

## Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge Oversight Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 27, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.

*Meeting notes added in italics.*

**Members Present:** *Jessie Bradley, Jenny Cole, Mark Dillenbeck, Larry Hamilton, Matt Krasnow, Sue Smith*

### Agenda with Notes

#### Updates

The last Park Oversight Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, June 24. Jenny Cole, Bob Hyams and Sue Smith were present. Purchases and summer work were discussed.

In June, Junior Lewis cleaned brush and piles of stone near the Route 7 end of the hedgerow by the Overlook field. The stones were used to fill low spots in the agricultural access to the field. He also repaired minor trail erosion and raised the lower bridge on Turkey Lane. Total cost: \$960

The Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility Offender Work Program has been working with only one crew supervisor. Because of the staff shortage, we have not scheduled work in Charlotte. Mow, Mow, Mow did a July mowing and trimming along the Roberts Trail and two side maintenance trails at a cost of \$450. (This is not covered by the maintenance contract.) Corrections work crews will be available for fall work.

Last May, Mark Dillenbeck identified diseased and dying trees along the Roberts Trail. Larry Hamilton followed up by marking trees that are likely to fall across or near the trail. Larry contacted V.J. Comai, who responded with a quote of \$300 (6 hours at \$50 per hour) for cutting the trees and cleaning up a fallen branch on the fence near the parking area. Jenny spoke with Jeff Spear from Vermont Arborists. His estimate for the work was around \$1000. Larry polled Park Committee members and received a positive response to having V.J. do the work. V.J. will get to it as soon as he can. (Jeff Spear is interested in doing a tree-pruning workshop in town.)

Purchases made before July 1, 2014 with remaining budget money:

1. Stihl trimmer/brush-cutter with brush-cutter attachment (Yandow Sales and Service- \$395.95 with 10% governmental discount)
2. Chaps, helmet and wedges for chainsaw use (Yandow Sales and Service- \$169.16 with 10% discount, purchased with money left over from Game of Logging courses)
3. Wood for bog bridges: 8 and 12 ft. planks (Clifford Lumber- \$544)

Purchases since July 1:

1. Small gas can (Yandow Sales and Service- \$29.24)
2. Blades for Corona handsaws (Corona Clipper- \$101.88)
3. Two posts for repair of trail signs (F.E. Hart Fence Co. \$42.78)

Larry looked into the purchase of cedar logs for bog bridges and water bars from Rick Mason of Hinesburg. Rick charged \$25 for delivery and donated the logs (\$300 value). Some of the material was used for waterbars on the Roberts Trail. The remainder, along with the wood from Clifford Lumber and

trail sign posts is stored at Jenny's house until needed for work days.

The Charlotte - Shelburne Rotary donated approximately ½ of the cost to replace decks, rails and some posts on the two bridges on the Roberts Trail. Work was nearly completed during two Rotary/Community volunteer work days. \$350 from the Park budget was spent on the project. A small section of deck on the first bridge is yet to be completed and will be repaired at the convenience of the Rotary. Extra materials are stored at the Thorp barn. Note: The bank under the first bridge is eroding. Further work may be needed in the future to stabilize the bridge.

Early in the season, wild parsnip was cut or dug up as found in the park. In late June, Dick Preston mowed areas of parsnip northwest of the Thorp Barn, in Unit D, and along the trail between the Barn and Unit D. The cost for the mowing was \$560. During July and August about 40 volunteer hours were spent hand-cutting parsnip throughout the park and in areas previously mowed. Locations have been mapped for future reference. The Committee should consider strategies to control wild parsnip along Route 7 next year.

Between July 31 and August 1, Junior Lewis and crew removed a large tree limb that fell across the entrance to the parking area on Greenbush Road. This work was covered by the road budget.

Bea Woodruff has been doing volunteer work at the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge as part of her C.V.U. Grad Challenge project. She helped with some trailside clearing, volunteered at the second Rotary work day, and is currently working on the Park section of the Town web site. She has posted her own photos of the Park, and is interested in having people submit photos. She also posted information about invasive plants. Take a look, and pass along your comments and suggestions to Jenny.

### **Fall Projects and Work Days**

1. Replace bench located where the Roberts Trail meets the Byington Trail  
*Jessie will look into this.*
2. Complete paperwork for posting land and update *No Hunting* signs  
*Jessie volunteered to do this.*
3. Schedule volunteer work days and recruit volunteers to work on bog bridges and waterbars  
*A volunteer day to work on the bog bridges was scheduled for Saturday, October 25 from 9:30-12:30 with a rain date of November 1. Use Thorp Barn entrance to access upper part of Roberts Trail.*
4. Select work areas for brush-hogging, mechanical clearing and Corrections work crews  
*Sue distributed a map showing work areas. Crews from Corrections will be available.*

### **Budget for 2015-16**

This year's park budget is \$14,450, an increase of \$1000 over the previous year. The increase anticipated additional costs for infrastructure repair and replacement. Because of donation of materials and volunteer time for bridge and trail work, shall we consider a reduction in the budget of \$500, leaving a request of \$13,950 for FY 2015-16?

*(This item was overlooked. Members will be contacted individually before presenting the budget to the Selectboard.)*

### **Courses/Workshops**

Shall we schedule Game of Logging Level 3 and Storm Damage Clean-up courses?

*Jenny will contact Northeast Woodland Training to see about dates this fall or next spring.*

## **Field Management**

Mowing and management for grassland birds

*The group felt that we should have discussions with Mike LaClair about mowing Units G and part of F in late July (and not doing early mowing) to allow bobolinks to nest. Compensation could be in the form of reduced lease payment for that area.*

## **Route 7 Access- Update**

*The Committee would like to talk with Tim Hunt about parking and trail link at the "Varney Farm" for people who cannot walk from the Greenbush Road parking area. It was felt this could be a 2015 project.*

## **New Items**

New Members and Member Terms: Dean Bloch reported that two people have expressed interest in serving on the Park oversight Committee. Shall we have two-year terms, staggered?

*There was no decision on terms. Committee members felt that potential new members should be invited to park committee meetings and work days.*