

APPROVED MINUTES
Town of Concord
Estabrook Access Study Committee
Meeting
June 23, 2016
141 Keyes Road

Members Present: Sally Schnitzer Justin King
 Polly Reeve Jeff Adams
 Neil Rasmussen Lisa Pohl
 Peter Siebert

Also Present: Jane Hotchkiss, Select Board liaison
 Nick D'Arbeloff (Carlisle liaison, non-voting)

Public Present: David Santomenna, Trustees of Reservations

1. Review and approval of minutes for June 9 meeting

The minutes from the Committee's meeting of June 9, 2016 were discussed. It was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as written. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Correspondence

A number of emails have been received since the last meeting. These were distributed before the meeting for the committee to review. It was noted that there still seems to be misinformation about the nature of ownership and access in the Woods.

3. Administrative Matters

Sally asked committee members if they felt that the introductory presentation and slides from the hearing should be posted to our website. The committee approved this idea, and Sally will get these materials posted, along with a link to the CCTV video recording once that is available.

With summer here, we expect to be missing some committee members at future meetings. It appears that we will have a quorum (five members) at all scheduled meetings, but members were asked to let the co-chairs know if their plans will take them away.

The committee agreed to replace the notice of the hearing at the access points to the Woods with a notice about the existence and purpose of the Estabrook Woods

Access Study Committee and information about how to get in touch. Justin offered to produce and distribute the posters for posting.

4. **General thoughts about the June 13 Public Hearing**

Committee members generally felt that the Public Hearing went very well. There was a thoughtful expression of ideas, people were respectful and shared concrete, helpful suggestions. The comment was made that some comments at the hearing seemed to reflect “not in my backyard” or “us vs. them” attitudes. Pressure on access points all around the Woods are increasing. Several members commented on the fact that so many people who attended the hearing (more than half) chose not to speak, and we noted that issues related dogs came up less than many expected they would.

5. **Additional Public Outreach**

The committee felt that coverage in the Concord Journal did not accurately communicate the tone and content of the Hearing. Sally suggested submitting a Guest Commentary from the committee to present a more accurate and balanced account of our purpose, process and progress to date. The Committee approved of this idea, and Sally will take the lead in drafting a piece, with Nick and Polly’s assistance.

6. **Moving toward proposed solutions**

The committee began the process of identifying areas that need further research or information:

- Exploring the potential for a small dirt off-road parking area to serve access at Punkatasset
- Assessing parking and access at Estabrook Road to move towards a permanent solution
- Determining the current status – exactly how much and what quality of parking is currently available at each access point?
- Clarifying the potential for parking and access at Monument Farms.

Jeff, Lisa, and Peter volunteered to work together and with the Town Engineers to put together an inventory of current and potential parking.

Members of the committee observed that current parking availability seems adequate, and the only time there are problems seem to be at times of peak demand. Neil shared his analysis on Estabrook Road that when usage exceeds 50% of maximum capacity on any given day, there are times during

that day when visitors need to seek alternate parking – thus, half of daily maximum capacity appears to be the practical capacity of parking areas. In addition, he has gathered information about nearby conservation lands and parking, which will be distributed to the committee, along with excerpts from TTOR’s management plan for Noanet Woodlands in Dover pertaining to the visitor experience and provided by David Santomenna.

Committee members acknowledged the need for clear and simple communication along with appropriate parking, to reinforce positive behavior. Nick suggested a system of free or inexpensive sticker parking which would require users to read and sign a document explaining the history of the Woods and agreeing to a code of conduct. The challenges of enforcement were also discussed. Because so much of the land is private, this would involve agreement between landowners and the Town. The precedent at White Pond of using season rangers might be a good model.

Nick, Neil and Polly agreed to work together to develop a proposal for establishing and communicating a code of conduct for visitors to the Woods.

The legality of boulders currently placed along the edge of Estabrook Road was questioned, and Jeff offered to look into this matter.

The need to clarify and resolve the status of public access at the end of Estabrook Road was discussed. The committee agreed to formally request, through Select Board member Jane Hotchkiss, that the town proceed with discussions with direct abutters, aimed towards reaching a long term resolution for public access to the Woods at the end of Estabrook Road.

There were no public comments.

The Committee adjourned at 8:30.

Materials:

- Minutes of June 9
- Packet of correspondence received since last meeting
- Power point slides and written presentation from June 13 hearing.

