

MEETING MINUTES

Barrington Conservation Commission

January 21, 2016 7:00 PM

Barrington Elementary School Library, Rte 125

PRESENT: John Wallace, Chair
Pam Failing, Vice-chair
Marika Wilde
Anne Melvin
Ken Grossman
Dan Ayer, Alternate
Susan Gaudiello, Selectmen representative
Alison Desmarais, Alternate

ABSENT: Peter Sandin, Alternate
Glenn Gould, Alternate

CALL TO ORDER

Barrington Conservation Commission (BCC) Chair John Wallace called the meeting of January 21, 2015 to order at 7:00.

DELEGATION OF VOTING MEMBERS Chair John Wallace confirmed the presence of members as above.

- 1) Sightings There were reported sightings of a red fox, deer, a red tailed hawk, an otter on Richardson Pond, and a dead coyote on SATWaSR. Alison shared some information on big trees in Hillsboro County.
- 2) Guests: none
- 3) Approval of minutes of Jan 7 & Jan 14 **Pam Failing made a motion to approve the minutes of January 7 as amended. Anne Melvin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with a vote of six (6) to zero (0) in favor.**

Susan Gaudiello made a motion to approve the minutes of January 14 (Chestnut Forest site walk). Alison Desmarais seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with a vote of six (6) to zero (0) in favor.

- 4) Complaints: none
- 5) Old Business
 - a) Conservation Projects:
 - i) Renna & Leahy properties: placing easement on this (and Leahy) will require town vote – selectmen have approved. Plan for deliberative session (Jan 30)? The Selectmen will send out an informational flyer explaining the articles. Susan suggested that John W. might write an explanation of these proposed easements to go on the flyer. John will do this and speak to the article at the Deliberative Session.

b) Calef Isinglass River Preserve

i) Parking area & improvement to Town Farm Road for access to Calef Preserve. Update?

Pam has given the Messengers an idea of what work would be needed, and she received an estimate for this. Peter Cook needs to be contacted to find out what the needs are for plow truck access and turn around. Pam explained that some of the organic material needs to be scraped out before gravel can be put down, and she said that Brooke Smart was amenable to this material being spread on the easement and seeded. John said that an alternative might be to have the organic material put in the area excluded from the easement where a parking area had been previously allowed for. Susan suggested a target date of March 3 for having the specs finalized, as this will need to be done before it goes out to bid. Anne volunteered to get in touch with Peter Cook to get answers to questions which have come up and to help finalize the specs. John reminded the group that NRCS has offered to pay for the gate being moved.

c) Planning Board:

i) 17-lot conservation subdivision on Tolend Rd. (Chestnut Forest): dispensation of open space: recommendation from site walk of 1/14

Duane Hyde and Phil Auger (SELT) Duane Hyde and Phil Auger were along on the site walk. They have since communicated to John that they think it very unlikely that SELT would be willing to take a role in the ownership or holding a conservation easement on the property. However, they noted on the walk that the open space, especially the area north of the wetland, appears to contain mostly sandy soils that are directly over a stratified drift aquifer, and thus would likely be an ideal spot for a future public water supply. Language could easily be added to the conservation restrictions in the deed that would allow for development of a well for a **public** water supply.

John will write a memo (below) to the Selectmen asking them to reconsider their earlier vote and summarizing options for the open space.

To summarize BCC points in favor of the town taking title to the land:

- *The area presents an excellent possibility for a future public water supply*
- *Town ownership assures public access for recreational purposes, if the town so desires*
- *There is zero effect on tax revenue. Open space associated with subdivisions that have been placed in conservation easements are assessed at value of \$0. Examples of this are Coachman Estates, Falls on the Isinglass, Forest Ridge, and River's Edge.*
- *SELT is not willing to either hold a conservation easement on or take title to the land*
If the town instead accepts a conservation easement on the property, it would present an ongoing expense for monitoring of the easement, and should ownership of the property be passed to a homeowners association, it may present difficulties in the future.

Our second choice remains that of the town taking a conservation easement on the property, but we firmly believe that taking title to it is a better choice.

