

Town of Warren
Conservation Commission
Zoom Mtg & In person

July 13, 2021

Present: Jito Coleman, Amy Polaczyk, Damon Reed, Carolyn Schipa, Jim Edgecomb, Kate Wanner, George Schenk, Rocky Blier, Taylor Corrigan, John Atkinson (Mad River Riders), Laura Arneson (Chair of Trail Collaborative), Ross Saxton (Mad River Path), Andrew Hally

Meeting called to order at 7:34 pm

- 1) Trails discussion -
 - o Jito: Mapping discussion to inform the trails specialists of available data
 - o Laura: intro to Trail Collaborative, master planning that can intersect with the data from WCC
 - o John:
 - (i) Plans for trails in Warren -
 1. Blueberry Lake (Velomont trail planned through)
 - a. discussion of tentative path of Velomont trail through Warren.
 - b. NEPA process on Velomont to start this fall
 - c. trail not allowed in designated wilderness areas.
 2. Roxbury to Blueberry Lake
 - (ii) Collaboration with USFS - requiring a master plan
 - (iii) happy to collaborate and
 1. share map layers rare plants
 2. walk lands/trails together
 - o Ross: Mad River Path's goal is to not impact nature but to improve the habitat along the path.
 - (i) working to connect different sections of path throughout Warren
 - (ii) Jito proposed to discuss the intersection of the Path and Arrowwood data
 - (iii) Kate will overlay the proposed trails (once received) with the priority ecological zones.
 1. John to send wilderness areas layer from Forest Service.
 - o George: concerns of resource use given the profound stress on environment already and gave the example of potential impacts of unleashed dogs on wildlife.
 - o Kate: Recreation has a history of leading to conservation of land
 - o Carolyn: Ski area impacts and increase in outdoor recreation. Concerns for high-altitude expansion is concerning. We need to be sensitive that we are not the only creatures here and echoed dog concerns.

- o Damon: humans hiking with unleashed dogs have the greatest impact on wildlife, lowest - snowmobile, bikes, xc ski, as they move quickly. Issue is not just trails, but the kind of activity on those trails.
- o George (f) Schenk: Flatbread parkinglot is often mainly mountain bikers and many with dogs off leash. Also things seem changed due to bike use and when do we stop constructing these trails?
- o Taylor: Proposed Velomont trail area passes through dense bear habitat near Stetson Hollow
- o Jito: WCC members need to start showing up at the Trail Collaborative meetings and doing education to show people the impact of the trail use.
 - (i) Taylor and Jim to attend July 23rd meeting and - Jito to send invite

2) Bear Committee with Margo Wade

- o Amy, Damon, and Carolyn to engage - Amy will contact Margo
- o Education, public meetings, Sue Morris to come talk
- o Report back by email.

3) Zoning Re-write

- o Planning Commission is now processing comments and revising draft to reflect comments. WCC will see it when the next draft is presented to the Selectboard. Jito will keep the group posted

4) Knotweed interns

- o Eradication:
 - (i) 5 interns doing way more than in other years , everything in east warren has been hit twice, LIncoln gap had 12 major infestations and having good luck ripping them out, but roots are large and will take time.
- o Experimentation (Near snowmaking pond):
 - (i) large smother site (covered with cardboard and black plastic). Jito to mow around edges
 - (ii) Site just being mowed
 - (iii) Wire-mesh site doing well
 - (iv) other CC's have participated in working with us to learn techniques and take back to their towns.
- o Outreach
 - (i) each intern doing a task
 1. making more/new signs
 2. writing VR article
 3. video, tiktok, instagram
 - (ii) How to deal with the school patches?
 1. Amy: maybe Four Winds could incorporate some education about invasives? Send info to Jito.

- (iii) George willing to host a dinner paid by WCC, have a workday (start at 1, work (At quays) until ~5, swim, dinner, lecture on knotweed tincture (Marge Kehoe), eat some knotweed - knotweed kimchi & “bucatini”
- (iv) Rocky - neighborhood knotweed groups
- (v) Discussion of how to address difficult patches and those near the river.

5) Gomez property (Kate)

- (a) surrounded by GMNF on 3 sides, landowners were going to sell to forest service but changed mind and now in the market for \$400,000. MR Riders interested in parcel. 123 acres between Lamenta’s Way and Flying Squirrel. Is an opportunity to site a hut, which could involve an access road.
- (b) There are many parcels on the market right now.

6) August 26th presentation at Flatbread “Natures Best Hope”

7)

8) Next meeting tentatively scheduled for September 14th 7:30pm.

Meeting concluded at 9:35pm

cc: Selectboard, PC, DRB, MRVPD, Waitsfield CC, Fayston CCweb, post