



Georgia Conservation Commission

Approved 5-21-18

Minutes April 16, 2018 Meeting @ Fire Station 7PM

Present: Ken Minck, Rob Meader, Fred Grimm, Suz Brown, Kent Henderson, and Nancy Volatile Wood

Guests: Gabe Bolin – Stone Environmental

Deer Brook Gully: Gabe detailed the work scope. The study will prepare a suite of up to eight practices to improve storm water management in the area draining to the gully. At the end of the project, final engineering will be 100% complete and ready to move on to application for subsequent CWIP implementation grant.

Minutes: March: Rob moved and Suz 2nd Kent abstained, KM, RM, FG, SB voted in the affirmative. NVW not in attendance

Reorganization: Fred moved and Nancy 2nd the following slate of candidates: Chair-Suz, Vice Chair-Rob, Treasurer-Nancy and Secretary-Ken Unanimous

Meeting dates: Tabled – Suz to check on dates that would not be in conflict with other town boards.

Financial Report: Line items: \$7,903.63 General fund: \$18,813.05 CRF: \$80,730.03(includes anticipated \$16,000 at year end)

Correspondence: Vermont Land Trust – Cara Montgomery

Town Government Minutes: Review of 3-26-18 Select Board meeting, Kent & Rob to address communication methodologies with the Select Board.

On-going business:

RGNA Parking lot apron: Hungerford's was awarded the work - Kent

[Type text]

Silver Lake Woods: Ken visited the CL4 road with Todd on 10-20-17 and staked out a parking area. The boulders will be moved to the Silver Lake Woods property line. Ken sent a note to Mary Smolinski regarding the work, their dwelling uses part of the CL4 road for their driveway. Kent will get with Ric Nye regarding construction details.

Management Plan Subcommittee: Ken & Kent started work on the Plan in accordance with the VLT easement. Public meeting 3-21-18 minutes attached.

Natural area hop: Rise Vermont 6-30-18 RGNA

Lost Pond Parcel: The ROW (1917) discovered by Paul Gilles in 2013 will not give us access to the parcel. As it turns out this ROW, connected two parcels owned by the same owner. (Maps available for clarification) Over the years the owners changed. Gallaghers are the current owner of the parcel. Kent will contact them about a possible ROW from Rt.104, on the St. Albans South town line. The law firm agreed to update the deeds to include the 1917 ROW for no additional fees.

Other: Scholarship, no applicants this year, Green-Up May 5th Facebook posting, Nancy to check on school newsletter and sign on GEMS lawn, More drivers needed for pick-ups, Ken & Kent can use there pick-ups. Bags coming soon.

New Business: Yankee Corp: Ken explained the proposed swale and wooden bridge through the buffer at the RGNA parcel.

Next Meeting: 5-21-2018

Adjourn: 9:40

Silver Lake Woods Public Input Meeting-DRAFT GEMS

Library 3/21/2018 6:40pm-7:50pm

GCC Members Present: Rob Meader, Ken Minck, and Cristin Pullis

Community Members Present: Suzanna Brown, Dian Duranleau, Gilles Rainville

Carol Ann Jones, Ed Simon, Barb Dow, Ed Ballentine, and Greg Drew

[I did not record any notes on facts mentioned in Ken's PowerPoint.]

Lucien Abair- last known homeowner to live on property. He was abutted by the Laughlin Farm. They farmed sheep and remnants of the woven wire can still be seen.

Gilles Rainville recalled some memories including: -haying the fields of the property when he was a teenager. At that time, the "big square house," a large barn and some smaller buildings were still standing. -a story about Lucien breaking a leg while logging,

getting up on his horse & riding home to go get medical help. □-in the 70's, he saw flames and called the fire department, but the FD had no way to get up on the property and the house burned. The house did not have electricity, so he assumed it was somehow set on fire. □-going blackberry picking on the property, but advises watching out for bears, as they like the berries, too.

Carol Ann Jones shared that she had heard stories from Dorothy Lawyer about her trips to go swimming and picnicking at Silver Lake.

Currently, it is hard to tell where private property ends and the SLW property begins. One will know that he/she is on the SLW property once he/she reaches the "No Motor Vehicles..." sign on the class 4 portion of the road. Boulders were illegally placed by an unknown party blocking the class 4 road, but the plan is to move them further down the class 4 road to just over the border of the SLW property.

Hunting on Georgia town-owned properties is allowed when all VT state regulations are followed. This is a Georgia Town Policy.

Discussion ensued around the idea of recommending one town property be designated and posted as a no-hunting zone. RGNA seems like the best choice to become a no-hunting public space, because:

-Arrowhead Lake lies to the south of the property, and now that Harrison's property is fenced, animal migration is limited to and from the east and north. This has and will continue to affect large animal use of the property, □-Several residents have expressed interest in at least one town-owned property that can be used/hiked safely during any hunting season.

-Respecting the strong tradition of hunting in Vermont and Georgia, and while considering the small percentage of town-owned acreage that RGNA comprises,

I'd like to know the total acreage of conserved public land in Georgia and RGNA's size in acreage to calculate RGNA's percentage of Georgia's public conserved land. Then we could compare that percentage to the approximate percentage of Georgia residents who hunt. Assuming RGNA's percentage will be far less than that of Georgia residents who hunt, this could be a comparison that puts our request into perspective. For instance, as an example, "Forty percent of Georgia residents hunt, but RGNA comprises only 15% of conserved public land. If 60% of Georgia residents don't hunt,

we are not asking for a proportional amount of 60% designated posted non-hunting land. We are only asking for 12%.

-RGNA already has an established history of educational uses and field trips. One planned field trip was already cancelled last year due to hunting season. To remove a unique educational opportunity for 50+ children, because a couple hunters *may* be using the land at that same time period, seems like an irresponsible and inequitable use of public land, at best. -Carol mentioned going for a run at RGNA until she noticed blaze orange-clad people in the woods, and was uncomfortable running with hunters all around her.

-It was suggested that a section of the Silver Lake Woods property could be deemed a "no hunting zone." □-Rob mentioned that in order to propose such a change, the GCC would need the support of a handful of community members, since a proposition like this would likely not be considered by the select board if the GCC, alone, proposed this change.

Suggested adding the following to the SLW "allowed activities" list: □1) Leashed dogs □2) forestry management demonstrations where wood would actually be harvested. Mr. Drew suggested interested individuals could come to an event with questions about their own land. An expert led class & demonstration would yield a forestry management plan for SLW and participating individuals would leave with a plan for their own land. □3) host guided wildflower walks (invite appropriate experts to lead)

-wild edibles walk -wild medicinal walk -tree ID walks □-animal tracking walks

4)kayaking in the beaver ponds 5) managing for wildlife

It was noted that SLW's management plan should have a provision that states the plan should be reviewed and updated every [predetermined interval]. Language in the second paragraph of the Interim plan already states, "...it will be reviewed and revised, if appropriate, at least once every five years after its initial adoption."

It was asked who still living in town is a wealth of Georgia history. Gilles Rainville mentioned the Blake brothers, as their family owned much of the property around that area and they used to live up there. Silver Lake was called Blake's Pond until the city of St. Albans changed the name when they started using it to supply water to the city.

Rob suggested that we form a public committee to help us continue this process, so a group of six people doesn't dictate how the entire community should use this property.