

Johnson Conservation Commission...Nov. 12, 2013...6:30 at the Lister's Office in the Municipal Bldg.

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Jeanne Engel, Eric Nuse, Noel Dodge, Carley Coolidge, AnnMarie Bahr. Absent: Jackie Stanton, Julia Stanton.

Guest: Cynthia Perry

Gomo Town Forest

We voted unanimously to give a \$100 gas card to Roy Marble in appreciation for his brush hogging at the Gomo property. He experienced equipment failure toward the end of the job and plans to finish in the spring.

Diana Frederick's response to Eric's letter regarding the proposed new trail told us that the Green Mountain Club holds the easements on the Long Trail. If we send her our ideas about what we want to do there, she will discuss them with the Club over the winter.

Our biggest topic was how to remedy the damage being caused by ATV riders on the Gomo land.

Eric provided us with pictures of the damage; pretty impressive as damage goes. We discussed ways in which to lay out the new connecting trail so it would be difficult to use by ATVs. Unfortunately, Eric's answer to the question brings a new trail away from the best scenery.

Doug Molde has suggested the ATV Club be responsible for repairing the damage and maintaining the roads. Not doing so would result in road closure.

Our #1 priority was identified as the Town making it clear that the legalities of ATV use on Town property will be enforced. The Selectboard will be the ones who see that this gets done. Lawbreakers can be fined but it's not easy to catch them.

Creative ideas for ways to control included suspension bridges on rollers, strategically placed sharp poisoned sticks, somebody with a rifle sitting on the nearest porch, remote controlled pop-up barriers, and (my personal favorite) Noel's suggestion of an automated flipper system that would sense whether the ATV in question is registered. Problem solved, Let's eat!

It was suggested that we revisit the Management Plan as a routine overview. Ray Toolan could be invited to the Jan. Meeting, as he might have some ideas after the Selectboard has spoken.

Ash Borer Preparedness

Steve Towne, of the Village Road Crew and Village Electric, has spoken with Lois and wants to be kept informed of our efforts.

The Regional Invasive Insect Preparedness Team would like to form a working project that can be used as an example for towns in the rest of the county.

More outreach is needed. Will anyone from the CC help?

Journey's End Update

Closed! Finally!

We agreed that there isn't much major work to be done on the trail besides one bridge at the brook. Eric's idea to cut down the unusual brown ash at that sight to use as lumber was thoroughly trounced upon by the Tree Steward of the group. The Selectboard will decide what they want to do/pay for and we will act as decision makers.

CC Budget

The Town needs our numbers by the third week of December, so we need to come up with a figure that reflects trail building, Journey's End parking, and a bridge.

Wildlife Connectivity

Lois, Eric, and Sue attended a meeting in Craftsbury, along with Doug Molde and Kim Dunkley, and were tested for the limits of human endurance when starved and bored endlessly. No one would have guessed something as interesting as wildlife connectivity could be so deadly. Good thing we all brought snacks for the ride home.

The info, incidentally, was stuff we'd all seen before.

Grant for Inventory

Seth Jenson has suggested to Jeanne that we go through the Vermont Community Foundation for the Green Mountain Fund to obtain a \$5000 grant. Lea and Seth will help write the grant. We need to research matching funds. We have a good chance, as there have been no recent applications from the county.

Bird Count

It's official; we're on for Sunday the 29th of December with dinner afterward. The word needs to go out about feeder counts to be done by folks at home.

Miscellaneous

The JSC student's proposal that we establish a community garden on the Prindle property will be gently rejected. It's just so environmentally unfriendly to cut down all the trees to grow zucchini.

Lois was on the original committee of nine who wrote the would-be ordinance controlling ATV activity that was voted down in favor of opening class 3 and 4 roads to ATVers. Nice work, Blaine Delisle.

Some members identify our # 1 priority to be cookies.

Adjourned at 8:15. Next meeting at the Library on Dec. 17, 2013 at 6:30.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary

Selectboard Meeting, Nov. 12, 2013, right after the CC meeting.

Eric Nuse presented photos and a request for action on the Gomo roads. Turns out, some years back the Selectboard gave permission to the ATV Club to start a second road after they ruined Coddling Hollow Rd., so technically they had the right to be on town land off the road. Not so for the third and current road. According to the State, ATVs can use all class 4 roads. The Board will look into the legalities surrounding the issue.

Doug Molde suggested that the members visit Gomo to see the damage firsthand.

Gary Nolan, who heads up the ATV Club, does want to work with the CC and will attend a meeting to discuss it.

Johnson Recreation may be interested in helping develop trails.