

Meeting opened at 6:07pm**Forest Committee members present:**

- Dana Rowe
- Doug Doty
- Alison Polido

Conservation Commission members present:

- Lori Chekal
- Tomas Sanchez
- James Cheney
- Randy Mason

Select Board member present:

- Rich Wallner

Issues Discussed:

1. Dana began the meeting by stating that this is a Forest Committee meeting to discuss the recent Swan Pond proposal presentation from Horsley Witten, with the goal of eliciting feedback from present members, as well as members of the Conservation Commission in attendance
2. It was acknowledged that Dan O'Donnell (town engineer) and Scott Buckley (School Committee) had stated via email that they were on board with the proposal and had no specific feedback to include.
3. The discussion then moved to potential questions or concerns that the public might have when presented with this proposal at a public meeting. The goal of stating these points was to begin work on addressing them, such as researching best practices, while acknowledging that resolutions will likely not be available by the public meeting.
 - a. Rule enforcement
 - i. Consider the use of fines to help enforce rules, however would need a town by-law passed in order to be enforceable
 - ii. Look into how town of Andover handles this in their forest areas for suggestions
 - b. Hours of Operation
 - i. Dawn to dusk proposed
 - ii. Look into customary practices in local areas
 - c. Presence of trash receptacles
 - i. Consider whether or not there should be public trash receptacles vs. keeping the area strictly pack-in/pack-out.
 - ii. If planning to have trash receptacles: How many there should be, where should they be, and who would be responsible for maintaining them?
 - d. Hunting permits
 - i. Ask Horsley Witten about state regulations

- ii. If permitting is required/desired, need to formalize who would be in charge of this and how it would be handled
 - iii. Consider including regulation information and safety precautions on signage (including hunting season dates, use of orange clothing, etc.)
 - e. Trail names
 - i. Proposal by Dana to name trails after former Forest Committee members who did a lot of important work in the Swan Pond area, including (but not limited to) Therrien, Standley, and Romeo.
 - ii. Proposal by Lori to name after her father Fred Richard “Dickie” Standley Jr., who has family ties to the area going back to the 1800’s, and who was an avid outdoorsman in the area.
 - f. Signage
 - i. For concerns about the number of signs, we should note that a minimalist approach will be used
 - ii. If more signs are wanted or needed after phase I, they can be discussed in future phases.
 - iii. Also consider the development of a phone app that users can download, or a QR code that can be used to access a website, which would allow the public to note points of interest or take and share longitudinal pictures of the area. These options would limit the physical signs needed in the area, while still offering the public a chance to understand and engage with the Swan Pond Forest area.
 - g. Buffer zone
 - i. Assure residents that there will be a buffer zone between trails and residential lots.
 - 1. Need to determine what buffer zone width will be. Will contact Horsley Witten for what is considered customary and reasonable.
 - ii. Look into whether or not the trail designated for accessibility would need to be altered based on the buffer zone used.
 - iii. Will the access point at the end of Fox Run Ln. be included in the buffer zone or be an exception as it is an access point?
 - h. Parking
 - i. Suggest that we not put a parking area at the end of Swan Pond Rd. (northwest most one noted on the Horsley Witten map).
 - ii. Consider making the Fox Run Ln. parking area handicap spots only, maximum 2 vehicles in order to avoid public parking blocking private property.
 - iii. Consider adding bike racks to parking areas/access points.
 - i. Emergency services
 - i. Fire access – ensure there is access for emergency fire vehicles
 - 1. Need to look into what would be required for this.
 - ii. Phone box to police – something to potentially consider in a later phase
 - 1. Dana noted that he has spoken with the NRPD and that the Swan Pond Forest area would fall under their purview
4. Specific feedback to be given to Horsley Witten

- a. Specify in presentation that no motorized vehicles will be permitted on the trails, with the exception of motorized wheelchairs
 - b. Specify in presentation that accessibility options for trails do NOT include paving.
 - c. Specify that groups will be welcome, but parking areas will be for cars only.
 - d. Note that any improvements to water crossings on the trails would need to be aboveground only, no fixation points going into or under the ground/water.
5. Available dates at the Distance Learning Lab were discussed as possible options for the future public meeting.

Future Actions:

1. Reach out to Hannah to inquire about best practices for rule enforcement, hours of operation, trash receptacles, hunting permits, buffer zones, and accessibility parking/access. (Ali)
2. Reach out to Andover to find out how they handle rule enforcement in their forest areas. (Ali)
3. Reach out to Parker River Association in Topsfield to inquire about suggestions on how to handle group outings. (Ali)
4. Look into what is needed for fire safety access. (Dana)

Next Meeting Scheduled: TBD

Meeting Adjournment at 7:00pm

Respectfully Submitted
Alison Polido, Secretary