

# Stranahan Stewardship Committee Meeting

February 17, 2014

**Members Attending:** Diana Batzel, Jim Brimblecombe, John Domey, Jenny Warshow

**Discussion:** Diana brought up the need for more structure in our meetings; meeting at the posted time, following town rules for meeting, creating an agenda, posting our minutes, accomplishing our goals, and just becoming more efficient overall.

John Domey raised the issue of the currant logging project which is an example of how we have not been effective. Through discussion we identified obstacles that have caused the logging to be delayed, the main obstacle was not having the wetlands mapped and flagged but this arose out of miscommunication with the Conservation Committee, depending too much on one person to take care of the details, contacting the Land Trust too late, and not having a procedure and time line in place to follow. Following is a checklist the Committee endeavored to create to follow now and in the future:

1. Through thoughtful discussion determine the area to be logged
2. Propose, present, and gain approval from Select Board
3. Ask the MCC if the area has been mapped, if not, ask their help in doing so
4. Flag sensitive areas
5. Submit proposal to VLT for approval and make adjustments if necessary
6. Arrange for stands to be marked by forester
7. Ask Select Board to put to bid
8. Review bids and subsequent contract with Select Board
9. As a Committee, oversee that the operation is being done in a responsible manner according to contract
10. Ask Select Board to hold deposit until we recommend release

This concluded discussion of logging except for the actions that will be taken as listed at the end of the minutes. The meeting moved on to other topics.

Back to the subject of minutes, the Committee agreed to learn the correct procedure regarding the minutes and get back in to the habit of posting them, going forward.

The Committee also agreed that we need to be more aware of the contracts being made concerning operations in the Town Forest so that we can make informed recommendations to the Select Board and better oversee that the contracts are being followed. It was proposed and agreed that we make a formal request to the Select Board that we be made aware of any pending contracts

before they have been approved so that we might have input on them. We also decided it would be a good idea for the Committee to have email or hard copies of the contracts on hand.

Jenny received a request from a mountain bike group to establish a bike trail. A dry area has been scoped out and the bike group knows they would be responsible for all maintenance and costs associated with such a trail. All members seemed agreeable to hearing a formal presentation of their proposal.

It was suggested that some of our summer meetings on the Stranahan Land be spent putting up boundary markers which we have had for a long time.

Diana put out the idea of a website to help document the development and history of the Stranahan Land. Jim brought up that the town will be switching to a new format for their websites in the near future which the town clerk will be administering. All agreed it was a good idea but also a massive undertaking.

We talked again about mapping and marking some of the historical sites on the land. Jenny recently became a member of the Historical Society and could become a liason to work jointly with them on these projects.

John and Jim expressed interest in having someone from The VLT come and talk to us about what constitutes wetlands. They felt if they were better educated in this respect it would help us with understanding and developing future land operations.

**Actions:** Diana will contact Brett Engstrom to see if he would map the wetlands in the current stands to be logged and if not, who he would recommend. Jenny will call The VLT about the letter concerning the wetlands and also see if someone from their agency would do a wetlands presentation for our Committee. The Committee will make a formal request to the Select Board to include us in any procedures regarding contracts on the Stranahan Land. Jim will ask the town clerk for rules regarding meeting rules, minutes, and postings and the best way to transfer our information to her. Jim will also ask the town clerk about access to current and future contracts regarding the Stranahan Land. After Jenny has secured someone from the VLT to speak, John will arrange the logistics of a presentation.

Next meeting March 17, 2014 St. Patricks Day at the Old School House Commons

**Approved:** March 17, 2014

