

TEMPLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes, December 9, 2020

Location: Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Attendees: Sean Radcliffe, Scott Hecker, Carol Mamczak, Cathy Joly, Mike Madden

Absent: Adie Krulis, Honey Hastings, Lincoln Geiger

Guests: Eric Foley

Started at 7:05 pm

1. Roll call attendance: Scott Hecker, Mike Madden, Carol Mamczak, Sean Radcliffe, Cathy Joly, and guest Eric Foley.
2. Carol moved to accept the minutes of the November 11, 2020 meeting, Mike seconded. Roll call vote: Sean yes, Scott yes, Mike yes, Carol yes, Cathy yes.
3. Handicap-accessible trail: Vivian looked at Monadnock Conservancy trails that used handicap accessible material, some type of stone dust; the Conservancy is excited about Vivian's proposed trail.
4. 2021 Budget: Mike and Scott proposed a budget to the Budget Committee to cover our normal yearly expenses plus trail work, newsletter, and initial work on updating our Natural Resource Inventory.
5. Natural Resource Inventory (NRI): Scott spoke with Henry Underwood from the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) about updating our NRI; Henry suggested this would cost \$2,000-\$3,000 at least. Scott also inquired if the NRI included regulatory information, but it does not - the NRI includes things like existing species, acreage, wetlands, and maps. A graduate student from Antioch created Temple's original NRI. Discussion included stretching this work and expense over two years, determining a schedule for updating our NRI and informing the town so they can plan for this recurring expense, doing a gap analysis of our NRI versus others. *Carol will look for Rindge's NRI and Scott will look for Mason's and Hancock's NRI.* The SWRPC NRI is on their website at swrpc.org then click on "Natural Resources" at the top of the page. *All members will review Temple's NRI and summary prior to our next meeting. Cathy will ask Temple's Planning Board if there is a deadline for updating the NRI and summary.*
6. Town Forest: Maple sugaring contract with Ben's Sugar Shack - discussion included the impressive level of detail in the NH Forest Society's sugaring contract and the fact that they have a forester who monitors the sugaring operation to ensure that best practices are used; the Forest Society's level of management is too burdensome for us and is beyond our knowledge; a simpler contract for the existing taps could include a minimum fee

plus a per-tap fee; the desire to support a local business; the difficulties we have had in prior communications with Ben Fisk, his unresponsiveness in addressing our concerns in a timely way while he was under contract and afterwards; the desire to keep the town forest natural; in the future if we choose to use the Town Forest as an example for landowners, sugaring could be a part of that. Mike made a motion that we decline to enter into a contract with Ben's Sugar Shack to tap the Town Forest land managed by the Conservation Commission of Temple, and request that Ben remove all of his property from the Town Forest by February 1, 2021. Sean seconded. Roll call vote: Scott yes, Sean yes, Carol yes, Mike yes, Cathy yes. *Scott will send this in a letter to Ben, copying the Select Board.*

7. Town Forest Plan: Eric shared two of his updated maps (attached); everyone agreed that they are easy to understand and look great. Eric noted that some of the colors are difficult to discern when printed on his home printer. Eric does not expect to have the plan completed by the end of the year. *Eric will email a completed draft by January 6, 2021 to the Con Com members, and members will review it prior to the January 13 meeting.* Eric asked about our goals for the forest; discussion centered on recreational and educational; not big enough to justify financial gain from logging. Eric mentioned the key upcoming issues: the health of Ash and Hemlock. It was reiterated that taking down all Ash trees, for example, was not wise because some trees might have the genetics to resist Emerald Ash Borer. Mike asked about preemptively treating Ash trees; Eric said we might consider it for a few trees next to the road, but it is expensive and not practical for treating the entire forest. The same is true for Hemlocks and Woolly Adelgid.
8. Town Land Research Committee: Scott shared that at the December 3 meeting, they voted to recommend that the Conservation Commission establish a conservation easement on part of lot 7-35 - specifically, from the stonewall on the South side of the old schoolhouse to the northernmost point. Discussion included whether the town would hold the easement, reaching out to Monadnock Conservancy to ascertain their interest, asking the town to pay for easement costs and surveying costs to change the lot line because this is the town's request, and whether the lot's deed stipulates that no development is allowed. *Carol will verify the contents of the deed.*
9. White-Pratt easement walk: Sean walked the farm and found no problems; owners are improving some trails that are being eroded; Sean will provide a copy of the easement to the owners at their request.
10. Commission Membership: We need all members to be active, so *Scott will follow up with members who have missed meetings. Scott has one candidate for a new member and will reach out.* Carol confirmed that we can have up to 7 regular members plus alternate members.

The group adjourned at 8:35 pm. The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 7:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Cathy Joly.

Italics above indicate tasks to be done.

Attachments: Eric Foley's example maps for updated Town Forest Plan

