

Sugar Hill Conservation Commission Meeting via Zoom **Draft**

February 18, 2021, 6 pm

Attending: Charlie Wolcott, Tim Williams, Chris Ellms, Cathy Strasser, Margo Connors

Whipple Field:

Charlie, as a board member of the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT), gave an overview of what has been happening at the Whipple Field conservation easement. Field was mowed in September of 2020. Work is being done on an interpretive trail, an educational brochure, and a kiosk. The Whipple Conservation Area goals are to enhance and maintain the site's scenic, educational and recreational qualities as well as protect and restore wildlife, native biodiversity and water quality.

It was agreed that the Conservation Commission would write a letter to ACT requesting an annual report on the status of the field.

Margo will look for Tim's history of Whipple Field in the files at the town office.

Cushing Bridge Trail:

Margo reported that Tim Clough, president of the Franconia area NEMBA, is reaching out to Rebecca Coffin-Vickery regarding improvements to the trail and permission to cross Rebecca's land.

Robertson Forest:

Chris suggested that we form a volunteer "steering" committee for the forest to get additional input on the trails and manpower for maintenance. We need to put a kiosk at the trail head with a map. Charlie talked about the Trail Steward position that ACT is seeking to fill. ACT is in the process of hiring a position that includes coordinating the trail stewardship on the various ACT owned properties and easement properties. This person could potentially be a resource for coordinating trail maintenance and development throughout the area. It was agreed that we would revisit the forest management plan for the forest to see if it needs updating. It would be nice to install the boardwalk across the marsh in the not too distant future.

Priorities:

Charlie suggested that we prioritize different areas in town for conservation e.g. Streeter Pond and both sides of the Gale River in Sugar Hill. Discussion re designating Streeter Pond as a "prime" wetland. Discussion on how to involve landowners.

Solar Letter:

Margo asked if the CC would be willing to pay for the cost of mailing a letter to voters about the proposed solar installation at the town garage before town meeting in May. She will get a cost and bring this up again in March.

Respectfully submitted,
Margo Connors