

Andrews Community Forest Committee
Regular Meeting Agenda
Monday, December 16th, 2024 - 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Location: Richmond Town Center Meeting Conf. Room C, 3rd Floor, 203 Bridge Street.

Committee business

- Roll call and confirm Quorum: Committee members in attendance: Chase Rosenberg (rotating co-chair), Ian Stokes (co-chair), Sam Pratt, Jim Cochran, Brad Elliott, Wright Preston, Melissa Wolaver Cecilia Danks. Absent: Julian Portilla

Members of the public: Merrick Gillies, Mike Donohue, Brandon Benedict, Zoom: Nancy Zimny, Jeanette Malone, Dan Wolfson, Kit Emery

- Timekeeper: Ian Stokes and Minutes: Melissa Wolaver
- Minutes of November 25: Wright made the motion and Sam seconded, accepting the minutes.
- **RCC RTC Reports as related to ACFC:** RCC: UVM climate study in Richmond might benefit ACF with hazard assessment and mitigation, forest resiliency and invasives. RCC will coordinate with the UVM class next fall. RTC: Questions about RMT relationship. Richmond Trails Committee is favorable to Richmond Mountain Trails as the main liaison and support to ACFC as opposed to the Richmond Trails Committee having this role. RMT does trail maintenance for Richmond Trails Committee. RMT has an outreach network for volunteers to do trail work.
- Public Comment: No comments at this point.

Discussion of forestry plans with County Forester Brandon Benedict: What Ethan left on what needed to be done. Ethan finished harvesting that was planned but not optional. Updating Forest Management Plan and what are next steps. Everything prescribed has happened by 2021. 2019-2029 is the one Ethan wrote. Easier would be for Brandon to write an amendment on update what has been done and the recommended harvest. The big one would be controlling invasives. Southern boundary is the worst. Three years in a row is best. Recommend some other potential harvesting. Deer use is heavy. He will contact us for a walk through. Deer enclosure with downed trees? Leave branches down or make slash wall.stands one and two in the southern and western portion of the property is where he recommended further possible harvesting. Management Plan section is assigned to Brandon. Best way to communicate with County Forester? Email is best. And he is available to help if he has the time. If he writes amendments he would write them as prescriptions. For us to decide if we want to recommend to selectboard.

Merrick Gillies and Mike Donohue are board members representing Richmond Mountain Trails. Richmond Mountain Trails is 501c non-profit. Under VMBA umbrella, the Richmond Mountain Trails is a chapter of VMBA. RMT works with all trail users on volunteer days. Half of \$75 membership funding goes back to Richmond and uses on Richmond Trails. \$5000 does not cover the town costs of trails. Spend about 250,000 in Richmond/Bolton in the last year. Trail building has many forms. They have 1000 members. RMT is interested in helping with design, maintenance, management of use. RMT says the town is moving toward one system Trailforks for updates on openings and closures.

-RMT and Trails in the surrounding area VYCC/Maplewind Farm. VYCC is working with RMT on their updated charter with bikes as an allowed use. Maplewind landowners reached out to RMT to build trails that will be open to public in the future. Trails will go from Rt 2 log landing to highlands and will head to vast trail that connects to VYCC. Vehicle. Parking will be at Maplewind and limited to start. Maplewind trail will connect to vast trail on corners on Andrews and Maplewind at corner of the field. Vast trail in meadow is on Maplewind property.

Cecilia requests public and wider community for building and helping so people have a sense of ownership. Volunteer days should be publicized to the wider community. Jim suggested invasive removal day utilizing RMT to advertise and get volunteers to test relationship. Nancy: What is your experience with wildlife habitat and relationship to Chittenden County uplands. Mike: working since inception having people out enjoying nature. Need to be careful about higher value areas. Jeanette: Invasives: How much have you done? RCC is promoting community wide effort on invasives and getting the community involved. Wright asks RMT to send us a narrative of what RMT are proposing for maintenance and relationship with ACFC.

Revisions of Management Plan – Plans for Committee, RCC, RTC and Public review process for Ian's draft: Ian has compiled and added to length and addition of wildlife stewardship. Sections have been assigned one person or groups of two people. Identify duplications between background and Mission: Objective is to avoid duplication between background and objectives. There are 68 objectives and 84 actions. Look again at Daniel's assignments and see if we can reduce items of list. Chase would like a process for targeting objectives per season. Ian: anyone to take over the next 6 weeks or divide it up. Judy R, RCC chair, says RCC has resources to hire to integrate and write plan. Is it ready to contract out now? The management plan has gone through two stages of revisions. Wright: let's hire a contractor to button it up. There are lots of people who could do this. Field Naturalist program graduates.

Ian: everyone is welcome to make annotations to the draft that was sent last night. Ian will phone Josh with OML questions. Does the town have a resource person we can recruit with editing? Sending out request for proposals. How to send individual changes. Just put a comment in. Use comment feature. Sam: have every document be the same with annotations and then have someone integrate. So just put comments on side. Ian will circulate word document. You can open yourself as a google doc.

Our committee will be sending the following people to the bio-finder training: Chase, Sam, Brad and Ian in January. Participants have submitted questions for the training.

Motion to adjourn: Wright makes the motion and Chase seconds.

Future meetings: January 27th and February 24th 2025