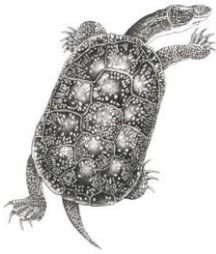


Gilmanton Conservation Commission



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Minutes of October 8, 2020

Work Session

APPROVED

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dick de Seve. Those present included Chairman Dick de Seve, Alternate Member Sue Hale-de Seve, Member Paula Gilman, Alt. Member Thomas Dombrowski, and Member Patrick Hackley along with the Conservation Commission Clerk Bre Daigneault. Vice Chair Jennifer Baker, Member Ed Bernstine, and Member Stephen Hopkins were absent. Due to the COVID-19 emergency order, this meeting was held virtually by utilizing the Zoom platform.

Work Session: Member Hackley gave an overview of the proposed Frisky Hill pull-off. The proposed area is located on the southerly portion of the land, currently has a good base and would require less gravel. DOT has previously stated they would not approve a pull-off along the shoulder of the road, a driveway would need to be installed. He described the proposed sketch having approximately a 15' X 20' driveway leading to two parking spaces with ADA handicap accessible area between. There is a back-up area to allow vehicles to safely turn around and pull onto the roadway front forward. There will be boulders placed around the parking area to keep vehicles within the designated area. There will also be a designated display area for the donor recognition and peak identifier. There is already a retaining wall on the southerly border. This may need to be extended or a fence could be added with sloping terrain. The dimension of the area would not encroach upon the haying field. Chair de Seve suggested a sign be placed at the back-up area to deter people from using the space for parking. The access ramp to the field would remain. Member Gilman suggested placing a fence or signs at the access ramp to deter vehicles from driving onto the field. She inquired as to the funds for the project, as well as whether it would be plowed in the winter. Member Hackley stated the funds would come from the conservation commission's account, as well as the Twigg fund. Members agreed it would not be plowed in the winter months. Reflectors could be placed by the boulders on the road side. Member Hackley reviewed photos taken at the site. A letter submitted by Member Hopkins was read by the commission members present. His comments included: he felt they had received significant opposition for a parking lot; he requested written documentation for the "obligation" of the commission to provide safe and reasonable access to the land; there is an open well and pond on the property which could cause a safety issue; where is the funding for the project; he wished for the boulder and horizon display be placed on the land in its current state. Member Hackley stated he would respond to the excerpt questioning the notes he had submitted. It was written more as an opinion statement than law. Member Hackley stated the parking area was part of the original plan when acquiring the land. It was discussed at public hearings; it is part of the public record; this cannot be ignored. Chair de Seve added there is a statute that provides there needs to be access. The written support for the parking is in the easement. He agrees there is an open well on the property that needs to be taken care of. There is a pond on the property, but there are many properties with ponds or old cellar holes on them that the town owns. This is the reason for liability insurance. The funding source has been discussed with the conservation fund. Member Hackley felt Member Hopkins had made a good point about the hazards. To be honest about their responsibility as stewards to natural resources, they need to be honest about the origins of this pull-off area. It has been

in public record for seven years. Member Hackley feels Member Hopkins, as someone who signed the petition against the pull-off area prior to joining the commission; he came predisposed to this. He is welcome to provide his comments and Member Hackley would respond. He also felt this project has been an initiative long before the strategic plan came into play. He feels just dropping the boulder and display sign on the side of the road is pretty cavalier. The donors deserve better recognition. Additionally, placing the items there is going to attract people, who will need a safe place to pull off the road. Without committing anyone to a certain position, chair de Seve inquired to members Gilman and Dombrowski if they felt this new proposal was an improvement over the prior proposed area. Alt. Member Dombrowski felt he could not answer that question. Chair de Seve inquired as to his opinion. Alt. Member Dombrowski felt this was going to happen no matter what, but he did find this location to be an improvement. He did not think parking would be put there; just the boulder and the kiosk with the parking remaining on the side of the road. He feels it is a better location but it is not what he envisioned. He gave the example of the State having markers on the side of the road all over the State without parking; one just about 50' from Frisky Hill. Member Hackley agreed, but also feels those markers are accessible for viewing. He gave an example of witnessing a near accident of motorcyclist who had pulled over to take pictures of the view on Frisky Hill. He feels they should be proactive and not wait for an accident to take place. He also felt they need to have consensus among the commission. If there isn't consensus, they shouldn't put it out to the public. He also did not feel it was the commissions responsibility to place the boulder, that falls on the GLT. He thinks this should go to vote by members to see if they should pursue the parking area. Another option would be to put it on the ballot. Alt. Member Hale-de Seve commented in favor of the ADA parking area. There are many areas that the handicap are not able to access. Chair de Seve would like the members to review the easement. The GLT was very involved in placing the language in the easement. The GLT had signed the easement, as well as the property owner, all parties involved understood the purpose of the easement. Member Gilman requested a copy of the easement. She inquired which members would be able to vote on the subject. Chair felt the members that had signed the petition should not vote. Admin. Daigneault would circulate the easement to members.

Chair de Seve closed the work session.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,

Bre Daigneault, Conservation Admin.

Attested by: _____ on _____

Dick de Seve, Chair

Date