

DRAFT

**THE RANDOLPH FOREST COMMISSION
JUNE 1, 2016**

Members Present: John Scarinza and Doug Mayer

Alternates Present: David Willcox

Others Present: Michele Cormier and David DeGrutolla (LandVest)

The chairman opened the meeting at 7:20 pm. He asked David Willcox to sit for Walter Graff. He also noted that the minutes of the May meeting have not yet been circulated.

John passed out copies of a draft contract between the Town and Fuller's Maple Farm, LLC of Lancaster, NH. This will need to be finalized before the maple tapping project can begin in earnest. John had begun drafting by reviewing, and borrowing material from, other maple tapping leases. He sent that first draft to David Fuller, who had his lawyer work on it. The current draft (draft 2) is the form in which Fuller's lawyer sent it back. John will e-mail copies of the draft to all Commission members and they are asked to respond promptly with any concerns they may have because it needs to be sent to our Town Counsel, Bernie Waugh.

There are two additional points which have been discussed and agreed upon between the parties, but which are not included in the language at present. One, is the need for the Town to have the right to approve assignees of the contract if David Fuller should ever decide to transfer his contractual rights and obligations to a third party. The second is the inclusion of a provision authorizing the State of New Hampshire to conduct research on a part of the sugarbush for the purpose of determining the effect of tapping on the growth of maple trees. Two categories of trees will be studied: those of 12" diameter or greater, and those of between 9" and 12" in diameter. The research will be overseen by Steve Roberge and Brendan Prusik of the UNH extension division.

David DeGrutolla reported on his helpful meeting with Walt Winteri. The Commission told him to feel free to consult with Walt again at any time.

He pointed out that Walt had said that the Second Stewardship Plan calls for a timber harvest in 2016 in the same compartments which are now reserved for maple tapping. He asked if the Commission wants to proceed with it. The Commission asked him to do a survey of the stands in the proposed harvest area to determine their composition. Any dense groves of maple trees which might be reserved for tapping in future, should be excluded from a harvest, but if there are enough other trees in the stands to make a harvest worthwhile, it should go ahead.

David also asked if he should take the initiative in enforcing the Commission's rules. He was told to feel free to act on the Commission's behalf, but to report incidents of infringement back to the Commission. The rules might be relaxed where people are acting in ignorance or, even if acting knowingly, are doing so on a small scale and without causing damage to the RCF.

Doug brought up the issue of the Interpretive Trail. He has asked the RMC if it wants to have it named officially as an RMC trail, while assuring the Club that the RFC will continue to pay for its maintenance. He has not yet received a reply, but cannot make the signs which are needed until he does. New signs are needed to make the trail easier for people to follow who are not regular trail hikers. These are, after all, the people for whom the trail was originally designed.

The final item on the agenda was the proposed Memorial Grove. Doug and David Willcox have been exchanging e-mails on the subject. While the concept seems simple on the surface, there are a number of hard questions which need to be addressed before it can be developed into a concrete proposal. Doug has put together a note outlining the idea and the sorts of issues that are raised by it. That note is attached to these minutes and Commission members are asked to think about the issues for a future discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed by general consent at 8:47 pm

Respectfully Submitted

David L. Willcox
Acting Secretary

Posted at Town Hall on June 6, 2016

Randolph Forest Commission

Memorial Grove (?) Thoughts

The Randolph Community Forest Memorial Forest is intended to be a place where family and friends can honor and remember a deceased loved one. Trees, shrubs and other plants native to the region may be planted in a [designated?] location in the Memorial Forest. Ashes may be scattered at that location. [?] With the exception of where trees have been planted, the Memorial Forest plot will be maintained as a wildlife opening.

The Memorial Forest will be located within easy walking distance of the Randolph Community Forest trailhead at the end of Randolph Hill Road. It will start as a [x] acre parcel around which additional acreage will be set aside, so the Memorial Forest can be expanded as needed in the years to come.

There will be (?) a simple map adjacent to the Memorial Forest that will indicate the trees that have been planted as memorials, and whom they honor. Simple, natural signs (?) will be allowed at the base of, or on, the memorial tree. [Will we allow permanent markers there, too?]

[Who qualifies?] The Memorial Forest is intended to honor individuals who have lived in Randolph at some point in their lives, have contributed to the well-being of the community, or otherwise have a special connection to the town and the mountains and forest in and around Randolph.

What are the other guidelines? What else is missing?

Perhaps it should be limited to those who qualify along the lines of your last paragraph. Does that mean that honorees must have lived in Randolph? (What about RMC trail crew? Are they considered as “Living” in Randolph?) I like the phrase about having contributed in some way to the well-being of the Randolph community. That is broad enough to cover any reason I can think of for bestowing the honor.

There are, however, other difficult questions: How is the decision to be made? By the Forest Commission? By the Planning Board after a recommendation from the Forest commission? Or should it require a vote at Town Meeting to make sure that it is a Town-wide appreciation? Who should pay the costs of planting the trees or bushes? If it is seen as a Town-wide appreciation, then probably the Forest Commission should pay the costs. If the decision is the response of the FC or the PB to a request by individuals, then probably they should pay. In like manner there is the question of the decision regarding what type of bush or tree is selected.

I assume that once a memorial planting has occurred, the FC will be responsible for nurturing it (and, presumably, replacing it should it die.) I also think that permanent markers should be put up, and, again, there is the question of who pays for them. Perhaps the same logic should apply as with the costs of planting and the selection of the plant.

It might be possible to have different categories of memorials, depending on whether or not it was a town-wide recognition or a family and friends effort.