

Minutes
Hogback Preservation Commission
Marlboro, Vermont

The November 10, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Hogback Preservation Commission was called to order at 5:03 p.m. at the Marlboro Town Office by Hal Himmelstein, Chair.

Members Present: Christine Collela, Hal Himmelstein, Ed Metcalfe, Mike Purcell, Jim Tober.

Members Absent: Bob Engel, Lauren MacArthur

Others Attending: Bob Anderson, President HMCA; Patti Smith, HMCA board member.

The minutes of the September 8, 2014 Regular Meeting were approved as distributed.

Officer and Committee Reports

Chair's Report.

Status of the Endowment Fund.

Bishop Homestead Project. Members of HPC, the HMCA board, and others interested in preserving the Bishop Homestead in the Conservation Area met with archaeologist and historic preservationist Elise Manning-Sterling at the Bishop site adjacent to the Grant Road Trail Head on November 7 to discuss options regarding how best to conserve/preserve the site and where to post information about the Bishop Homestead, its layout and history. Elise recommended that three dying large white birches be removed from around the main cellar hole foundation before they drop and destroy or seriously compromise the integrity of the site. HMCA will do this in the spring, probably with the assistance of a professional arborist. Volunteers will begin removing saplings and deadfall from around the cellar hole and other building foundations. Elise's thinking is that if the site is tidied and labeled so that visitors see that it is being monitored and cared for, there will be less temptation for folks to do their own "excavation." Drawing on Diana Todd's detailed history of the site and Bob Anderson's and Diana's extensive mapping efforts, HMCA will develop interpretive signage that discusses the history of the Bishop Homestead.

Windham County Forester Bill Guenther will attend HPC's January meeting to discuss preparation of a Forest Management Plan for the Conservation Area.

HMCA Report

Early Successional Habitat (ESH) Project. Organized and led by HMCA board member Diana Todd, volunteers have cleared three acres of the Meadow Ski Run during the first two work seasons. Next fall clearing will begin on the Great White Way.

Ski Patrol Hut Repair. HMCA board member Staley McDermet has developed a plan for repair of the ski patrol hut. Over the Thanksgiving weekend a volunteer work crew will patch the hole in the roof, board up the windows, remove debris from inside the hut, and trim encroaching vegetation in preparation for a more complete renovation of the building next year.

Proposal for a Summer Intern/Conservation Area Manager. A proposal is being formalized to hire an individual to perform a variety of designated tasks in the Conservation Area over a ten-week period. The position is included as a line item in the 2015 Conservation Area budget.

Southern Vermont Natural History Museum Report

The Museum's interpretive signage grant, mentioned at the September meeting, appears not to be connected with the Conservation Area's interpretive signage project.

The 2014 Vermont Wildlife Festival was a success, with over 500 people attending.

Old Business

Independent Study Projects. Bob Engel has prepared a letter to be distributed to selected universities and colleges in the region requesting graduate student proposals for independent study projects with a fieldwork component in the Conservation Area. An update on the status of the distribution and any responses will be presented at the January meeting.

New Business

Reconfiguration of Hogback Summit Trail and Little Hogback Loop. HMCA submitted a proposal to extend the Hogback Summit Trail to the intersection with White's Loop to make the route to the Hogback summit clearer and more direct. The Little Hogback Loop will be renamed the Little Hogback Trail and the short connector trail from the Douglas Trail to the Hogback Summit Trail will be named The Link. **M/S/P 5-0.**

2015 Conservation Area Budget. HPC will recommend a budget of \$7,284 to the Marlboro Select board for its approval. The recommended budget includes a new request, submitted by HMCA, for \$3,000 for a summer intern/Conservation Area

Manager to perform a variety of activities in the Conservation Area over a ten-week period. HMCA has provided a summary of sample tasks that may be performed under the supervision of an HMCA board member. **M/S/P 5-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hal Himmelstein
Chair