

Community Forest Management Plan Committee

April 24th Meeting Minutes

The Town of Barre Community Forest Management Plan Committee held a Public Meeting on Monday, April 24, 2023, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room #3 at the Municipal Building, 149 Websterville Road. Committee members present included: Patty Meriam, Chair Larry Rogacki, Vice Chair Jim West, and Dean Preston. Also present at the meeting: Recreation Director/Committee Administrator Johnny Crossley, UVM Intern Aidan Rowley, MTA President Kevin Spaulding, and Recreation Board Chair Doug Farham.

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Larry Rogacki called the meeting to order, **6:04pm**
2. **Consider Approving Meeting Agenda:** Jim West made a motion to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Patty Meriam seconded the motion. Committee approved 4-0. Committee members David Rouleau, Lori Bernier, and Josh Howard were not present at this meeting.
3. **Consider Approving April 17th Meeting Minutes:** Patty Meriam made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Dean Preston seconded the motion. Committee approved 4-0.
4. **Receive Public Input (for non-agenda items):** Recreation Director Johnny Crossley read aloud an email written by Michelle Lever. Ms. Lever expressed her frustration with logging in the Barre Town Forest, and asked for a complete stop to the practice.
5. **Updates from the Recreation Director:**
 - a. UVM Intern Aidan Rowley gave an update regarding the Barre Town Forest survey. A total of 81 people have responded to the survey to date. The QR code attached to the survey is not working, but Aidan will troubleshoot to fix this problem. Additionally, Aidan gave an update on his mapping project. He is in the middle of working on the Barre trail map.
 - b. Johnny Crossley provided a printout of committee member Lori Bernier's updates to the Central Vermont Regional Plan subsection of the CFMP.
6. **Continue Review of Community Forest Management Plan:**
 - a. The review of the CFMP began on page 46, subsection **Hunting, Trapping, and Collecting** under section **X. Recreation and Education**. Extensive discussion took place regarding trapping in the Barre Town Forest. The committee will wait for the results of the survey on May 5th to determine the necessary edits needed for the trapping section.
 - b. Under the **Camping** subsection, the committee added a third paragraph stating that campfires may be permitted with proper permission, and all remnants must be removed before leaving a campfire.
 - c. The committee reviewed up to page 46, subsection **Managing Public Access** under section **X. Recreation and Education**. Edits are contained within the Meeting Minutes.

7. ***Schedule May Meeting Dates and Set Tentative Agenda for May 8th Meeting:*** The committee will meet May 8th, 15th, and 22nd next month. On May 8th, the committee will allot time for Aidan to present final data from the survey. Additionally, the committee will continue review of the Community Forest Management Plan.
8. ***Adjourn:*** Jim West made a motion to adjourn. Patty Meriam seconded the motion. Committee approved 4-0. ***8:07pm***

groups must provide proof of insurance which names the Town as additional insured. If the Selectboard or Recreation Board is not satisfied with the way these activities are being managed, they could withdraw the license.

The Recreation Board will annually monitor the forest, particularly the trails, for evidence of abuse or damage to natural systems due to recreational activities and will modify management recommendations and actions appropriately.

Trail Signage

Trail Corridor Managers are required to clearly mark designated trails in coordination with the Barre Town Recreation Board. Trails that continue onto private property will have signs that indicate a user is leaving the Town Forest. All signs are subject to approval by the Recreation Board. Trail maps of the Barre Town Forest can be obtained at the Town office and the Town of Barre's website.

Trail Fees

Trail Corridor Managers who wish to charge a fee for use of any trail located within the Barre Town Forest must get Town approval. The TCM applicant will apply for fee schedule approval from the Barre Town Recreation Board, which will make a recommendation to the Selectboard. The applicant will seek final approval from the Selectboard. See Appendix I for more details.

All trails on the Town Forest will be open to all hikers, snowshoers and dogwalkers, without cost.

Hunting, Trapping, Fishing and Collecting

Hunting is permitted in the Town Forest in compliance with the laws of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. A valid state hunting license is required. Hunting and other recreational and educational uses of this property do not need to conflict. Prudence dictates that precautions are exercised both by hunters and by non-hunting users, especially during rifle season for deer. Except for pedestrian use, trails will be closed from the beginning of rifle season until the end of muzzle loader season for deer. All tree stands are prohibited. Carry in-carry out ground blinds may be permitted within the Town Forest, but must be dismantled after use, following the Leave No Trace Guidelines, and requires written permission from the Barre Town Recreation Board. No live growth shall be cut or damaged to construct blinds or to create shooting lanes.

Trapping is allowed, for noncommercial purposes as permitted and as directed by the Selectboard. (State law requires all trappers to get landowner permission.)

Commented [JC9]: Come back after Survey results

The killing of non-game animals or permanent removal of nests or plants, including wildflowers, is prohibited. Activities such as the limited collection of tree leaves, fern fronds, berries, fungi, fruits, algae, and lichen specimens are permitted for non-commercial, educational, and individual use. The Town may require a special use permit if there is concern for depletion of the resource, or if uncontrolled harvesting may have an adverse impact on the health of the forest.

