

**MINUTES**  
**Underhill Conservation Commission**  
**April 13, 2020**  
**Conference Call**

Present on Conference Call: Karen McKnight, Betsy Chapek, Laurie Graham, Steve Webster, Nancy McRae, Peter Hiskes, Daphne Tanis, Amy Golodetz,

Absent: Pat Lamphere

Guests: Mike Weisel

Welcome and Opening Remarks: Karen welcomed all and led meeting.

Public Comment: None

Approval Minutes: 3/9/20 Minutes approved with changes.

Time: 6:30pm - 7:30pm

### **Crane Brook Trails**

- Mike Weisel was biking on the Perimeter Trail of Crane Brook and tried to follow the map and found the brown with blue tips trail markers. He came across an impassable wet area and proposed a relocation of trail that would lessen the amount of time spent on the wet area by moving the trail closer to the Town Garage and approaching the area at a new angle. (Nancy reminds us that this area is before the vernal pool and the original trail plan included a 25 foot boardwalk in this area.) He suggested the addition of a 12-14ft bridge that would be beneficial for bikers and walkers. He has a possible 10 foot bridge he may be able to donate and has experience with creating natural-looking bridges with the Brewster River Mountain Bike Club.
- Members of the Conservation Committee will be meeting with Mike Weisel on Wednesday at 10am to talk about the Perimeter Trail and access over the wet area. Karen, Steve, Daphne, Peter and Betsy will meet Mike by Town Garage and walk up. (Steve will invite Anton Kelsey of the Recreation Committee to join the walk.)

### **Trail Map Planning**

- The UCC will share the trail map more readily with the public when proper signage is in place and the management and usage goals of the area are clear.
  - Things to consider include foot paths vs. mountain bike area, dog and leash guidelines and horse use.
  - Some trails may need specific uses (hiking, biking).
  - Some trails may need "closure" during mud season.
- Original application was for "hiking, skiing and non-motorized use".
- Other similar trails we can look for signage: Wiseman Woods from the Stowe Land Trust, Mad River Valley
- Mountain bike community and Recreation Committee will be a great asset when planning usage and guidelines of the Crane Brook Trail.
- Next Steps: Karen and Daphne draft guidelines in regards to horses, Laurie will research other trail guidelines from local trails and email out, UCC group will talk to Mike on Wednesday about mountain bike trails.

### **Upcoming Events**

- **Green Up Day:** Organizers for Green Up Day have tentatively moved the date to May 30th.
- **Indigenous Agriculture Workshop with Fred Wiseman:** Originally scheduled for May 8th but we will need to postpone. Daphne offers to help plan this event with Pat, create flyers and get information out.
- **Plant Sale Planning:** Wait to start planning until the May meeting. At a later date, Ryan Ochse will share the viability of chestnut trees; he also has blueberries that we may be able to purchase for the plant sale.

### **Invasive Species**

- The UCC has read the new Vermont Invasives article, "A New Way to Treat Knotweed."  
<https://vtinvasives.org/news-events/news/a-new-way-to-treat-knotweed>
- The method includes the use of hardware cloth, wire fence mesh, with ½ inch openings. The idea is that the shoots will grow through the mesh and the surface growth will eventually die. This will start to exhaust the JK of the energy needed for the Japanese Knotweed to grow back again next year.

- Based on the reading, it seems like this may be a method for a small patch with definite boundaries, uncertain in larger areas.
- The UCC would like to try this method on the Crane Brook Conservation District Hillside by stream, a plot of about 20x12, the long patch across the road from this, and possibly at Moore Park area where we could do a demonstration project.
- There is about ~\$500 in the UCC account to purchase tools for this, including a weed wrench and the steel mesh hardware cloth.
- Steve will contact Andrea Shortsleeve to hear her thoughts on the new article and control method.
- **Other Information on Invasives:** Ethan Tapper will be talking about invasive species on 4/16 on a Zoom conference 10:30-11:30am.

Adjourn @ 7:30pm.

Minutes Approved 5/11/20