

July 1, 2024  
DRAFT Minutes of the Forest and Parks Commission  
Chelsea Town Library  
Start time 6:06 pm

Present: Jen Chase, Susan Elder, Linda Kuban, John Upham, Robin Amber, Pete Amber.

Meeting minutes from June 2024 were approved as submitted.

Public Comments: None.

Language Change of "Use of Commons" form proposal. A discussion was held on the proposed revisions to the "Use of Commons" form given to all persons and groups requesting to use the Commons. After discussion the proposed revisions were decided upon and will be presented to the Selectboard at the next evening's Selectboard meeting by Jen Chase and Susan Elder. It will also be requested of the Board to approve educational efforts by the group to bring the issue of health of the commons to the public. This will involve promoting measures that can be taken to avoid further damage and methods to improve the health of the commons. This involves the negative impacts of driving onto the Commons, its damage to tree roots, the replacement history/early death of trees, replacement costs, efforts to keep the greens healthy with proper management (such as aeration, fertilization, filling in low areas with good soil, and choosing proper landscape trees).

Some of the suggested possibilities for education efforts about the impact of soil compaction on tree health might include: inviting the Chelsea Tree Warden Zeb Allen and / or CF&P committee members to share information at the farmers market, a newspaper article in the Chelsea Spotlight newsletter, informational handouts circulated at the farmer's market to vendors, publishing information on the Town's website, and signage on the green.

Susan reported on the status of the pollinator garden on the Maple Avenue property. A walk-through of the property to brainstorm ideas will be scheduled in August. The timing of the press release, the "kick off" party, the involvement of both the Tunbridge and Chelsea schools, arrangement of selection of trees, delivery and planting was set forth. The Safe Art summer program for kids ages 10-17 have been involved in the planning already. They are busy painting bird houses and mason bee homes to be hung at the site. Chelsea Librarian, Kate MacClean, is actively planning the kick off event with Susan. There was an idea that the Chelsea students could make a wooden bench or two for the site as well. A member of the committee will inquire about this. The plan is to have area school children help to plant trees and spring bulbs. All should be done by mid-October.

The search for an aerator has been unsuccessful, so it was suggested to see if renting one for Ron Johnson to use is a possibility. The aeration could be done in the spring along with fertilization for the Commons.

Pete Amber spoke to another Health Center representative concerning collaborating on the Memory tree project. Jen added that this could be a way to raise money for replanting of new trees on the Commons.

Jen added that she will be calling the Upper Valley Trails alliance for advice on our trails project.

Next meeting will be August 5, 2024. A tour of the Maple Avenue lot and the trees on the Commons followed the meeting. The tour of the Commons focused on the declining health of several trees, recommendation for several removals, the many open spaces created from previous tree removals and places in the common where trees are recommended for replanting.

Adjourn at 7:10 p.m.