Camping

There are currently no campgrounds or camping areas located on the Property and camping is not allowed without permission from the Town of Barre. The Town may designate a camping area in the future. Permission from the Town will be required; all authorized camping must follow the Leave No Trace guidelines (see Appendix F).

~~Due to the risk of wildfires, campfires are prohibited.~~ If camping is allowed in the future, small campfires may be allowed under ideal conditions and in designated confined areas. Permission from the Recreation Board and Fire Warden would also be required.

Fires for specific activities and events are permitted with prior approval from the Recreation Board and Fire Warden. All remnants of the fire must be removed in accordance with Leave No Trace Principles.

Other Activities

Swimming is not currently allowed in the Forest. Individuals may choose to engage in other lawful activities which have minimal impact on the natural condition of the land, such as swimming, non-motorized water vessels, fishing, and ice skating, at their own risk. The Town may designate a particular quarry iesy for swimming after conferring with the town's insurance provider and after potential sites have been examined by underwater divers. All users should follow Leave No Trace Guidelines by packing out all trash including cigarette butts, and keep noise to a respectful level.

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Prohibited

~~Alcoholic beverages are prohibited within the Barre Town Forest. Notice should be given at parking areas.~~ Littering and dumping is prohibited. "No dumping" and "no littering" signs should be posted at parking areas and along Littlejohn Road where it bisects the Town Forest.

Enforcement

Town Forest visitors will be expected to respect and obey the Town of Barre Conduct Ordinance (Chapter 3.5 of the Barre Town Code of Ordinances), ~~as it may apply to the Town Forest.~~

Public Events

The Town or a user group may conduct periodic, temporary, non-commercial, community, and public gatherings and events on the Barre Town Forest, assuring that there is adequate provision for parking and septic disposal, and that there will be no lasting harm to natural systems. Such events require advance written permission from the Recreation Board. The Town may charge user groups a reasonable event fee if police services or traffic control are needed or other costs to the town are incurred. User groups must provide proof of insurance that names the Town as additional insured. Trails may be closed during races or events to ensure public safety. Fires may be allowed during special events with permission of the Fire Warden and the Recreation Board.

Structures

The Property contains a 2-car garage, off Brook Street, as shown on the Conservation Plan. It will be used for storage of equipment used in the management of the Town Forest. If provided for in a Trail Corridor Manager Agreement, TCMs may store trail management equipment here. Rent or an annual fee may be charged for use of the garage by TCMs. The garage may be

Barre Town Forest Community Forest Plan

2/27/13

expanded to include a small shed for storage of lumber, ~~and or~~ modified to accommodate a bathroom facilities, to install electricity, with prior approval of the Town and Easement Holders. If a Trail Corridor Management Agreement is not renewed, all equipment owned by that Trail Corridor Manager must be removed within 30 days. The town is not liable for damage or theft of equipment stored in the garage.

The Property also contains a one story cement block building as shown on the Conservation Plan. This will be used for storage of items related to the management of Barre Town Forest and may, someday, be converted to a picnic shelter or similar recreational structure. The playground equipment (2 swing sets, carousel, slide and jungle gym) at the Town's Upper Graniteville Playground encroaches on the Property and is considered a minor structure.

No new structures are planned at this time.

Managing Public Access

The ~~Town of Barre will~~ Recreation Board is responsible to monitor public access to and use of areas that are ecologically fragile to ensure that the current ecological conditions and the purposes of the Easements are not diminished or degraded by the public. Access to the property may be closed or restricted by either the Town of Barre or Vermont Land Trust for public health and safety reasons or to protect the Property's natural resources and ensure compliance with the terms of the Easement. Concentrated public use causing erosion or degradation of the landscape, hunting out of season, threat of fire, or danger from active timber harvesting operations are all examples of issues that may require either the Town of Barre or the Vermont Land Trust to restrict public access. Both the Town of Barre and the Vermont Land Trust will work in good faith to manage and maintain public access to the Property according to the terms of the Easements.

The Town of Barre will notify VLT and VHCB if restriction of public access is deemed necessary. The Town of Barre will alert the public using temporary signs regarding any active timber harvesting operations on the Property. The Town of Barre will exercise care during timber harvesting operations to avoid affecting or blocking public trails as much as possible.

Parking and Access

The Town may construct, maintain, and replace three permeable surfaced parking areas, not to exceed 0.3 acres each, at the location depicted as "Parking Area" on the Recreation Map (Map C). These parking areas shall be used for such uses as are permitted in the Easement.

Subject to adequate funding, kiosks will display a trail map, and appropriate cautions, rules and expectations of those using the Property.

The Town of Barre will coordinate the creation of any parking areas with VLT and VHCB. Parking areas will be clearly marked. The Town will be responsible for coordinating annual maintenance, mowing, plowing, or grading as necessary. Parking areas will be open from dawn until dusk and be policed in accordance with other municipal parking facilities. A seasonal 24-hour parking may be considered upon request to the Recreation Board.
(see Map C: Access and Recreation Map).

There are also multiple pedestrian access points to the Town Forest (see map C):

- Littlejohn Road
- Church Hill Road
- Violette Street
- Casanova Street

