

Motion to declare the wooded area of Sagamore Farm a Camden Town Park

Background. Sagamore Farm is a 77-acre parcel of land abutting Camden Hills State Park owned by the Town of Camden. It was a farm throughout much of the 1800's. Around 1890, the farm was purchased by Joseph B. Stearns, who operated it as a high-end cattle farm, until his death in 1895. How long it remained as a farm after that is unclear. In 1945, Chauncy and Bruce Borland transferred the Sagamore Farm deed to the "Inhabitants of the Town of Camden".



Sagamore Farm
Deed.pdf

Since then, Sagamore Farm has largely reverted to woodland. At some point, the Town of Camden built a 120,000 gallon underground water storage tank near the entrance to the property. There is also a small abandoned gravel pit (used in the late 1960s or early 1970s) next to the storage tank, which has since become a wetland and home to a variety of aquatic wildlife. During the reconstruction of High Street, the area behind Laite Construction was used for fill and has since been maintained as a field.

At various times since 1980, there have been proposals to promote Sagamore Farm as a site for a business park. Although the exact boundaries of the business park land have not been defined, the most logical place would be on the field created by the fill from the High Street reconstruction project. Part of this area is also under consideration for installation of a solar array to service part of the Town's electrical needs.

Starting about three years ago, with the permission of the Camden Select Board, Morgan Laidlaw, representing McNEMBA (Mid-Coast chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association), constructed a set of trails in the wooded area of Sagamore Farm (see attached map created by Hans Bengtsson).



Sagamore Farm trail
map 2.7.17.pdf

The trails have the advantage of being located on a gentle grade and suitable for use by people who are unable to navigate the many steeper, rocky trails common in the mountains surrounding Camden. The trails are suitable for hiking, biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. The forest itself is an estimated 40-60 years old and is home to a diverse array of wildlife as judged by the variety of animal tracks in the snow.

Sagamore Farm Trails in Winter and Summer



The Camden Conservation Commission believes it is now appropriate to designate the wooded area of Sagamore Farm as a Town Park. Such designation does not preclude commercial development of the field behind Laite Construction. McNEMBA has agreed to maintain the trail system. Jim Burgess, the owner of the Lodge at Camden Hills has agreed to provide parking and access to the Sagamore Farm trail system through his property. The Camden Conservation Commission can provide the labor necessary to build a kiosk at the beginning of the trail system. This proposal has the support of Camden's Parks and Recreation Acting Director and the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Motion: The Camden Conservation Commission requests that the Town of Camden establish the wooded area of Sagamore Farm as a Town Park.