



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

MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, October 11, 2017 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Bill Bilodeau, Laura Byergo, Chip Hussey

Members Absent: Sarah Rowe

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

1. Falls Way Site Walk Review

Chair Byergo reviewed the Falls Way site walk that was done on Saturday, September 30, 2017. C. Hussey wasn't present for that walk. Notes were done by Chair Byergo. The site walk was not complete. C. Hussey suggested the monitoring report be kept on file and added to as sections were finished. The map being used wasn't the entire easement; the Atlantic White Cedars were not included. The baseline report indicates there are conservation easements A through K; the maps being used did not show sections A-C and H-I.

During the walk they could not locate any wetland and conservation markings. A trail had also been cut into an area, which may have been for a dirt bike; C. Hussey noted motorized vehicles aren't allowed. Another date for the next section will need to be set for a monitoring walk. In the next letter, Chair Byergo would like to include a reminder about conservation easements, and what can and cannot be done.

C. Hussey recommended putting up a sign on each end of the trail: "no motorized vehicles". They can walk or use a bicycle. The easement doesn't allow motorized vehicles. He also suggested handing out copies of the easement when doing the monitoring walks, highlighting specific points. Easement signs will need to be put back up in some areas. Chair Byergo suggested undertaking another section and look for better signage and any encroachment. She would like to go out again as soon as possible.

Chair Byergo told members Exeter and Hampton have hired interns to monitor their properties; one from UNH and the other a retired Vet. She suggested that if members find it beyond their capacity, they could hire an intern next summer through the Conservation Commission budget to get the work done. Monitoring is one the responsibilities noted in the RSA. C. Hussey commented that he would prefer conservation property not be given to the Town; it should be given to an agency that had the manpower to do the monitoring or the homeowners association should pay to have it done.

2. Conservation Commission Talking Points Update

This topic was continued to the next meeting.

3. Liberty Hill Trail Update

C. Hussey reported that the update would have to wait until the leaves drop. Chair Byergo requested a copy of the surveyor's report.

4. Winnicut River Wood Cut

At the last meeting, members discussed cleaning up the river in the winter once it froze or in the fall, or do something with the beaver dam in the spring. C. Hussey thought the plan was to cut everything with a chain saw that was hanging over once there was a good solid freeze. Wood could then be dragged by someone with a snow mobile or four-wheeler. He clarified they would cut anything hanging above the water, nothing in the water. Chair Byergo added they didn't want to cut a surface structure that may be holding something under the ice. Her concern was the cutting should be done in a way it didn't harm any habitats. C. Hussey assured her they would not be dragging anything out of the water; they would be cutting branches hanging close to the water.

Chair Byergo was reluctant to take on any projects when existing projects aren't complete. She didn't want to take time from monitoring or walking the trail when accessing wetlands would be easier once the ground was frozen. Residents will need to be notified of any work being done on their property.

Chair Byergo stated it was important that the Conservation Commission receive credit for any work done on the river. The topic won't be discussed again until the river is frozen.

5. Review of Cluster Housing Options

This topic was continued to the next meeting.

6. Conservation Land on Tide Mill Road, Town Open Space on Van Etten Drive

Town Open Space on Van Etten Drive: Chair Byergo confirmed with the Town Administrator that the open space at the end of Van Etten Drive is Town-owned and not part of the homeowners association (this is land on the same side where the trail starts). The land between Rt. 33 and the homes on Van Etten belongs to the association. She would like to ask the Selectmen if they have a plan for the Town-owned land; it would be a nice open space habitat area and would not require much maintenance. C. Hussey suggested she have a plan for the parcel, including how it would be maintained. Open space doesn't have the protection of a conservation easement, but is designated as open space and should not be developed; C. Hussey stated it could be developed. Chair Byergo stated there was a report done by RPC between 1989 and 1994 regarding the open space in Greenland. There may be useful ideas in that report for the Conservation Commission.

C. Hussey stated that a bog bridge would need to be built on the trail near the beaver dam. Chair Byergo agreed.

Conservation Land on Tide Mill Road: Chair Byergo contacted the Nature Conservancy; they are the third party to the conservation easement on the property. The Society for the Protection of New England Forests is the second party, and the landowner is the first party. The primary responsibility for maintaining the easement is the responsibility of the Society. Chair Byergo spoke to the Director of Land Stewardship at the Society. The Director said there was a maintenance fund for the property. It took a hit during the housing crisis, and they had been dependent on the interest of the fund to do the

mowing. The last mowing on record was 2005-2006. They were reluctant to draw on the capital for mowing costs (the last mowing cost \$2,600 due to it being overgrown). The Director felt it may have gotten to the point where they would need to draw on the capital. They would contact the landowner to see if he could help with funding. The Conservancy would also be contacted to possibly share the costs of mowing. Chair Byergo suggested they contact the Great Bay Estuarine Research Reserve because the conservation land is within the perimeter of the Reserve. Even though the Reserve isn't on the easement, they may be interested in helping with the maintenance because it's adjacent to the tidal river.

