

# **Minutes**

## **Hogback Preservation Commission**

### **Marlboro, Vermont**

The July 8, 2013 Regular Meeting of the Hogback Preservation Commission was called to order at 5:10 p.m. at the Marlboro Town Office by Bob Engel, Vice Chair.

**Members Present:** Bob Engel, Lauren MacArthur, Mike Purcell, Jim Tober.

**Members Absent:** Christine Colella, Hal Himmelstein, Ed Metcalfe.

**Also Attending:** Bob Anderson, President, HMCA.

Acceptance of the May 2013 minutes was tabled until the September meeting.

## **Officer, Committee and Liaison Reports**

### **Vice Chair's Report**

Vice Chair Bob Engel offered a short report of some observations about early successional habitat use by songbirds. Use is heaviest in the largest area (as theory predicts) out in "front," between the Museum and the point where the Tower Trail curves into the first woods.

### **Planning Commission Liaison Report**

Jim Tober talked of the on-going study of possible zoning changes (some possibly resulting from wildlife data) that had consumed a lot of the Planning Commission's time. They trudge ahead.

### **HMCA Report**

HMCA annual elections resulted in Bob Anderson's being elected HMCA President. Immediate past President Staley McDermet will remain on HMCA's board as Vice President. Bob Anderson listed several advances made by HMCA. They include (1) substantial and productive displays at the recent Strolling of the Heifers event and the open house at the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum; (2) a new and greatly expanded Hogback Website ([www.hogbackvt.org](http://www.hogbackvt.org)); (3) intern Amy Schiller's three study plots in the Conservation Area; and (4) Bob Anderson's and Diana Todd's test cut on the Meadow Ski Run that can provide an estimate of the total effort/ski slope treatment.

## Old Business

Bob Engel brought a list of possible interpretive trail sign recommendations to be included in the Management Plan. These were culled from an Army Corps web site. Since Ed Metcalfe was not present, it was decided to wait to formalize these guidelines until the Museum's preliminary efforts to sign could be compared with a theoretical "ideal."

The Commission had a lengthy discussion about user signage at the kiosks. While nothing was formally resolved, a sense of the meeting did emerge:

- a. The notice should be more welcoming, with fewer "do not"s and more "do"s. Perhaps there should be a welcoming notice at the top of the kiosks.
- b. The notice should contain information about the preserved property, its establishment, and its management—an "about us" thing.
- c. Whatever we say, the signage should be shorter rather than longer.
- d. A separate sign, delineating the Vermont Trail Ethic, would be a good idea and would make our sign shorter and cleaner.
- e. These notices would also go on the new [www.hogbackvt.org](http://www.hogbackvt.org) Website.
- f. A calendar of Conservation Area events might be a good addition to the kiosks.
- g. Smaller, simpler, visual signs (like those shown to us by Hal) could be displayed in lieu of lots of "don't"s on our signage, especially for actions we truly don't want to see (motorized vehicles, campfires, etc.).
- h. Trail distance/degree of difficulty signage should be placed at trailheads.

## New Business

The Commission unanimously accepted the proposal to proceed with the clearing, blazing, and mapping of the proposed out-and-back Hogback Summit Trail as outlined on the working map prepared by HMCA's Diana Todd. Establishment of a Little Hogback Loop Trail was tabled for future consideration.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Engel, Vice Chair