

WEATHERSFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES August 27, 2020

Attending: Heather Shand, Jeff Pelton, Roy Burton, Howard Beach and Ryan Gumbart

Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM and adjourned at 9:15 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES, JULY 2020 MEETING: Minutes were accepted without amendment.

TOWN FOREST DISCUSSION ITEMS:

-WEATHERSFIELD/ATA AGREEMENT: Stan Spencer and other Ascutney Trail Association (ATA) members attended the WCC meeting to discuss their involvement in the Weathersfield Town Forest. The ATA has been an instrumental part in reclaiming old logging roads for trail use, as well as managing the invasive plants beneath the powerlines. The primary objective for the ATA is to build trails for mountain biking and trail running. The ATA has worked with the Ascutney State Park on trail maintenance and has a documented agreement to assure both parties are on the same page. The ATA has gained approval for an access road that runs through the State Park to be utilized as a connection trail to the Town Forest. The road, "Rick's Road" as it has been named, is gated off of Route 44A and is passable by truck. The ATA has expressed an interest in building mountain bike trails within the Town Forest as it is a key connection for completing a trail around Mt. Ascutney, one of the ATA's priorities. The Town Forest also offers terrain for beginners, a feature that is lacking within their current network of trails. In addition, the ATA proposed building mountain bike trails throughout much of the Town Forest to take advantage of the intermediate and expert terrain as well. The proposed agreement states several requirements from both parties, such as the Town will develop a trail management plan to guide the building and terminating of trails. It is likely that trail management will be covered in a broader forest management plan that will guide the forest management to provide a balance between the variety of values that were determined by the residents of Weathersfield during Town Forest workshops. The Agreement will be further discussed at the next meeting to gather input from the absent members and others.

WCC SPONSERED WORKSHOP/HIKE IDEAS: The WCC will be leading an Emerald Ash Borer walk later in the fall to raise awareness and answer questions about the effects of the Emerald Ash Borer. Roy and Ryan will be scouting out potential roads for the walk that have a high amount of road side ash trees, good parking for attendees and low traffic. Jeff Pelton has been involved with raising awareness about EAB by posting signs and submitting a brief write up for EAB Awareness Week (September 12-19).

Next WCC Meeting: September 24, 2020, at 7:00 PM, Location TBD

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan Gumbart