

BILLINGS PARK COMMISSION
Agenda - DRAFT
19 October 2020
4 pm

In Attendance:

Billings Park Commission Members: Sam Segal, Randy Richardson, Alison Clarkson, Julian Underwood, Rebecca Williams

Woodstock Town Manager: Bill Kerbin

Woodstock Select Board Member: Mary Riley

National Rivers and Trails: Jennifer Waite

Guests: Nick Mahood, Bill Corson, Matt Stout, Mary MacVey, Kent McFarland

- 1. The Chair Called the meeting to order at 4:04.**
- 2. On a motion duly made, seconded and adopted, the minutes from the BPC meeting of 28 September 2020 were approved.**
- 3. Update on Mt Peg Summit Kiosk installation.** Mary Riley was assured that the Summit Kiosk included a description of the new East End Park. Connecting the kiosk with online maps is important. QR codes are important and should be flexible. Randy wondered if trail counters might be helpful in quantifying usage. Final citing for the location can be done to guide the building of the frame for the panel.

4. Update & discussion of the Park Management Plan

Ecological section is important to guide decisions about the park. Sam relayed that his impression from the Redstart contract was that an Ecological section was included. He expressed his worry that Redstart provided a Current Use description with some wildlife observations added which wasn't in keeping with his understanding of the contract.

Alison affirmed Sam's concerns about the Plan with which we have been provided. Kent McFarland has looked at the parameters of the Plan and that Redstart provided a document in keeping with their expertise.

Kent has reviewed that many studies have been made about natural communities on Mt. Peg and Mt. Tom. He suggested we review Brett Engstrom's "Identification, Assessment, and Mapping of Natural Communities in Woodstock, Vermont" commissioned by Woodstock's Conservation Commission in 2008. A natural community is something that hasn't been impacted by humans and none exist on Mt. Peg. A few natural communities exist on Mt. Tom that are of local and state significance. One in particular, the white pine and red oak stand is important and should never be disturbed.

Kent suggested not spending a lot of money on hiring someone new and using what we have – incorporating existing reports into this Plan. Members of the Commission wondered if Mt. Peg park has been over-used but under-managed.

Kent suggested there might be value in conducting a Bio-Blitz. iNaturalist is a resource in which users upload data about their experience in the parks. He will reach out to his colleagues at VT Fish and Wildlife to obtain information about natural communities on Mt. Tom.

5. Discussion of the WAMBA Proposal

Alison invited comment about the proposal. Matt reviewed some of the thinking that WAMBA has been done relating the proposed location, land-use agreements, neighbor outreach,

Sam expressed his support for moving forward with this proposal.

Julian said that nothing in the gifting documents (Elizabeth Billings, Merrill purchase/easement, and the WRC gift) would suggest that mountain biking is specifically prohibited. In fact, the use of recreational opportunities is often mentioned.

Becky said that she and her son walked that trail and thought that the trail was well marked did not cross other trails and seemed to occupy a separate corridor in the park from the hiking trails.

Alison feels that the proposal is solid. She wonders if parking can be addressed, this is more of a town issue. She suggested that a one-year trial period is a way of moving forward.

Matt expressed his concern with calling this a “trial” period as it might cause him to hesitate to enlist donations and volunteer hours for this project. Many trails are subject to the on-going permission of the landowners with MOUs. Nick Mahood suggested we develop a one year agreement with an option to review and renew for a longer period of time.

Sam said that trail use and maintenance is always subject to the landowners on-going permission.

Sam: Moved to recommend that BPC present this proposal to the Select Board and that we move forward with the WAMBA’s proposal to build a multi-use on the southern border of Mt. Peg Park subject to developing a MOU.

Unanimously Approved.

6. Update on Faulkner Trust Proposal presentation 15 Oct

Alison reported that at the Oct 15th meeting a Task Force was created by the Selectboard, comprised of all the stakeholders, to review the Faulkner Trust proposal and other proposals received by the Selectboard. The Task Force is to review the proposals and make a recommendation to the Selectboard in the spring.

7. Fall Trail Stewardship projects/Mowing of Mt Peg

8. New Business –

Invite Ben and Bill from Red Start to next meeting

9. Next meeting

Monday, November 23rd at 4pm.

This Meeting will be held on Zoom

The link to join us is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83292302498?pwd=QzU1NEs2TkVSc2k2WG5Cc0ZINGNUQT09>

or from zoom.us you can enter these details:

Meeting ID: 832-9230-2498

Password: 512577

You can also download the Zoom app on your smartphone.

For those without a computer or smartphone you may call in:

Phone number: 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 832-9320-2498

Password: 512577

For Help on Joining Use this Link:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Meeting>