

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
Town Forest Stewardship Committee
Minutes of June 18, 2024

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Jeremy Whalen, Ginny Kunkel, Russ Barrett, Andrew Padilla, Colin Blackman, Dayton Crites (MABA)
- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED): Dayton Crites, MABA, Ridgeline trail discussion**
 - a. MABA currently helps maintain trails at Irish Hill and North Branch in Montpelier
 - b. MABA is interested in restoring a ridge trail to connect Irish Hill and Paine Mountain. 2 private landowners would need to consent.
 - c. MABA's purpose for tonight's visit was to gauge the TFSC's interest in supporting this proposal.
 - d. MABA has met with the Berlin Conservation Commission (BCC) and Dayton's take was they were lukewarm on the proposal. Their main concern was potential E-bike usage from Paine since Norwich allows class 1 E-bikes on their network.
 - e. MABA is not looking to build berms or jumps on this connector just a flat rolling trail to get between the two networks.
 - f. Went to open discussion between Dayton and TFSC members.
 - i. Discussed the trail usages as multiuse and built to withstand storm event runoff.
 - ii. Maintenance would be discussed through the approval process, but MABA hoped to have some support/partnership from TFSC given the distance from Montpelier
 - iii. MABA has not had a conversation with private landowners yet.
 - iv. MABA could use support in facilitating conversations with BCC and private landowners
 - v. Russ thought it was important to keep as a connector trail and not as a way to expand trail network.
 - vi. Jeremy commented on concerns of rare and threatened plant species known to be in the proposed area. Dayton said their next step would be to use ANR's Bio-finder and locate sensitive area's to avoid them.
 - vii. Andrew commented that we should also discuss with VAST and a discussion on E-bikes and motorized vehicles continued.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 16th, 2024 (Approved 6-0)**

IV. UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

a. Shaw center update

- i. ARPA funds for disc golf approved. Design work to begin in July. Install next spring.
- ii. FEMA grant for landslide behind Shaw was ineligible for FEMA funds unless a tie to education uses is made. Looking for public educational use of Shaw center area for funding
- iii. Trail counter on Kingston installed
- iv. Waiting for lock and chain from Jeff to close and lock gate on Kingston Rd.
- v. Andrew has new etiquette sign draft.
- vi. NU is going to hire someone to mow the trail network again this year. Hopefully not clear cut like last year
- vii. Andrew submitted the Town volunteer form. May need help getting town to recognize what to do with them
- viii. VOREC trail survey is posted around the property.
- ix. Almost done signing trails with markers

b. HS trails working group

- i. ARPA grant application update, being taken up by SB on 6/25/2024
- ii. Working with VYCC to clean up Garvey Hill and Paine Mtn Trails

c. Audubon Society and Cheney Field plan

- i. Jeremy and Ginny will be working together on Cheney field plan
- ii. Updates to the Audubon plan would be free

d. Town forest plan update

- i. Russ should have more details by next month. He has meetings with some folks that he has been waiting to hear back from.

e. Ridgeline trail discussion: No further discussion.

V. Public Participation (Unscheduled): None

VI. Other Business

- a. Ginny asks about Turkey Hill Road access. Russ explains it is a class 4 road up to the gate, then 3-500 yards beyond.
- b. Jeremy updates group of VOREC funding for outdoor programming.
- c. Ginny wants to thank Nelson for all his sawyer work on the trails

VII. Adjournment: 19:10