



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Town of Greenland • Greenland, NH 03840
575 Portsmouth Avenue • PO Box 100
Phone: 603.431.7111 • Fax: 603.430.3761
Website: greenland-nh.com

MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, October 08, 2014 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Chair Chip Hussey, Bill Bilodeau, Laura Byergo, Joe Fredericks, Kevin Lucey

Chair Hussey opened the Conservation Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chair; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Purchase of Town Land – Map R21, Lot 7

Chair Hussey reviewed the purchase of Town land that was proposed by the Commission to the Board of Selectmen. The Planning Board unanimously approved the purchase at their meeting on Thursday, October 02, 2014. Two public hearings are required; the first will be held on Monday, October 20, 2014 during the Board of Selectmen meeting.

MOTION: L. Byergo moved to recommend the purchase of Town Land [Map R21, Lot 7]. Second – B. Bilodeau

DISCUSSION: L. Byergo felt it made an enormous amount of sense: the land backs up to Packer Brook, goes into the Winnicut, and abuts conservation land on two sides. The lot will be classified as conservation land and not open space. The cost of the land is \$11,300; funds will be taken from Conservation Land Capital Reserve Fund.

MOTION: L. Byergo moved to recommend the purchase of Town Land [Map R21, Lot 7]. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. **MOTION CARRIED**

2. Trail Update

L. Byergo updated members on the trail. She had asked the Appalachian Mountain Club for a cost assessment to walk the land and design the proposed trail. One day round trip travel from Pinkham Notch, lunch, and a one day field assessment will cost approximately \$500 for two people; the two day cost is expected to be \$1,250. They will compile data, create a map with call-outs and write a report. RPC has been unable to give L. Byergo a cost of having someone walk the trails with a GPS for one day. She felt the Commission could go to the Selectmen and ask to use the matching grant funding to start the trail project.

It was pointed out that RPC would not be needed if the Appalachian Mountain Club used GPS points on their map. RPC has offered one person to work with AMC the day the trail is walked. The RPC grant for mapping will indicate where the trailheads should meet, the location of existing conservation land, and

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

where land will have to be procured in order to make the larger network of trails work. J. Fredericks suggested that L. Byergo confirm with AMC if they were planning to use GPS points on their map.

The Commission felt the price was fair, but wanted to cover the matching funds grant. The Selectmen will request a match; the prep work that's already been done can be used.

MOTION: *J. Fredericks moved to request from the Board of Selectmen the use of matching funds from Warrant Article 11, which was passed at the 2013 Town Meeting. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor.*
MOTION CARRIED

K. Lucey stated that AMC is professional in this field, but they are not natural resource scientists. He recommended their mapping be noted as a preliminary design. Their plan should also include recommendations on handling invasives. L. Byergo recently spoke with a former forester from this area who is working on songbird and cottontail habitat, and invasive species. Contrary to the current opinion that invasives are negative when out of control, certain invasives (example: Autumn Olive and multiflora rose) are creating dense tangles and replicating a great habitat for the cottontails. L. Byergo would like him to look at the proposed trailheads with cuts in the cover. There may not be as much of a problem under the trees; however, the pit will be a problem. They may be able to work on containing the invasives and protect the cottontail.

K. Lucey recommended that the trails not be opened until the invasive species can be controlled. He continued that constraints be placed on their design and not go through Thompson Brook, which is a more sensitive area. L. Byergo felt they should design as much as possible; the entire trail didn't need to be built and could be done in stages. K. Lucey continued that he felt the Conservation Commission was not recommending a full plan be done, which would include invasive species; they were planning an incremental trail task. J. Fredericks agreed that AMC was doing a plan for trails, not a management plan; a conservation plan and management plan would be needed eventually. K. Lucey countered that the Town's own conservation plan stated it not be done, adding that by putting lines on a plan there was a risk of it being built, and the conservation risks that were identified would come to fruition. He continued that if the Thompson Brook area was opened up, it would become subject to infestation. J. Frederick added going to Thompson Brook was long range and very expensive.

Chair Hussey showed members the proposed sign for the Thompson Brook Trail through Van Etten Drive. The sign will be brown with white lettering. J. Fredericks suggested addressing bicycles, horses, etc. on the trails. Chair Hussey stated that on the original Meaghan Way property the only exclusion is motorized vehicles. Lenny Lord felt some of the proposed locations for trails would be too wet for horses and be destructive. L. Byergo reminded members that abutters would have to be contacted for permission. J. Fredericks personal preference was foot traffic only; horses and bikes were more likely to go off trail. To maintain the conservation aspect of the property was to keep people on the trail. K. Lucey suggested that since this would be a preliminary plan, Andrew should be asked for the preferred use of the trail.

3. Conservation Subdivisions: Density Bonuses

J. Fredericks has worked on density bonuses for conservation subdivisions. He reminded members that last March the Planning Board removed all density bonuses for conservation subdivisions with the exception of work force housing. Without incentives, there would be no reason to build a conservation subdivision. There was a discussion regarding the difference between cluster developments and conservation subdivisions. Chair Hussey asked members to review the proposal by J. Fredericks and be ready to discuss this item further at the next meeting.

Growth management was discussed. Chair Hussey told members that an active CIP was needed for growth control.

4. Vernal Pools

Chair Hussey asked if members wanted to move vernal pools forward this year. If so, he would need something definitive for the Planning Board to review. B. Bilodeau suggested using the Fish and Game definition of vernal pools. K. Lucey pointed out that it would be difficult for the Conservation Commission to make any determination that federal and state agencies failed to do; vernal pools don't have a size. Army Corps of Engineers has a definition, and is referred to in the Greenland Zoning Ordinance as well as used by the State of Maine.

L. Byergo stated they needed to move towards effective protections and get away from the size issue. They should discuss what provides effective protection of vernal pools; it's not setting aside a specific number of square feet. J. Fredericks countered that if you wanted to change the way wetlands were dealt with in Town, that's what should be changed. L. Byergo responded that because vernal pools are so small, they're different than wetlands in general. J. Fredericks asked her how an effective regulatory environment could be created around what she was proposing. She responded that something slightly more sophisticated should be used as well as a soil description that includes how the eco-system and habitat is actually being used. Developers should be asked to be less reductionists and more comprehensive. J. Fredericks stated that vernal pools should fit into the existing regulations for wetlands. Changing the way vernal pools are identified and protected would add a layer of complexity during the planning process that would stymie engineers because it's a wildlife scientist point of reference.

K. Lucey clarified that Maine's policy for significant vernal pools is a 250' radius from the spring high water. J. Fredericks added that the fatal flaw to the Maine approach is that wetland engineers are relied on to determine what is significant. K. Lucey commented Maine is operating within a larger system that doesn't exist in New Hampshire.

5. Budget

Chair Hussey reviewed the budget with members. L. Byergo requested that a portion of the education funds be applied to the 13-week Natural Steward Conservation course she is taking.

MOTION: B. Bilodeau moved to approve 50% payment (\$150) of the Natural Steward Conservation course for L. Byergo. Second – K. Lucey; four in favor, one abstain (L. Byergo). **MOTION CARRIED**

6. Other Business

L. Byergo announced that there will be a Green Infrastructure workshop at Greenland School on Thursday, November 13, 2014.

7. Approval of Minutes: Wednesday, September 10, 2014

MOTION: J. Fredericks moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, September 10, 2014. Second – K. Lucey; four in favor, one abstain (L. Byergo). **MOTION CARRIED**

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

8. Adjournment

MOTION: *B. Bilodeau moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. Second – J. Fredericks; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED*

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, November 12, 2014 – 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: 