter gift. We would like to propose gifting this parcel to the town for conservation purposes, with the hope that by adding this acreage to the Potter holdings, the viability of this block of protected land will be enhanced in some small way.

This offer would be in memory of Charlie Crathern, whom some older citizens in town may remember. He died in 1982. Charlie was one of five children born to Charles Frank Hill Crathern (who served for a time as pastor in the Mason Congregational Church) and Sadie Tarbell of Mason. Our family is proud of its deep Mason roots, and, accordingly, wishes to contribute to the town's well being by adding this land to its roster of open space resources.

If this is of interest to the Conservation Commission, please let us know, and we will work with you to take the necessary steps to convey. Best contact is Jim French at (508) 873-7147 or jim.french@state.ma.us.

Thank you for giving this matter consideration.

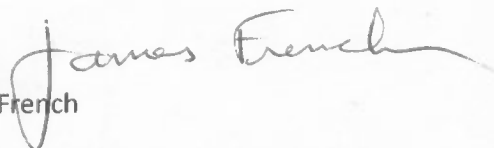
Sincerely,



Dorie French

21 Johnson Road, Sterling, MA 01564

Jim French



19 Johnson Road, Sterling, MA 01564