



Canterbury Conservation Commission
Canterbury, NH 03224

November 21, 2011

Minutes of the Special Meeting

Present: Galen Beale, Jen Taylor, Tom Osmer, Kelly Short, Bob Fife, Linda Fife, Teresa Wyman, Jim Bassett

Absent: Ken Stern

Guests: Steve Seron, George Glines, Sumner Dole, Bob Steenson

Jen stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the town wide meeting held last Friday night on the sale of the Intervale Farm [formerly Gold Star]

Jen asked if anyone had questions for George

Linda: Had a question on their proposal to rent out land to Millikens. George said the boys intended to rent about 50 acres. He described Milliken's Nursery as a high end business, when trees taken out, the holes filled with soil. Currently there are about 90 acres of trees, most unusable, Milliken wants to pick out good ones. He'd have a 15 year lease.

Linda asked, will you have any control over Miliken. He will use insecticides as well. George: people are afraid of pest control but it is important to understand they are not put on willy-nilly, chemicals are very expensive.

Bob asked Sumner about his proposed easement - where will it be? Sumner owns approximately 600 acres in the Forrest Pond area. Sumer responded there were two potential places for the access road. He was looking at the Fish and Game for an easement and Game for ten to fifteen years to see how it went and the Fish and Game would get a remote canoe access spot on Forrest Pond. Sumner also said that he had offered a land swap initial to the Selectmen but they had declined the offer and he continued to say he would be interested in an easement in the future; perhaps selling the development rights and use the monies to help support Peter and Eric, but currently the only thing under consideration is the Fish and Game remote canoe access proposal.

Bob asked George, will you run this farm? No, the boys are running it, I am working for them.

Jen and Kelly asked if we could focus on the question at hand.

Tom: If we set aside the finances, the personal relationships, agricultural practices and only talk about the land's conservation value, which is our role - the public recreation, forestry and wildlife issues on the property, then, in his opinion, the two proposals don't differ very much, both have young crops which will restrict access periodically; both have perennial crops and both will grow annual crops which will leave the soil bare part of the year. Both proposals allow public access and access for wildlife. In my mind, because of the excellent conservation easements already in place on the land, there is not an overwhelming conservation value, which is not already protected or at risk. Therefore, he felt that there was not enough for us to take a public stand. We will have a chance to vote our own personal feelings on December 3.

Kelly stated that she felt that Organic techniques were a conservation value. She felt we had to include how land is managed and treated which was why we bought the property in the first place., and while she wished we could have both proposals, she would go with the organic farmer. Acknowledging she is not a farmer, merely a lay person, she preferred organic techniques and felt because so much of the land lay near the River, what goes on the land will go in the River. Recognizing how hard it is to be a dairy farmer, Kelly gave an example of a Vermont neighbor whose dairy farm was saved because he switched to organic. Kelly liked the diversification of Brookford, she felt that organic and niche marketing were the future of farming.

Fred said he is waiting for the joint venture.

Teresa, said that while she too supported organic techniques, and purchased organic, she felt there were shades of grey, in organic growing – those who are going in that direction, using as little as possible, etc and they should be credited for their efforts as well.

Jim comes at 7:45. George Glines and Sumner Dole leave.

Galen said that she felt that the River protections were strong and that she too felt that Certified Organic growing was only one of several kinds of farming that could be done on this land. That organic was popular today, but something else may come in the future. Galen felt that a CCC vote to support the Selectmen's position would be a political vote and she did not wish to do that, she wished to remain neutral and have the townspeople make up their own minds.

Tom: We're only picking the next owner, it could be sold in two years. Once we sell it we have no recourse. Are we satisfied that we are selling the land, but that discussion is off the table.

8:00 Bob Steenson comes and asks if we have any questions for him. Bob described the Selectmen's reasoning for choosing the Brookford proposal.

Tom asked Steensen: does the Forest Society have an opinion on this matter. Steenson: they are excited to sell outright to Brookford Farm, they support a sale, we are working with their lawyers as they are more up to speed than our Town Lawyers on these issues. They do not support a lease to own transaction. The Selectmen have also consulted with the Town Lawyer who are against a lease to own as well.

Fred asked what if Luke leaves, or Gary wants to sell. Response: We will no longer have a stay in whoat happens on this land, only LCHIP will.

Kelly: There are no guarantees, the property could still return to a sod farm. Kelly reiterated her position on the value of organic techniques.

Tom: The large turnout on Friday meant that people either care about land or the Glines

Jen: Would an endorsement of the Selectman's recommended position be our next step?

Tom reviewed his first statement, that we only endorse a proposal based on its conservation value with the differences in finances and farming techniques removed. We can vote holistically on December 3, he did not feel there were significant difference in conservation values here.

Kelly thinks organic is a conservation issue. NRCS has a study that says that growing sod is better than growing corn.

Jen: she was very touched by Glines' previous visit to the CCC discussing the quality of the soil and the family's passion for farming. But they want to rebuild the soil with manure and sludge. While she realizes these techniques are within the range of best practices, she is not comfortable with them. The additional fact that they utilize GMO varieties, swayed her not to support the Glines proposal.

Tom: The definition of organic is what does not get put on the soil – that does not mean they will put on enough of something to help the soil.

Tom asked Steensen: Thinking of the proposals from a risk analysis point of view, how much is the tax rate going up if the boys defaulted. Steenson about 30 or 40 cents if the taxes aren't paid and we would forgo the \$10,000 in income. Secret ballot.

Steenson leaves at 8:30.

The Commission has a discussion about call a vote on a motion to support support the Selectmen's position.

Galen and Tom would not support a motion to vote.

Jen says she thinks a vote is important because there may be new people in Town who have no information on this issue and who have come to vote and they would look to the CCC for a recommendation. She also felt that the biodiversity of Brookford Farm would be an important conservation component.

Linda pointed out that these were two different proposals, that dairy farms, by definition were closer to monoculture.

Tom: Once again, I do not see a significant conservation difference between these proposals and I am impressed by the fact that the Glines were farming this land 40 years before our Country had a Constitution.

Drawing straws, Teresa was chosen as an alternate in the vote.

Vote to support the choice of the selectmen

MOTION by Kelly, that the Conservation Commission make a motion to recommend to the Town of which proposal to support. Seconded by Fred.

VOTE: All in favor 3. All opposed, 4. The Conservation Commission will not make a motion recommending a proposal to the Town.

2, Budget – Kelly

MOTION by Kelly, seconded by Tom that in 2012 the Conservation Commission submit a budget equivalent of the Commission's 2011 Budget to the Town.

All voted in favor

Capital Reserve Fund

Jen made a motion the Commission request \$20,000 from the Town this year. Seconded by Kelly. A discussion followed and at the close Jen rescinded her motion. The Commission will not make a Capital Reserve request this year.

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 on a motion from Jen seconded by Fred.

Respectfully submitted,

Galen Beale, acting Secretary