



Mason Conservation Commission Minutes – D R A F T

August 13, 2014
7:00 pm to 11:00 pm

In Attendance

- Bob Larochele
- Barbara Devore
- Anna Faiello
- Ann Moser
- Rob Doyle
- Liz Fletcher
- Bob Dillberger

Voted unanimously to accept July minutes.

Bob L and Jim French perambulated the boundary of the C-27 donation parcel on Saturday July 12th. They discovered a rare Black Gum swamp on the south side. Hemlock Wholly Adelgid was found in the same area. Preliminary map included on page 3 shows about 21 acres. No hazardous materials were observed during the site visit. We agreed to forward info to Selectmen to have the deed of gift prepared.

Bob L met with Jen, Emily and Lauren on Saturday July 26th to inspect the proposed Florence Roberts Forest trail addition which was flagged in yellow. Adjustments were made to take advantage of existing wall openings. The south end of the trail was rerouted to avoid wetlands and allow for future expansion.

Discussed bill received from Attny. Drescher. We still have not received the work product (easement review) for which we're being charged. Liz will contact Mr. Drescher to let him know we'll vote on paying the bill once the requested review has been delivered to the Commission.

Rob Doyle moved we accept the quarry ordinance as ammended and received via email on Aug. 13 from Charles Moser (Selectemen Chair). Barbara seconded. Decided by roll-call vote, as follows:

Barbara Devore: yay
Rob Doyle: yay
Bob Dillberger: yay
Anna Faiello: yay
Liz Fletcher: yay
Bob Larochele: yay
Ann Moser: yay

Surprise! Met with George & Kathy Schwenk, and Shirley & Bill Wildes. Bill recounted the discovery of a letter from Twig Jones to his mother, dated 1951, recounting a visit to the Mason Quarry. Barbara read the letter aloud, to the delight of all.

Met with Al Williams regarding work we've discussed along the RR trail. Al needs us to show him where the knotweed is on the RR trail. Al also described an offer from Amos White to do trail maintenance at \$1,000/day; Amos requests a minimum of 2 days work. Work includes ditching, grading, and related maintenance on a TBD trail portion. Also discussed placing a gate on Mitchell Hill land at Mason-Milford town line; Al said Winter Wanderers might be willing to install this gate. Al also asked permission to paint RR trail gates and add new reflective material starting at Morse Rd. and working north. Commission agreed to permit this maintenance (and thanks!). Al asked permission to install traffic control signs for snowmobilers ("Stop", "Gate ahead", etc.). Again, Commission agreed to permit this work. Finally, Al mentioned that town road snowplowing at some RR trail crossings produced piles of debris and snow that interferes with trail grooming. Commission agreed to ask Hightway Dept. to avoid creating debris piles at trail crossings (or make other allowance such that snowmobiles can pass without trouble).

Regarding access road upgrade at Mason Quarry: engineering firm needs to know if any restrictions apply to the method used to upgrade the culverts. We need to check with the Forest Society regarding easement restrictions; historical preservation considerations might apply. (Replacing stone culverts with contemporary concrete culverts is cheapest.)

Harry Spear spoke about the possibility of using skilled townfolk for work we typically contract to outside commercial ventures. Bob D. suggested we compile a list of local folks with relevant skills that we can keep on-hand for future projects. When work is available, we can solicit bids (or volunteer hours) from these folks as well as contacting commercial outfits. Barbara suggested starting a sign-up sheet at Old Home Day.

Barbara reported on prison sign making. They take custom orders only (no fixed price schedule) in aluminum or polyethelene. Bob D. will go snap a photo of an existing sign at Morse Rd. and will email same along with dimensions to Barbara who will prepare an order. Bob D. also volunteered to prepare a draft of an edited version of the Quarry ordinance suitable for posting on signs.

Discussed request from Jason Smith to hold wedding vows ceremony on Potter land at overlook on Greenville Rd. Commission agreed to allow the event with the understanding that it will involve approx. 25 people and the vows ceremony only (no reception). Barbara so moved. Passed unanimously.

Discussed the perpetual problem of dealing with invasive plants. Bob D. thinks we need to be more active in this regard, as the problem is getting worse. Barbara Devore reported on efforts in Peterborough where they have a subcommittee aimed at invasive plant control. They also have a guidebook for invasive plants, more targeted at the Monadnock region (unlike the UNH CES pamphlet which is state-wide). Discussed various ways to use the town website to support this effort. Bob D., Rob, and Barbara will discuss how to promote this issue at Old Home Day to solicit community involvement.

Met with Dave Baker regarding hay field. Dave reports problems with vandalism on the property. Dave proposed a simple sign as a first-attempt deterrent: "Conservation Land. No unauthorized vehicles. Police take notice." Dave also offered to speak with the police about installing a wildlife camera to identify perpetrators.

Dave, acting as fire chief, raised a concern about allowing camping at the quarry. However, discussion revealed the latest ordinance wording already contains the language needed to address Dave's concern.

Reviewed draft plan for Mason Quarry access road restoration from Field Stone Excavation. Looks reasonable so far. Liz will forward to Brian Hotz at SPNHF to check for restrictions on culvert repair (see previous topic).