

Town of Hudson
Benson Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 1, 2010

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

A meeting of the Benson Committee was called to order by Chair H. Schibanoff at 7:08 pm. July 1, 2010 in the Board of Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall. Eagle Scout Candidate Stephen Lichenberg led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Attendance:

J. Barnes, late, K. Dickinson, R. Empey, C. Gagnon, Selectman Liaison S. Jasper, M Lee, Clerk P. Nichols, Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh, Alternate A. Desrosiers,
Excused: J. Leone

3. Public Input

None

4. Presentations

- A. **Stephen Lichenberg**, Eagle Scout Candidate gave a presentation on his Benson Park Footbridge Proposal on the Haselton Barn Trail near post sign 14. He gave the Committee a hand-out of his plans and pictures of the site he would like to build the Bridge. He explained his plans on the footings and placement of this Footbridge. Eagle Scout Candidate S. Lichenberg said that he would not be able to present his plans to the Eagle Board for approval but hopes to have the project done by October of this year. Questions were asked and he answered them to the best of his ability. He plans to have a pancake breakfast to raise the funds for this project if it is accepted by the Eagle Board. The consensus of the Committee was unanimous in accepting Eagle Scout Candidate S. Lichenberg's plan for a Footbridge on the property. With approval of the Board of Selectmen at a later date.
- B. **Curt Laffin**, a member of the Hudson Community and the American Chestnut Foundation, appeared before the Committee. Before beginning his presentation he complimented the Committee on the Park progress. As a member of the first Committee years ago, he sees the Park as it was envisioned then and how it has come to resemble the original plans. C. Laffin spoke of the American Chestnut Tree and its History. As one of the most important Trees in forests from Maine to Georgia, and from Piedmont west to the Ohio River Valley, it grew tall and straight, some reaching heights of 100 feet with a diameter of five (5) feet or more. Then the blight struck. In 1904 in NY City, the blight, an Asian fungus, that the Chestnut had no resistance to spread quickly. By 1950 some four (4) billion trees had been destroyed. Today, the TACF (The American Chestnut Foundation) are working to restore this species to its native eastern forests with an eye on improving the environment.

TACF has been working to plant some of these nuts in areas in the east. On June 8th C. Laffin took some members of TACF and the New England Science Foundation to Benson Park to see if this would be an area that could be consider in planting some of these nuts. An area in upper end of the North Field was an area that C. Laffin liked because of its sunny location and traffic pattern. Educating people on these beautiful trees and watching them grow would be something that would interest young and old alike. The TACF liked the area and asked C. Laffin to send a letter to their Board requesting a few of these nuts for planting in the park. He is looking for an endorsement from the Committee to allow the planting of some of these nuts if TACF Board approves this.

P. Nichols made a motion to endorse C. Laffin's proposal to write a letter to the TACF Board requesting that some nuts be planted at Benson Park.

K. Dickinson seconded the motion

J. Barnes asked what was required of the Committee if the TACF approved this planting. C. Laffin said that he would put a group together to do the planting, upkeep, history, etc. so that all he needs is our approval. Other questions and answers followed.

All in favor-Motion Carries

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of June 17, 2010 Benson Park Committee.

J. Barnes made a motion to accept minutes

A. Desrosiers seconded the motion

All in favor...Motion Carries

6. Current Issues

A. **Chair H. Schibanoff** said that he received a call from K. Matthews to let him know that there were no brochures in the park and asked if P. Nichols knew this. P. Nichols responded and said that brochures were on order and that she was able to get a few hundred from the Recreation Department and would put them in for the week-end. When the others came in they would be put in the park.

B. **P. Nichols** mentioned that the bottom of the Main Entrance road was in disrepair. The asphalt was starting to break apart and cars were making it worse. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said he would talk to the highway department, he had noticed it too.

C. **D. Empey** said that someone had gone around and painted fluorescent orange in several locations and he did not know if it was the Highway Department. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he knew the Highway Department had marked a spot at the top of the hill and thinks they will be fixing that also.

D. A. Desrosiers said that at the last meeting it was mentioned putting white stripes next to the fence across from the handicap parking area to stop people from parking because they were blocking access for emergency vehicles. A Tanker for watering at the park could not leave because of the limited space.

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said he would look into this problem and see what could be done to correct it. Questions and discussion followed. It was mentioned to ask J. Griffiths if he returns with a proposal to do another sign to add Main Entrance with an arrow. This might help.

