

**Town Forest Committee
Minutes
June 7, 2013**

Present: Sue Barnett, Peter Brewer, Paul Doucette, Shirley Smith and Bill Dakai

The meeting was called to order at 10:20 AM.

Peter made a motion to approve the minutes from May 3, 2013. Paul seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.

Members were introduced to a Susan Barnett and welcomed her to the committee. Sharon had left the committee and Sue would be taking her place.

Map Showing Conservation Lands

Shirley passed out copies of a map that showed conservation lands, Southwick Zoo property, and undeveloped lands abutting or in proximity to the Mendon Town Forest. This included the 175 acre Cormier Woods and 61 acre Meadow Brook Woods. Shirley pointed out a 60 acre undeveloped parcel off Chapin Street that had just come on the market. She related how Anne Mazar had been meeting with the Uxbridge Conservation Committee, had walked the land, and were working to find a way to buy it for conservation. Twenty acres of the land was in Mendon and could be purchased with CPA funds. Peter wondered who owned the tract between Asylum Street and Millville Road. Shirley said it might be helpful to have enlargements made of the map and she would bring them to the next meeting.

Department of Recreation and Conservation (DCR) Grant

Shirley passed out copies of what she had done so far on the application. There had been an objection to the inclusion of snowmobile use so the committee agreed on changing that section from Combination of Users to Non-Motorized Users. The committee reviewed the list of user groups that would benefit from the project. Shirley didn't understand how to answer a question relating to the Topographic Quadrangle Number but Paul produced a map with that information. Sue asked about the deadline for the application and Shirley said she thought it was at the end of the year but would check with Amanda Lewis of DCR to be certain. She also wanted to clarify exactly at what point in the process work would count toward the 20% matching part of the grant. DCR allowed \$26 per hour for this labor.

Trail Map

Bill laid out the quite impressive trail map he had been working on. Such a map was a requirement for the grant application. It had 7 color coded trails plus the main trail, 10 points of interest, 3 informational kiosks, locations of 24 trail signs, 2 parking signs and 9 forest boundary signs. Shirley had concerns about one trail that crossed wetlands but Bill said the trail was on a ridge and was not actually in proximity to the wetlands.

Proposed Parking Areas

Shirley and Paul told the committee how they had gone up to the tower and laid out a parking area for cars. Two picnic tables would be placed nearby. Several days later they had returned

with Bill who agreed that it was a good location for parking. There was not, however, enough room for horse trailers so Bill showed them a spot further up the trail towards the dance hall that could be designated for the trailers.

These parking areas would be pervious and Bill would meet with Mike Salvador, a local contractor, to get an estimate of the cost. Mike would also include some trail repair in his estimate.

Gates

The subject of gates was discussed. The purpose of having gates at the entrances was to keep out teenagers who liked to drive up Tower Road and build camp fires. Not only did this increase the risk of forest fires but they would leave their trash. Bill described how he had picked up large numbers of beer cans. Another factor was that the main trails could be accessed off Tower Road and motorized vehicles could be destructive to those trails.

The estimates for all of the above: signs, kiosks, parking area construction, gates and other items would be an essential part of the grant application.

Peter made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Paul seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Smith