

Andrews Community Forest Committee Minutes

Regular Meeting

March 24, 2025 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Attendees: Melissa Wolaver (co-chair), Ian Stokes (co-chair), Brad Elliott, Wright Preston, Chase Rosenberg, Sam Pratt Julian Portilla, Cecilia Dank (online)

Minutes taker: Julian

Time keeper: Sam

Public: Dan Wolfson, John Rankin

- **Minutes from March 10 approved**
- **Management Plan due on May 22nd**
- **Need to address the ethics code. All need to sign and then need a training by June.**

No updates from Conservation Commission

Updates from trails committee (Chase)

- Discussion about online trails conditions reports.
- Worked well to work with Adam Morse, director of Fellowship of the Wheel, to post on Trailforks when trail systems are open or closed. All of the systems need to be well-coordinated so that no trail systems are left inappropriately open.
- Advice of trails commission was to have consistency among the trail systems. When one system is closed, it's likely that all systems need to be closed. RMT manages other trail systems, Cochran's manages their own closures.
- Typical default of systems is to do what other trails are doing and AFC default should be what other trail are doing, but could have an override if needed.
- Communication would be through Richmond town website and Cochrans and RMT, can put it on the Andrew's website. Will need to work out the details on exactly how to do this. Sam can help with this.
- Would make sense to create a profile for the town or the trail committee and then give administrative privileges to an individual who can follow along w other trail systems.

Management plan edits

- **Education section**
 - Needs work. Received some draft language from Jeanette Malone and Daniel Schmidt.
- **General organization**

- Recreation section: a lot of it seems redundant. There is a great deal of repetition between the introductions and then the objectives and directives of various sections.
- Each section could be, just a bit of context, then the objectives, actions, etc. and move all the backgrounds to the appendices.
- Proposal is to create sections that look like this:
 - Preamble, goals, objectives, guidelines and actions
 - Everything else would fall into appendices.
- Just about all of section 2 is background and history of the area and the forest.
- **Section 2.10, AG and Easements**
 - Wright will make a proposal for this section to include only material relevant to objectives and actions for ag and easement. Everything else will go into the appendix section.
- **Appendix section proposed by Brad E.**
 - Would replace 2.2-2.6 (not 2.4).
 - Motion: replace sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.5 and 2.6 with the Eco appendix proposed by Brad E to be included in the appendix.
 - Proposed by Ian, seconded by Jim. All voted in favor.
- **Section 7 recreation**
 - Discussion of Brad E's proposal for an alternative.
 - Discussion of forest standards vs town standards.
 - Likely unable to go higher than the standard set by Zoning Regulations
 - Strike the portions that repeat the zoning guidance and make reference to town zoning rules. Julian will propose language to this effect for the lines of Brad's document that number in the high 90s.
 - If document makes reference to erosion and sediment controls, it could suggest consulting with Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPSESC)
 - Discussion about multi use, mountain bike and high density usage.
 - Perhaps take bikes out of the MP section.
 - HOMEWORK for next meeting: Look over the two versions of the Recreation section and move to comment and complete MP.
 - Suggestion for improvement: could remove the MTB specific objective and is left in the objective before it (Lines 21 and 22).
 - On the other hand, there is broad interest in Mountain Biking and we should include them in the MP.
 - Include something about non-multiuse trail.
- **Section 5: Cultural History**
 - Question: How to manage the current state of the issues around identity and who gets to decide (state v federal, etc.)
 - Cecilia: Can refer to the four tribes of Abenaki and thus not engage in the controversy.

- Goal would be to seek “indigenous” representatives but membership on the committee requires Richmond residence.
 - Can work on the appendix to drill down into how Abenaki advisors would participate if there are none from Richmond who wish to be on the committee.
- HTF has a related goals item in every management objectives: Where it’s noted where goals in one section related to goals in other sections.
- Will try to include goals for this section to conform w the format that Brad E has proposed.

Vacancies for ACFC

- Deadline is April 4th for consideration at SB for June appointments.

Update for input to the town plan

- Have asked Virginia for clarification on a few questions.

Directions for our next meeting

- Will be working on the section for recreation. Suggestions for next meeting:
 - Brad’s proposal is that we should divide the forest into zones.
- Need to talk about ecology too. Recreation and ecology will be discussed together since they are very related.
- Document needs to go to the select board for May 22. All sections need to be discussed before we go to the SB.
- RCC had a different opinion than what the AFC said.