

Richmond Rural Preservation Land Trust

February 1st, 2021 MINUTES

February 1st, 2021
5:30 P.M., via Zoom

Call to Order: 5:35 PM

Roll Call: R. Anderson, R. Swanson, S. Paton, A. Fox, T. Bietz, N. Gronstrom, T. Bietz, J. Davenport, S. Lacey (ex-officio)

Others in attendance: D. Poyer

Not Present: D. Madnick (ex-officio)

Approval of Minutes: R. Anderson motioned to approve minutes as amended, R. Swanson 2nd, Aye. N. Gronstrom, Aye. T. Bietz, Abstain. J. Davenport, Aye. A. Fox, Aye. R. Anderson, Aye. S. Paton, Aye.

Communications: S. Paton received a call from R. Friday, of the Rhode Island Land Trust Council. He inquired about S. Paton's interest in joining a search committee to find his replacement; a director for the Rhode Island Land Trust Council, as R. Friday will be retiring soon. S. Paton also received a call from Wild and Scenic Rivers, Antonia Bryson. Bryson is a Richmond resident and interested in collaborating with the RRPLT in the future.

Approval of Invoices for Payment:

1. Reimbursement of chainsaw replacement request for Crawley steward.

- a. S. McBurney, Crawley steward, broke his machine while stewarding trails and is seeking help for repairment costs. There was a board discussion of reimbursement vs giving access to the shed and use of RRPLT power tools and chainsaws. The RRPLT concluded that it cannot justify setting a precedent that would open the town paying for replacement parts without having known what the machine was used for prior to Land Trust property-related use.

Public Forum: None.

Old Business

1. Member Reports

- a. R. Anderson walked the trails on the Kenyon Preserve and reported that there was one tree down. Everything else was fine.
- b. J. Davenport walked the perimeter of the Crawley Preserve. He noted a few orange signs down on the west and north side, NW corner -- likely from tree falls. He found 4-6 signs on the ground. R. Anderson stated there are more signs in the shed to replace the ones fallen down.
- c. R. Swanson replaced a missing board on the bridge in Bradner.
- d. S. Paton walked the boundary of the Salia Preserve. She reported that some signs were down. She brought signs with her and replaced where they had been

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Richmond Rural Preservation Land Trust

missing. She reported at the northern boundary there is a big field, and in it, a bald eagle eating something in a tree. She reported that the western and eastern boundary has been logged. There were no encroachments - except the trail that has been used by abutting property. Though, it does not appear to be used by vehicles. She also reported that there was a red blaze marking a trail -- the abutters have created this "red trail" at the northern end of property and crosses over RRPLT property. Board discussion of unauthorized trail creation and safety/legal concerns.

- e. S. Paton was contacted by an abutter to the Kenyon Preserve offering to purchase the Preserve land that abuts their property. Claimed the boundary signs were not correct. The Land Trust cannot sell property. S. Paton suggested to wait and get updated GIS (BAD ELF) to cross-check the boundaries in order to have a more thorough discussion with the land owner.
- f. S. Paton submitted the annual report to the Town Council and also gave the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) presentation. It was well received.
- g. R. Anderson completed the stewardship monitoring report for the Kenyon Preserve. He installed new signs, but could not find the signs at the northeast corner (Miranda Drive).
- h. S. Paton shared that she submitted the trail grant, for \$76,000 to complete design and build parking area at the salia preserve, to RI DEM. The RRPLT is required to contribute \$19,322 in matching funds, which will mostly be in the form of in-kind contributions.

2. Town Planner Update

- a. S. Lacey updated that the Tug Hollow property owner with whom the RRPLT met in 2019 for a potential land donation, is still in development. S. Lacey will keep the board updated as new information becomes available.
- b. The final draft of the Comprehensive plan is now available. The Planning Board will be reviewing it next. All are welcome to attend the Planning Board meeting, February 9th, 2021, for review of the Comprehensive Plan. S. Lacey thanked the Trustees for their input.

3. Budget Update

- a. S. Paton provided a quick update on the current RRPLT finances.

4. Stewardship Subcommittee Update

a. Chan Preserve Boundary Line Agreement

- i. There is an issue of an abutter piling logs on Chan Property. In order for DEM to sign the property easement, they need confirmation that the abutter will halt log piling on Land Trust property. K. Elsworth has drafted an agreement between the abutter and the RRPLT stating that the abutter is expected to vacate the premises by March 31st. D. Poyer suggested a later target date of May 1st, 2021 for vacating. She suggested the board set up a meeting to discuss the boundary with the abutter, explaining DEM's requirements. S. Lacey recommended accepting the March 31st cut off date. The Town is working with the abutter to move to a more suitable location.
- ii. The Class I Survey for \$21,727.27 with Al DiOrio has been completed.
- iii. D. Poyer reached out to DEM and was informed the RRPLT has to execute a conservation easement with DEM. Karen Elsworth put a

Richmond Rural Preservation Land Trust

certificate of authority on the docket for the next Town Council meeting - the chair of land trust can then sign the conservation easement.

- b. S. Paton shared that they held a Horsely Witten kick off call with engineers to begin preliminary topographic and wetland work.
- 5. Property Acquisition Subcommittee Update**
 - a. S. Paton would like to reconvene on the property prioritization list. There was a brief discussion on preparing a strategy/ mission for the Town Council to keep them in the know. Then, reach out to landowners.
- 6. Communications / Outreach Subcommittee Update**
 - a. A. Fox provided an update on the land trust brochure. She suggested changing focus to include less details about the individual preserves, and share more highlights of the trust; land acquisition, projects, collaborations, outreach, etc.
- 7. Boundary Reports for Properties**
 - a. Discussed in member reports.

New Business:

- 1. Beaver River Watershed Stewardship Plan - discussion of comments**
 - a. After review, the board felt the stewardship plan was detailed and well put together.
 - b. There was brief board discussion about the methodology used to produce the report.
 - c. S. Paton shared concern of less protection in the lower Beaver River watershed. The board discussed the purchase of agriculture fields to protect the waters.
 - i. D. Poyer suggested the acquisition committee meet and identify properties of water protection/ rural character interest.
 - ii. Suggested working with NRCS and other organizations in reaching out to property owners of agricultural/ properties of interest.
 - iii. S. Paton asked for comments to be sent to her, so she can compile and share with the Conservation Commission.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Trustees may move to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a)(5), discussions related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes.

There was no Executive Session held for the February 2021 RRPLT Meeting.

Next Agenda:

1. Review Items for next agenda

R. Swanson motioned to adjourn, R. Anderson 2nd, Aye. N. Gronstom, Aye. T. Bietz, Abstain. J. Davenport, Aye. A. Fox, Aye. R. Swanson, Aye. S. Paton, Aye.

Adjourn: 7:35 PM

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