- E. **Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh** asked that at the next clean-up could dressing up the entrance way be a possibility? C. Gagnon said that the landscape Committee would be meeting at the park on July 3rd to plant flowers at the Entrance sign and at the Kiosk.
- F. **D. Empey** said that the area by the handicap entrance has been cleared with the brush mower and would like the town to put in on their mowing schedule to keep it clear. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper will put this on his list of things to do.
- G. **C. Gagnon** asked if anyone else had noticed that when entering and leaving the park from the main entrance a problem exists if a vehicle is trying to enter as someone is leaving. Are there plans for the future to correct this? Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said he noticed this and some long term planning will have to be developed to correct this. It is not attractive with the jersey barriers there. This is an issue that will have to be discussed at a later date.
- H. **K. Dickinson** referred back to the blocking of the gate in the handicap area and suggested a couple of signs saying “ no parking this side”. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper will look into this with the Road Agent who has experience with this.
- I. **C. Gagnon** asked if anyone noticed the rules signs (metal) on the large size that are throughout the park. She doesn’t remember the committee talking about this or how many should be placed in the park. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that the Board of Selectmen issues four or five signs to be placed around the park due to people entering from so many ways. A. Desrosiers said that these signs had the hours on them but she was in the park at 8:40 pm and there were still two vehicles in the handicap area. The police were there at 8:20 pm to lock up and they couldn’t because people were still in the park. She asked if some sort of sign be placed so that everyone would be aware of the park hours. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he would have D. Yates look into having a few signs made to say Gates locked at (Time) for the season. Chair H. Schibanoff asked to have the committee review these signs.
- J. **Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh** asked if others have seen unleashed dogs in the park. Some have and it is unacceptable for the dogs to be unleashed. There are children playing and running in the park and many people have a fear of dogs. C. Gagnon tells them that we are working on having a dog park for dogs to run without being restrained. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said he is waiting for an ordinance so that something could be done.

7. Old Business

A. Project Management & Process

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh gave an overview of what she is trying to do. She has started to design a form that people would fill out with their name, address, scope of project, etc. This would be a simple form and let the committee track

park projects in the future. There would also be a formal approval process to go along with this. Discussion and ideas and suggestions followed.

B. Phase II Planning

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh handed out two pages with the raw data of the Survey given to the committee. She had eight responses and based her data on this. She looked at the data and found the top priority items for 2011 and five years later. Some members took this as a wish list and others saw it as something that will be on-going starting in 2011. Some of the survey questions were broad and can be defined as the committee progresses. Questions and thoughts were given in depth. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh asked how we should proceed in lining up future priorities. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he thought looking at what could be budgeted would have a great deal to do with what could be accomplished. The Board of Selectmen would need the Benson Committee Budget Request some time in September. He stated that D. Yates could investigate what the Committee's priority's are for the future and come back with costs. The Committee was charged with a wish list for the year 2012 in a month and it would be discussed, voted on and sent to D. Yates for investigating costs. C. Gagnon said that this budget was for the year 2012. What do we have for a budget for the year 2011 if any?

C. Letterboxes/geocaches

C. Gagnon explained what Letterboxes and Geocaches were. She met with people interested in doing this in the park and seemed alright with this. G. Gagnon said she would be glad to be the point person to make sure this does not get out of hand.

D. Nameplates

Consensus from the Committee-no name plates

6. New Business

A. Committee Reports

C. Gagnon spoke on the **volunteer committee**. The next clean-up would be on the second Saturday of the month from 9 am to 2 pm. The **landscape committee** has three active spots that they are working on, one is across from the butterfly garden, another is an oval that is at an intersection of many roads and the last one is up on Story Book Hill near the Old Shoe. There are plants left over that will die if not placed in the ground so the committee is meeting at the park on Saturday, July 3rd to place these at the Main Entrance and at the Kiosk. The landscape committee is looking for approval from the Park Committee to place wooden signs in the areas that are being planted. The signs would be pressure treated wood carved like the signs throughout the park with the same lettering. These signs would be about 12 inches from the ground so that they would blend into the surroundings.

D. Empey reported on the **Trails/Paths Committees**. A workshop was held on the grounds of Benson Park on Tuesday. It was well attended with some new people and a lot of progress was made. He is going to try to keep this going through the summer months. The committee is trying to complete the Haselton Barn trail between sign post 7 & 8 that has been non-passable. Some

issues to be brought back to the committee will be wetlands issues and he said that he would have to go to the Conservation Commission and DES but he is not ready at this time to pursue this.

P. Nichols said that the **Communications Committee** will be meeting next week to discuss plans on the Grand Opening in September.

B. Discussion on Memorials

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh created a few categories on Memorials and wants feed back from Committee Members.

C. Eagle Scout Projects Report

Chair H. Schibanoff gave an update J. Schlosberg project on invasive plants. He has withdrawn from this project and he is moving on to another project that he feels he is suited for. Chair H. Schibanoff made contact with B. Bates about his project on the remote control car area and he is still very interested in doing this for his Eagle Scout Badge. He will be presenting this to the Scout Council in August and will come back to the Committee with his plans. The third Eagle Scout project undertaken by M. Undercofler will be underway soon. His fundraiser was a success and he is in the process of purchasing materials, etc.

7. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper spoke about an issue he has with the Senior Center location. Chair H. Schibanoff said that this issue would be discussed at the next meeting when the Selectman Liaison K. Massey from the Senior building committee will be there along with D. Briand from the dog park committee.

A. Desrosiers said that she had been at the park the other night and there was a professional photographer there along with an assistant, a mother and a student. This boy was having his yearbook picture taken with Swan Lake as the background.

P. Nichols thanked the Landscape committee and the Butterfly garden group for the wonderful work they are doing. It is already making a difference. She also thanked D. Empey and his crew for all the work and hours they spend working on the trails.

Next Clean-up date will be Saturday, July 10, 2010 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Rain Date: Saturday, July 17, 2010 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

**Next meeting Date: July 15, 2010 at 7:00 pm
Community Development Room, Town Hall**

8. Adjournment 8:55 pm

K. Dickinson made a motion to adjourn

C. Gagnon Seconded the Motion

All in favor-Motion Carries