

Minutes

Hogback Preservation Commission

Marlboro, Vermont

The May 12, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Hogback Preservation Commission was called to order at 5:04 p.m. at the Marlboro Town Office by Hal Himmelstein, Chair.

Members Present: Christine Colella, Hal Himmelstein, Lauren MacArthur, Mike Purcell, and Jim Tober.

Members Absent: Bob Engel and Ed Metcalfe

Also Attending: Bob Anderson, President HMCA, Diana Todd and Nancy Anderson, HMCA board members.

The revised agenda was reviewed.

The minutes of the March 10, 2014 Regular Meeting were accepted as distributed.

Reports

Chair's Report (with thanks to the Chair for a thorough written report.)

--Budget Matters: Funds on Hand: CD= \$121,600; MM= \$4,575 Total: \$126, 175
Expenditures, March-May: Geoge Leoniak, stipend \$50; Audubon Bird Count, \$100

--Reappointments: Christine Colella (2014-17), Mike Purcell (2014-17), Jim Tober (2014-15)

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--Conservation Area Management Plan updated in March and posted on Town web site

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--Whaleback representatives visited the Conservation Area on March 24, 2014 to examine T-bar towers and related equipment and indicated they would prepare a proposal for the Town's consideration. Hal Himmelstein, Mike Purcell and Bob Engel were present for HPC; Bob and Nancy Anderson represented the HMCA board. Whaleback's proposal, dated May 8, was distributed by e-mail to HPC commissioners.

-- Hal Himmelstein, Bob Anderson and Diana Todd met with representatives of the Deerfield Valley Stump Jumpers snowmobile club, including Trail Master Carl Shepherd. to discuss violations of the landowner's agreement this past winter season in the CA's southern sector. Recommended posting a map of the approved VAST trail through the CA on the VAST/DVSJ kiosk in the north parking lot next to their regional trail system map. Diana volunteered to work with Carl to make this happen. Suggested posting this

map on the SVSJ web site and at the Wilmington trailer. SVSJ will (with Ed Metcalfe's permission) put up a snow fence gate blocking the Tower Trail.

--DVSJ reps. indicated that the club had done our recommended bridge repairs in the NW sector of the CA in November 2013. Unfortunately, no one from the club contacted us prior to proceeding and we were therefore unable to input. Will work to establish a better communication mechanism with the club going forward. Hal hiked to the bridges on May 7 and photographed them for our records; he e-mailed Carl Shepherd thanking him and his colleagues for their bridge construction work.

-- Molly Stark map update. Diana Todd sent digital map files to Ethan Phelps (F,P &R) updating the Molly Stark trail map. Hal will meet with Ethan on May 21 to review joint activities for 2014 Molly Stark season, including installing a small information kiosk at the CA-Molly Stark boundary on the Tower Trail.

--Kiosk plastic map holders: HMCA trail committee agreed to handle this

--Little Hogback Loop and the Summit Trail require blazing.

-- Forest Management Plan: Pieter van Loon, representing both VLT and the Select board, suggests that the Commission consider hiring a consulting forester to prepare a detailed Forest Management Plan for the CA; he indicated that the Select board may be able to find \$\$\$ from the Town's general fund for this, the cost of which will likely be in the \$3,000-\$4,000 range.

HMCA Report

--Bob Anderson reported that a location had been selected for the memorial to Jason Saltman; some clearing and installation will be required. There will be a gathering in Jason's memory, TBA.

--Bob announced the May 27 date for MES day and referred inquiries to Carol Berner

--There was a brief discussion of the routing of the south-side trail relative to ESH zones. A proposal will come back to the HPC from the trails committee

Southern Vermont Natural History Museum Report

--No report

Old Business

HMCA presentation on the preservation of the T-bar lifts in the Conservation Area.

--Bob Anderson urged the town to retain the lifts and all ancillary equipment and structures owing to the iconic place of the ski area in the town's history and character.

--A letter from Lee Todd, of Silver Spring, MD, and Halifax, VT, was distributed, which concludes as follows: "Whaleback is asking to take away the very things that made the

site worth saving in my eyes. . . . We should keep the lifts intact on the mountain, as historic, educational objects.”

--Dianna Todd also spoke against accepting the Whaleback proposal and offered a slide presentation on the history of Hogback ski area, its importance in the town and region, and its unique value on public land as an open-air museum that illustrates the evolution of ski technology through three generations of lifts and towers and that is featured importantly in the Lost Ski Areas Project.

Discussion of Whaleback Proposal

Hal read statements from absent commissioners, Bob Engel, (in opposition to the proposal,) and Ed Metcalf, cautiously supportive of the proposal but open to retaining the towers and equipment.

Points raised in discussion included these:

--While preservation is an important value, so is re-use and the knowledge that material resources are providing valuable services to others, elsewhere.

--What if Whaleback fails, and the equipment were to rust on the ground where there is no historical connection at all?

--Consider the potential for educational/historical tours and the fundraising potential of a Hogback living museum.

--Consider the need to improve artifacts to the extent that they do not invite vandalism or represent hazards.

The following was moved by Mike Purcell, seconded by Christine Colella, and adopted 5-0:

“In order to preserve the historic heritage and ecological integrity of the Hogback Mountain Conservation Area, the HPC opposes donation of any portion of the old Hogback Ski Area equipment to the Whaleback Mountain Ski Area.”

New Business

--None

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Tober
Secretary pro tempore