



LMAC
(Land Management and Acquisitions Committee)

Members Present: Audrey Farber, David Gagnon; and Chris Kittredge
Liaisons Present: Karen Jacobsen, Conservation Commission
Staff Present: Amanda Stearns, Open Space Manager

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 17, 2018

1. **Call to Order** – In the absence of Chair, Dave Gagnon assumed the role for this meeting.
2. **Approval of Minutes** – With a motion by Audrey and a second by Chris, the minutes of March 20, 2018 were approved unanimously.
3. **Open Space Manager Report** – Amanda offered the following on various projects and issues:
 - a. North Falmouth Community Forest - Windham Quarry proposal – there is a proposal in front of the Windham Planning Board for a quarry operation on land which abuts the northerly boundary of the forest. The Town Manager and Community Development Director have communicated with the Town of Windham with regard to general concerns on the possible negative impact the operation could have on open space.
 - b. River Point – There has been a prolific abuse of the prohibition on dogs and the closure of trails on this site. Staff are working with police to ramp up patrols and intervening when violators are observed. The BDI staff are on site now and that may lead to confusion but the signs are up and being ignored. Additionally, most are probably aware that there were human remains found on land at River Point or the Adam property. The committee discussed ways that we could beef up monitoring sites off trails and emphasized the importance of the buddy system to avoid uncomfortable encounters. It is recognized that River Point is very visible and very accessible.
 - c. Trail Closures – After the last meeting, discussions continued and a decision was made to close trails based on reports from users and user groups. Audrey suggested that we could improve our website documents as well as improve trail stewardship by engaging abutting property owners. FLT is moving in this direction to build awareness of their lands. Amanda mentioned that if anyone is interested in monitoring trails for conditions moving forward, she would make some trail monitor notices to put in windshields and they would be available in her office. Staff will monitor weather patterns and keep tabs on other trail areas to determine when to reopen. There have been some complaints but Lucky reports that through her office there have been less than past years.
 - d. Falmouth Nature Preserve – The Town Manager and Council Chair met with the abutting property owner and a landscaping plan has been approved. Amanda will keep tabs on the progress of the replanting.
 - e. Trailhead Signs – Amanda noted that she will be building a spreadsheet to keep track of all trailheads and related resources such as signs, parking spaces or lots, etc. This way we will have a comprehensive inventory to work from in the future.

4. **9:15 – Paul Larrivee, Town Forester** - Paul Larrivee joined the committee for a discussion on forestry operations on town lands. Paul introduced himself and noted that he has a forestry degree from UM, previously worked for the Maine Forest Service as a district forester and now works as a land owner assistant in southern Maine for Sappi. He has been providing Falmouth with assistance for about 5 years. He discussed that he would like to promote the town as Tree Farmer of the Year through the State program. He feels that Falmouth is a great example of forestry stewardship. Sappi is focused on sustainability and well managed forests and all timber must meet the FSC or CFI standards. All operations are audited and must meet stringent standards. He noted that the North Falmouth Community Forest operation was the subject of many Sappi tours for their customers.

Paul explained that all operation require small yards as trees are prepared in the woods and brought to the yard. This method is less invasive and allows the harvester to build a “branch” road to protect the forest floor.

The Woods Road operation was reviewed, explaining that the requirement under the MDEP easement required the alteration of the site to promote a deer wintering yard. Wintering yards rely mostly on hemlock stands that provide a dense canopy. Also important is a food source nearby and in this case, providing one that was on the same side of Woods Road. A third objective of the town was to maintain the old growth portion of the forest. The resulting harvest focused on red maple to provide regrowth shoots as a food source.

The discussion turned to the overall philosophy of managing the deer population, objectives to bring forests back to a natural succession and the need to balance goals for the forest.

Paul asked if LMAC would be interested in reviewing the management plans and assisting him in developing priorities among the various plans. The committee will talk about this at the next meeting. Paul wrapped the discussion up by summarizing the biggest challenges for managing forests in Maine at this time: increasingly severe windstorms, increasing severe rainstorms, invasive insects and invasive plants.

5. **Other business** – none
6. **Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 am.

Minutes prepared by Amanda L. Stearns
Open Space Manager