Hollis Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2021

Present: Paul Mattor; Catherine Hewitt; Madison Moody; Joanne Toone; Richard Vanlangen; Doris Luther

1. Roadside Clean up will be on October 2 at 9:30 am. Location to be announced. Keep your eyes open for places in town that need a clean-up.
2. Memorial Bench Update: John and Madison met with Jean Whitney’s children at Indian Cellar (IC) to scout out a spot for a Memorial Bench to honor Jean, who walked at IC with her dog almost every day. A spot was chosen behind the swimming hole. Discussion ensued regarding securing the bench from vandalism. John will take a look at the site for ideas on securing the bench. We also discussed the size of the font. Catherine suggested a smaller font. We all agreed and were in favor of a black font. Madison will check on whether or not it can be black and more discrete. Jean’s family will be dropping off a check to cover the costs.
3. Indian Cellar (IC) – Feedback on Facebook: Feedback received was that IC needs some work on the board bridges. It was also suggested that having a written history would be appreciated. John will work on writing up a history of IC. To get more attention/ publicity for IC, Catherine suggested hosting walks with a naturalist, or other. Doug Hitchcox, a birder, for example. Richard suggested having educational material at the kiosk – points of interest, flora and fauna, etc. We felt it was more important right now to focus more on the open space plan. Catherine, Joanne, and John are planning on attending the Maine Association of Conservation Commission’s annual meeting on October 16 from 9-2 at the Curtis Library in Brunswick. We are current members.
4. Guests for upcoming meetings:
   1. October: Paul Mattor, Faith Plummer and Kathy Harriman to talk about long-range planning.
   2. November: Paul Schumacher from Southern Maine Regional Planning to talk about an Open Space Plan
   3. December/January: Saco Valley Land Trust. Discussion ensued - John would

Like to see a part of Western Hollis near Killick Pond and the Army Base be protected by a land trust. The habitat contains sandy barrens, rare butterflies, scrub oak and pitch pine. The habitat should be preserved. There is a lot of pressure in Southern Maine for land development. Beginning With Habitat has mapped out the area habitat. John pointed out that the only access to the area is by ATV’s which can go around the barriers and are tearing up the land, which excludes responsible public access by motorized vehicle.

* 1. Catherine suggested that, down the road, we meet with abutting towns to discuss open space and land trust possibilities. Waterboro has a Long-Range plan and part of that is an open space plan. So, first we should have a Long-Range plan for Hollis. Fred Snow from the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions has done some Open-Space plans and may be a resource for us. We agreed that we don’t have to hire someone to create an Open Space plan and that we don’t have to re-invent the wheel. We can use plans from other similar towns as our template. It was pointed out that the Hollis Comprehensive plan does address land-use strategies. The town of Westbrook requires that developers have to put money in a fund to buy land for conservation.

1. Gardening at the sports complex and town hall – Volunteer event? Discussion around who maintains the plantings at these areas. Should it be the Conservation Commission (HCC) or the Sports Complex Committee or Parks and Recreation? Ultimately, we felt it was the Sports Complex Committee. We discussed HCC contributing money from the interest earned on the IC account. It seems that there is no restriction on how we spend that money. Madison will talk with Debbie Teft about it and whether or not HCC should pursue this.
2. Other: No other business.

Respectfully submitted,

Doris Luther