

Minutes of the Sugar Hill Conservation Commission

Date 8/18/2016

Start Time 6:14

Adjournment time 6:33

Attending Members

Kathy Galligan

William Fraser

Tim Williams

Accepted the minutes of 7/21/2016 meeting unanimous

Coffin Conservation Area sign.

Resolved that the Coffin family may place a small plaque near (but not on) the official NH Fish and Game sign stating the area is in memory of Joseph Coffin with a few words concerning Mr. Coffin. Plaque to be less than 1 foot square. Without additional confirmation no mention is to be made of Coffin family donation of land as NH Fish and Game states there is no record of Coffin ownership of the land. Town of Sugar Hill will move a boulder to area desired by Coffin family without charge. Plaque and installation on boulder to be funded by Coffin family. Unanimous MARGO CONNORS to contact Coffin family concerning plaque.

Phillip Robertson Town Forest.

Report by T. Williams on progress of recreational trail in town forest. Report appended to these minutes.

TIM WILLIAMS to contact town office re: funding for remaining work to be done by BEN HUDSON. Do we need to have a hearing on funding to complete work?

KATHIE GALLIGAN will look into brochure of trail to be made by Profile High School student.

Next meeting Sept 15 at 6:00 PM

TW report on forest trail.

Phillip Robertson Town Forest

Site visit with Ben Hudson to set route for recreational trail in forest

Aug 18, 2016

Spent a productive 2 hours walking and GPS plotting the proposed trail. Trail starts from the old landing area, winding through the blackberry patch/ meadow, crossing the brook, ascending through selectively cut pine and mixed forest and looping back along the stream. Trail seeks to avoid wet areas and important logging roads so as to permit future logging without disturbing trail system. Trail is first stage of trail system. This loop is restricted to the western part of the forest not crossing the central wetlands, future trails could branch off to the height of land and eastern section.

Trail is designed to include several different habitats and forest types. It passes near a vernal pool and wetland, a pond and follows the stream for a section allowing views of a small canyon. It also passes near a stone structure probably a barn foundation or livestock pen.

The trail will not involve any significant earth moving or excavation, only small (less than 6" diameter) trees would be removed to create a wide path (6' to 8' right of way). The trail is designed to be winding and fit the contours of the land.

We discussed several options for the stream crossing: Culvert and fill, 8' wide bridge strong enough to support a tractor, and a foot bridge (4' wide able to support humans) We decided upon the foot bridge for the following reasons. All mechanized trail work would be done during the summer when a tractor could easily be driven over the rocky ford above the proposed bridge site and thus there is no need for a motorized capable bridge. The footbridge would be less intrusive ecologically and could be made of local tree trunks with rough cut 2" boards as a surface. In my view the foot bridge would also discourage illegal ATV access to the trails. The bridge would be located at the upper end of the stream crossing which would allow space for access below it by logging equipment in the future without disturbing the foot bridge.

Ben will provide us with a rough map of the proposed trail. I told him that we would consider the is to be an approximate route and that he would be free to make minor changes as local conditions required. The final trail would not be surfaced but would be cleared of stumps, logs and smaller rocks to present a safe, more or less even surface suitable for hiking with a group such as a school class or snowshoeing in winter.

Ben reported that he had located a large culvert in usable condition which had washed out from the old stream crossing which he would be able to move to the road if the town so desired where it could be picked up by the highway department for use.

We also discussed enlarging the present parking area by moving the barrier boulders back from the road to the limits of the flat graveled area, creating a small parking area about 40' deep which could safely accommodate 4 to 6 cars.