

**MINUTES**  
**Underhill Conservation Commission - Special Meeting**  
**June 8, 2020**  
**Remote Meeting on GoToMeeting**

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

**Absent:** Pat Lamphere,

**Guests:** Anton Kelsey, Brian Sweeney

**6:30 p.m. Welcome** Karen McKnight welcomed all and led the meeting.

**6:31 p.m. Public Comment** None.

**6:32 p.m. Minutes**

Nancy McRae moves to approve the 6/3/20 Special Meeting Minutes and Amy Golodetz seconds. Minutes are approved by the commission.

Regular Meeting Minutes of 5/11/20 are tabled until the next meeting.

**6:35 p.m. Plant Sale Discussion, Farmers Market Observations, Pre-Order, Decision & Next Steps**

Farmer's Market Observations: Amy observed rules posted at the front, masks provided, layout was in a one-way loop, there was a designated ordering and pick up area for food, and the turnout was good. Karen acknowledges that it doesn't have the usual community spirit.

Plan for Plant Sale: Betsy posted to FPF that this year's Plant Sale would be cancelled but will be back next year. Amy suggests a Plant Sale for fall planting, later in the season. Anton Kelsey supports the Plant Sale and shares state Farmers Market Guidelines. Betsy and Daphne will work together on a fall Plant Sale plan and present it at the next meeting.

**6:50 p.m. Crane Brook Conservation District (CBCD)**

Brief overview of the proposed walkway, Steve created and shared a map with the location. Trail would be moved slightly to avoid the wet area. Karen will check in with Andrew Strniste to make sure there are no permits required.

Anton Kelsey talked to Brad Holden about kiosk and parking, to see if there had been prior approval from past Selectboard meetings. Upon hearing back, he will begin planning for a kiosk. The Conservation Commission will use budget money for one kiosk, about \$200, using 4x4 plywood with no glass or plastic cover over the postings. The Development Review Board previously walked CBCD trails in 2012 and considered kiosk and parking at that time.

Discussion ensues about parking. On New Road, moving dirt around on the left side for 4 to 5 cars, facing nose in at an angle. Not sure if there is room on the Irish Settlement Road side. On New Road, parking might fit with Japanese Knotweed eradication. Parking in the open area along the road had been discussed with Nate Sullivan last fall, but considering nearby homes, parking would be better at the end of the road near the boulders.

Anton Kelsey notes that the CBCD is a resource for the town and many residents don't know about it.

As there are more users, parking and maps available, discussion ensues about the concern about restrooms. Anton Kelsey notes that the state has 17+ port-a-potties at various fishing spots. Discussion continues that CBCD may not have a need based on the amount of use and time spent at CBCD, but smaller areas may be more affected by increase in use. The Recreation Committee budgets for the port-o-potty at the Town Pond, something the Conservation Commission may consider for future budget.

Use of Trail Guidelines: There is a [CBCD Management Plan Draft available](#), including information from Ethan Tapper on flora/fauna as well as information on invasive species. When the CBCD was established in 1995, the plan included recreation and education opportunities to protect and maintain this resource.

When creating guidelines, only having a few would be best. Discussion continues about leashed dogs, liability for the town, and the lack of ability to enforce the park guidelines. Anton Kelsey suggests using signs created by the Trails and Greenways Council.

The Recreation Committee is eager to help and work on CBCD trails, signage, or other tasks.

Steve suggests a walkway in the ROW over the Crane Brook (after it runs down the CBCD trail and veers off to the southeast) to make it easier to walk from New Road through to Fuller Road and presents the location on a map.

Nancy suggests teaming with the Recreation Committee for signage, and creating some signage with a map so people know where they are within the CBCD. Daphne suggests something posted on kiosk about trail etiquette.

Betsy and Karen will team up to work on a few guidelines for the CBCD signs, and will invite Amy who left the meeting early.

Discussion about the mowing of the meadow on CBCD continues. Nancy recalls a family member of someone on the Recreation Committee volunteered to mow the field. Betsy will check with Sherri Morin to find out about who mows the meadow.

Betsy noticed evidence of large motorized vehicles driving up from the Town Garage through the meadow and out to Irish Settlement Road. Members of the UCC have also noticed some trees have recently been cut, about 10 or 15 3-4 inch diameter birches past the meadow. Betsy will ask Nate Sullivan if he knows of anything. Suggestion of putting a second gate, past the town garage, that stays closed.

### **7:45 p.m. Japanese Knotweed Monitoring**

Steve presents Japanese Knotweed Monitoring schedule with volunteers signed up through the second week in July. Steve will post to FPF for the next work party, this Saturday, June 13th from 9-12 pm.

Observations include that the area with hardware cloth is not growing as fast as other areas. Considerations being that perhaps the past work weakened rhizomes or the area is more shaded than others.

Extra hardware cloth could be tried at the Beartown Road gravel pit after the solar project is finished.

Next time we purchase hardware cloth, we would like to try the smaller, quarter-inch size.

The willows planted at CBCD survived but the dogwood did not. There is one elm tree in Moore Park that is doing well.

**7:55 p.m. Other Information**

Grant the town received for Green Up Day roadcrew/signs/bags was not used because the event was cancelled. Could use the \$1,000 as long as it goes to something related to picking up trash, used by July 1. Steve suggests hiring local folks to remove metal, car parts, tires from CBCD- Selectboard would do the contract but UCC would oversee the job.

Peter lives on Repa Rd. and has noticed Westford has been doing a lot of work on trail easement just on the other side of town land. Peter is going to reach out to Westford to gauge interest in anything happening on the Underhill side and future trail development.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:03 p.m.**

Minutes submitted by Laurie Graham.