

Poland Conservation Commission

Town of Poland
1231 Maine St.
Poland, Maine 04274

Meeting Minutes, July 14, 2021

Members Present: Barry Morgan(co-chairperson), Fred Huntress(co-Chairperson), Donald Stover (Secretary), John Young, Alan Audet, Steve Robinson (Selectboard liason), Scott Segal (Director of Parks and Recreation), Ray Stillman (visitor)

Also present were the following visitors from Androscoggin Land Trust: Aimee Dorval, Joshua Nagine, Rick Speer, Charlie Mitchell.

Meeting called to order at 7 pm by Chairman Morgan.

Androscoggin Land Trust (ALT) representatives made a presentation on a project they are developing on 15 acres atop Mequier Hill. Poland resident, Charles Mitchell is donating this land to ALT who will manage it with a conservation easement. Their plan for the property is attached to these minutes. The ALT plans exemplify our goals for preserving valuable open space. The exceptional view from this property, as well as its location along one of our most scenic roads, makes this project a welcome addition to Poland's conservation lands. There was an open discussion of the details of the project and various ways our two groups can cooperate. The committee expressed gratitude to Mr. Mitchell and ALT for developing this project and initiating a cooperative relationship with the town.

Minutes of June meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

Treasurer's report: Chairman Morgan reported no changes.

Sale of Sadie Jackson lot: Deposit is in the Conservation account and a closing is still pending.

Heart of Poland: NEFF has identified three possible errors in the survey. We shall ask Matt to review these items with the surveyor and resolve discrepancies with NEFF.

By-Laws: The town is making a review of by-laws for all committees. The only correction needed for ours is a change from 6 to 7 members. Barry has submitted this change.

Mike Murphy Memorial: Fred Huntress has donated a stone that we hope can be engraved. John Young will pursue this with Collette Monuments. Barry will keep Matt informed of the progress in placing this monument by the tree that has already been set. We shall solicit contributions for all costs of this monument.

Other Business: Don presented a list of items that need our renewed attention. Several were resolved immediately and others were placed on future agenda as detailed below:

Selection of Officers: By unanimous vote the following were selected for the next year:

Chairman: Barry Morgan

Treasurer: John Young

Secretary: Don Stover

Naturalist and Trail Steward: Alan Audette

Vacant Seat: Ray Stillman accepted our invitation to serve as a commission member. He will file an application with the Town Office and offer himself for Selectboard appointment.

Conservation Plans: Plans for Waterhouse Park and Map 10-Lot 54 await Selectboard approval. Don and Fred will make corrections to these two plans, respectively, and they will be finalized at our August meeting with a plan for presentation and approval by Selectboard .

Review of master trail plan: This will be a major topic at August meeting.

HOP Survey: Resolution of these issues will also be presented at August meeting.

Waterhouse Park: The proposed new trail will be discussed at October meeting.

Budget issues: Future budget issues, including allocation of proceeds from Sadie Jackson lot sale, will be primary topic for our September meeting.

Scott Segal: gave an update on plans for the municipal park behind the library. A major grant application is in progress with a good possibility of generous funding

Steve Robinson: discussed federal Covid relief funds that the town will receive. He is including trail improvements for consideration under these grants.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm. The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 11 at 7pm in the library.

Future primary agenda items:

August: Finalization of both conservation plans

HOP survey results

Master Trail Plan

September: future budget and allocation of expected property sale proceeds

discussion of properties with conservation potential

October: New Waterhouse Brook Trail

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Stover, Secretary

Attached: "Androscoggin Land Trust plan

Androscoggin Land Trust proposed project to conserve a parcel of land on Megquier Hill Road in Poland.

The Androscoggin Land Trust is currently working with Charles Mitchell (245 Megquier Hill Road, Poland) on the conservation of a 15-acre parcel of land that he owns with frontage on

Megquier Hill Road across from his house. [Poland tax map 14, lot 25A]

The developing plan for the property would have the Androscoggin Land Trust purchasing the

parcel from Mr. Mitchell using funds donated to ALT from his mother's trust, the Anna C. Mitchell

Trust. Prior to this purchase, a conservation easement would be placed on the deed, with the

easement to be held by the ALT and to be managed for the public good. It is the desire of ALT to

have the deed, easement, fee ownership by ALT, and subsequent stewardship of the site to be

managed in such a fashion as to be exempt from property taxes from the town of Poland.

At this point in our discussions, Charles Mitchell and the Androscoggin Land Trust have the

following objectives for this property:

- Preserve in perpetuity the view from Megquier Hill Road down to Tripp Pond.
- Create a small parking area for as many as 6 vehicles at the northern boundary of the property, along the tree line.
- Install two picnic tables near the parking area.
- Erect ALT kiosk at parking area, with map, background on the project, Poland area history, and natural history information associated with the parcel.
- Develop a limited trail system from the parking area down the hill and skirting the edges of the wetland below.
- ALT will maintain the meadow/field on the property as it has existed for the last several decades.
- As time and resources permit, ALT will be exploring options for an invasive plant removal project for the shrubby growth area below the field.
- No buildings, plants, fences, signage, or other structures will be added to the property that would obstruct the view from Megquier Hill Road.

Presented to the Poland Conservation Commission on July 1, 2021.

Rick Speer

Chair, ALT Lands Committee

raspeer@gmail.com

207-783-8463