

TEMPLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of Special Public Meeting, December 17, 2012

Attendees: Eric Foley, Honey Hastings, Bruce Kantner, John Kieley ,Sean Radcliffe,
Dave Repak
Absent: Lincoln Geiger,

Opening at 6:30 pm

Report on Maple Tap Lines in Town Forest: Dave and John reported that when they walked the Town Forest a few weeks ago with members of the Land Committee of the Monadnock Conservancy they all were surprised and concerned to see a maze of maple tap lines, operated by Ben Fisk, throughout much of the forest and crossing trails in 8-10 places. Eric showed members an aerial photo and map with the main tap lines indicated. This situation makes the trails less welcoming for walkers and impossible for horse riders.

Bruce brought a copy of the letter the TCC sent to Ben Fisk on June 30, 2008, granting him rights to tap the trees with the expectation that he “remove his tap lines from any walking trails at the end of the sugaring season; communicate with the TCC when the season is over; and donate a gallon of syrup to a Town cause, to be determined by the TCC.” Members noted that these conditions have not been fulfilled, and the lines have been extended into the interior of the Town Forest to an extent that was not anticipated.

Discussion of tap lines: Members reaffirmed that they like having Ben using the trees along the road, and perhaps somewhat into the forest, for his “agricultural” purposes. This is part of the TCC’s mission in supporting local agriculture and related businesses. There was discussion about setting up policies for the use of the Town Forest that would balance sustainable timber harvesting, maple sugaring, and recreation uses. Eric added some of his research findings from his Town Forest Project, which he will present in a public meeting this winter. Appropriate uses of Town properties for local private enterprise were also considered.

Next Steps: Members would like to meet with Ben at the next scheduled meeting on January 14th. *John will draft a letter to Ben, Bruce will edit it if necessary, and Dave will sign it as the Vice Chair and mail it to Ben, giving his phone number as a reply contact.* Members want to discuss the original agreement and their tapping expectations with Ben to see what changes would work for Ben in carrying out the 2008 agreement, a time table for these, and how communication could be improved on a regular basis. Members are hopeful that Ben will respond positively and come with fresh ideas to the January 14th meeting.

Meeting ended at 7:12 pm.

The next meeting is on Monday, January 14, at 6:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Bruce Kantner. *Italics* above indicate tasks to be done or motions.