The deed indicates it must be kept as an open meadow as part of the conservation easement. Chair Byergo said the Society also holds the conservation easement on the Hughes property on Tuttle Lane. She continued that one of the things mentioned by Fred Borman was that there is land that could benefit from a conservation easement (example: Packer Brook) as well as valuable uplands.

C. Hussey stated that a plan would need to be given to the Selectmen for Tide Mill Road and Van Etten Drive. Chair Byergo responded they would need to decide what they wanted to do with those properties and if they wanted it to be added as conservation land; it abuts very nice conservation land and would add to the environmental value of that land, which adjoins the trail. C. Hussey pointed out it was open space and could be sold. Chair Byergo questioned if stronger protection was needed. C. Hussey stated he had tried to get all the open space deeds placed in conservation, but the Board at the time didn't agree. He suggested if there was a large audience present at a Board meeting, that might be the time to request a warrant article placing the open space land on Liberty Hill, Coastal Way, Cushman Way and behind Meaghan Way into conservation. That would provide the extra protection.

There was further discussion about land in conservation throughout Town that doesn't have public access. A prime area for a conservation easement with public access is the land where the trail is located. C. Hussey felt if it was presented to the Selectmen properly, it may "fly". Unless residents are involved, it may not move forward. Chair Byergo stated abutters need to be involved, and suggested residents on Falls Way could help with monitoring. It would get them involved in protecting their back yards in addition to making it easier for the Conservation Commission. She further suggested adding a statement to the next notification that the Commission was looking for monitors for the conservation land. Abutters were the stakeholders and people in Town that care.

7. 31 Winnicut Road Update

Chair Byergo updated members that the Winnicut River was a Category 3 river. It would need to be a Category 4 river (must have at least four tributaries) to be protected under the Shoreland Protection Act. She added that the septic system was on the 100' mark, and it was unclear how well it was measured; however, it has been approved. The application date was the 18th; the meeting date was September 13th. Chair Byergo contacted DES because the Conservation Commission didn't have time to submit comments. She was concerned that it was a quick turnaround and the Conservation Commission didn't have enough time to react to the septic system. Chair Byergo explained that when the Conservation Commission reviews a permit, she would like to know the results. That would include comments from the Planning Board and Zoning Board, and any approvals.

8. Approval of Minutes: Wednesday, September 13, 2017

Chair Byergo questioned the fourth paragraph on the first page and the reference to “20 years”. C. Hussey and B. Bilodeau responded that it was in reference to the old fish ladder; there was a dam and fish ladder.

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, September 13, 2017. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. **MOTION CARRIED**

9. Other Business

Invoice: The invoice for the 2018 membership dues to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions was given to the Commission for approval.

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to approve payment of the invoice for the 2018 membership dues to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions in the amount of \$296. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. **MOTION CARRIED**

Chair Byergo will contact the NHACC about suggestions to increase membership. She will also contact the Portsmouth Herald for prices to place an ad. C. Hussey mentioned Seacoast Online, the paper, and an insert for Greenland residents only.

Chair Byergo reminded members about the conference on Saturday, November 04, 2017. Workshops were reviewed.

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to approve payment of the conference fee up to \$55 for any Conservation Commission member wishing to attend. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. **MOTION CARRIED**

King Tide: King Tide will be happening November 5 – 7, 2017. The NH Coastal Adaptation Group sponsors a King Tide photo contest. Chair Byergo explained the King Tide contest, adding it could develop into a Conservation Commission project with historical significance. Members discussed setting a pole at the end of Tide Mill Road or on a resident’s private property near the Bay. C. Hussey will check with the Property Maintenance Supervisor for a pole. They also mentioned putting up a sign explaining the purpose.

Website Links: Chair Byergo stated there are many links on the Conservation Commission page on the Town website. One of the most useful was the Conservation and Land Stewardship Plan. She would also like to include the management plans for land with conservation easements. More information about Greenland should be on their page.

Conservation Shirts: C. Hussey suggested Conservation Commission members wear conservation shirts when accessing a resident’s property. Chair Byergo felt all that was needed was a name plate or badge.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to adjourn at 8:03 p.m. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. **MOTION CARRIED**

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, November 08, 2017 – 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: Wednesday, January 08, 2018