Susan suggested a path from Tolend Road to provide access to the open space.

d) Easement monitoring (Ken) This is in relation to inviting the public to informally monitor public conservation areas. Ken will send out a copy of the information, including a list of the 14 conservation areas that have public access, for comments and editing from the BCC. Ken would like input from the BCC by Feb. 1.

e) Calef property: what do we want to allow? (Alison and Pam) Alison shared a rough draft stating what might be permitted uses on the town owned conservation areas. (SATWaSR, Goodwill Conservation Area, Calef Preserve, Town Forest, and Kids of the River.) In part, Alison's draft reads as *allowed uses include passive recreational uses including hiking, fishing, snowshoeing, xc skiing, and hunting. Not allowed are motorized vehicles of any kind except for snowmobiles on certain trails in the winter months.* There was discussion about permitting

horseback riding and mountain bikes, and it was mentioned that these two activities might be permitted on trails unless specifically prohibited. Susan suggested that the snowmobile trails be established with input from the Snow Goers group in conjunction with the Trails Committee. John proposed that it could be the Trails Committee that does the final determination of permitted uses. Alison will put together another draft for final review by the BCC. This will also need to be reviewed and approved by the Selectmen.

f) Goals for 2016

- i) Calef 'roll-out' to public, trail work, restoration, etc.
- ii) Conservation plan:
- iii) Management plans for town properties
- iv) Turtle crossings Alison will contact Fish and Game regarding the signs and places.
- v) Other??? Ken would like to see outreach for public education on the importance of wetlands and wetland buffers. Pam wondered about a turtle/wetland presentation at the library. Anne suggested the BCC becoming familiar with the Stonehouse Forest property so that members could lead future hikes.

6) New Business:

- a) Lee wants to discontinue the portion of Tibbetts Rd in Lee. This is in anticipation of UNH putting the property on either side of the road up for sale. John stated that we have alternative access to SATWAsR so it doesn't seem to be a problem. There was consensus that the BCC has no objections, and John will send an email to John Scruton stating this.
- b) Other warrant articles we would like to take a position on? There was discussion about the petitioned warrant article regarding service stations over the aquifer. The PB voted (4-3) not to support this warrant article, and the BCC reiterated its support for the article.
- c) Planning Board:
 - i) Lot line adjustment request: Landry The purpose of this is to put the Auto Salvage Business and house on separate lots. The BCC has no objections, and Dan will convey this to the Planning Board.
 - ii) Wetlands buffer impact request: Atkins (1290 sf buffer impact) John wondered about the proximity of this proposed change to the Town Forest and if there would be any effect on the TF wetlands. ~~The~~In the application the homeowner ~~stated-states~~ that the plans presented allow for the least disruption to the existing house and would be located where vehicles are already parked. There was a long discussion about allowing of 9.6 requests, and Alison stated that she feels allowing minor impacts sets a precedent for future impacts that are more disruptive, and often the BCC opinions on 9.6 requests are disregarded by the PB. In relation to this particular case, John said he feels that is not worth making an issue of this request, Susan said to let this one go, Anne feels it's a useless battle, and Ken said it's not something to get excited about and he doesn't feel that this is the case to make an issue about. Pam feels it's a disregard of the zoning rules and there should be alternatives looked at. More conversation followed with discussion about what the term 'reasonable alternatives' means, and Susan stated that it doesn't appear that the homeowner's goals for how they want their residence to turn out are unreasonable. There was consensus that Ken will write a memo (below) and send it to Marcia, and Dan will share this with the PB.
"The Barrington Conservation Commission is concerned about the loss of wetland buffer in this case. We do not have enough information to determine whether there are reasonable alternatives to the Atkins' plans as submitted."
- d) ZBA
- e) Forest Laws workshop: John noted that the law about ~~cutting-logging~~ along roads allows for cuts not more than 50% of the basal area. This applies to class 6 roads also. He also

mentioned that timber harvests are exempt from shoreline protection, but need to follow the basal area policy.

- f) Dredge and Fill applications
- g) Treasurer's report (Pam) Pam reported that there is currently \$301,118 in the Conservation Stewardship Fund. \$220,000 is committed to the Stonehouse Forest project, and \$15,000 is committed for the Calef parking area.
- h) Legislative updates (Ken)
- 7) Announcements/correspondence:
 - a) DES:
- 8) Other committees: Trails Committee, IRLAC, ORLAC
- 9) Easements: Forest Society has monitored the Chase easement on Hall Road.
- 10) Next scheduled meeting: February 4

Items remaining on agenda, but not expected to be discussed at this meeting:

- a) Conservation Projects:
 - i) Stonehouse Forest
 - ii) Barr property, 58 acres, Seavey Bridge Rd.
 - iii) Cook property
 - iv) Cullen Woods property – town has taken title to open space
 - v) Wilson property for sale (on Mendums, abuts Jeffrey and Brookwood Shores)

Susan Gaudiello made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45. Ken Grossman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with a vote of six (6) to zero (0) in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Lenzi

NOTE: THESE ARE SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES ONLY. A COMPLETE COPY OF THE MEETING AUDIO IS AVAILABLE AT THE LAND USE DEPARTMENT.