

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of August 23, 2023

- I. **ROLL CALL.** Nigel called the meeting to order at 6:07, all members attending with exception of Mo.
- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** July 26, 2023, Ruth moved, 2nd by Jeremy, unanimously approved.
- IV. **DISCUSSION**
 - a. **Dog River Park Committee: Discussion of Proposed Maintenance Plan:** Bonnie Donahue attended to discuss the maintenance plan for the park. Town is in charge of maintenance for the park. David suggests that the DRP committee review the work performed by the town and clarify what work will be done by volunteers. Perhaps a one page document on key points for town workers could be created. We would like to endorse the maintenance plan at the next meeting so NCC members have time to review. Ruth would like to know what amount, in addition to what is in the budget, is needed for special projects, i.e., mulching trees. It is important to post this document on the town website and publicize the effectiveness of the park in the recent flooding.
 - b. **Town Forest Stewardship Committee (TFSC)** The group did not meet in August.
 - 1. **Town Forest Trails – Closures/Repairs:** One workday took place adding water bars.
 - 2. **Ski Trail Proposal:** Backcountry skiers request a 60 ft. corridor along the boundary line of the town forest from the Paine Mtn summit. Light pruning would be necessary. This trail does not impact wildlife in this area. Next meeting, we will review the recommendation of the TFSC regarding this trail, but comments were generally supportive. The proponents of this ski corridor would like approval by NCC and TFSC.
 - 3. **Other Business:** Caroline has stepped down from the TFSC, leaving a vacancy.
 - c. **Report of Working Group on Forest Uses and Town Forest Stewardship Plan:** the working group has not met to propose edits. Maybe an addendum will be an easy way to do this.
 - d. **Collective Purchasing of Bare Root Tree Stock:** Ruth suggests that this may be a good option in future years. It would be helpful to have a tree plan. A bare root tree planting in a riparian area might be a good way to engage the community.
- V. **UPDATES**
 - a. **VOREC Grant:** A 2nd estimate to create parking spaces at the Shaw Outdoor Center is needed as well as determining if an act 250 amendment is required for this work. Maps look good. The group would like the TFSC and NCC to suggest information to be included on the map. Debbie will attend a meeting of the TFSC to review the maps.
 - b. **New Tree Planting Grant:** A grant from Urban and Community Forestry for \$4,000 with a \$2,000 match should fund 7-10 trees. Additional planting will occur at the Falls field, continuing the planting scheme established there.

- c. **Reports on Flood Damages and Restoration:** In October we will invite Brian Voight from CVRPC to join our meeting to review funding opportunities for flood restorations. Will Eldrige gave a talk highlighting culvert replacement and outcomes that might be appropriate for our group.
- d. **High School Trails System:** discuss at next meeting

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED) None

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. We have not heard back from the Planning Commission regarding our letter that asked for a town forest zoning change. Jeremy, David and Nigel, may attend the next meeting of the PC on Sept. 6th to ask for an update.
- b. Sept. 19th is “Night on the Common.” VOREC maps would be of interest to the community. Nigel will attend. Suggestion to ask Mo if she could do this as well.

VIII. TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING (September 27, 2023)

- a. **Town Forest Conservation Easement – Working Group:** Nigel, Russ and Laura Hill-Eubanks are the working group for this effort.
- b. **Vote on DRP maintenance plan.**
- c. **TFSC position on new ski trail.**
- d. **High School trails update.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT: 8:08, David moved, Jeremy 2nd, meeting adjourned.

**Deborah Zuaro
Secretary, NCC**