

DEERFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2015

Members Present Erick Berglund, Deb Campelia, Jim Deely, Serita Frey, Wes Golomb, Kate Hartnett, Dave Linden
Visitors: Joel DeStasio, Leigh Harrington

Chair Serita Frey **called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM followed by introductions.**

Joel DeStasio, representing Trout Unlimited, submitted two Wetlands Permit Applications for review. The projects are for the *restoration of instream aquatic habitats using large wood*. The first is on Griffin Brook (which flows into the Little Suncook River in Deerfield) on property owned by Lawrence and Melissa **Graykin, Map 406 Lot 13, Old Coffeetown and Blake’s Hill Roads**. The second is on the Lamprey River on property owned by **Allen Barton, Map 205 Lot 2, Griffin Rd**. Both properties are under easement to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), US Department of Agriculture <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>. The applicants are seeking *expedited review* of the Wetlands Permit Applications requiring the signature of the DCC, which Mr. DeStasio hopes to obtain if the members are agreeable after his presentation.

The objective of the projects is to **restore in-stream habitats through large wood loading** (“chop and drop”) **to create a riffle-pool environment that is favorable to the development of trout populations**. Trees would be felled locally from the riparian area outside the 50-foot buffer zones adjacent to the water bodies and would not involve the removal of trees forming the canopy. The logs would then be moved by hand, and “keyed” into the banks. Slash inserted into the spaces between the logs create a structure that will increase the retention of fallen leaves and twigs. These vegetative materials are used as a *food source and physical habitat for macroinvertebrates* (insects, crustaceans, mollusks, arachnids and annelids; having no backbone and visible with the naked eye) which in turn become a source of food for *fish, other aquatic organisms, spiders, bats and birds*. Asked if the obstructions would cause flooding, Mr. DeStasio responded that the **objective was not to construct impermeable barriers or log jams, but to create pools that would support trout and other aquatic species as well as invertebrates**.

Of particular interest to the DCC, will be the **results of water sampling, which promise to provide data on a hoped-for reduction in nitrogen levels downstream from the restored areas, as well as the effect of the restorations on the mitigation of nutrients to Great Bay**. Forthcoming results of sampling at existing sites in Bow and Marlow could prove to be indicative of what may result at the sites in Deerfield. **Kate Hartnett has requested that DCC be informed on the outcome of these analyses**. Ultimately, the goal of Trout Unlimited is to initiate **23 projects in New Hampshire with the assistance of NH Fish and Game, West Environmental, Inc. and Rockingham County Conservation District**. Additional funding for the projects is being provided by NRCS to property owners whose easements are held by the USDA. **Mr. DeStasio could not confirm if any of the funding was coming from Northern Pass outreach initiatives**.

Jim Deely **asked if there were trout present at the sites at this time and if there were plans to stock the areas** in the future. Mr. DeStasio couldn’t comment on potential stocking, but will respond to the question on the current trout population after researching the results of electro-shocking. It is anticipated that **250 locations are to be evaluated by interns this summer, including sampling of water**. They will also be **measuring the height of drops in culverts and related conditions that create obstacles** affecting the ability of fish to navigate these man-made installations. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/engineering/hydraulics/pubs/07033/3.cfm>.

It was the consensus of the group that **no further review of the applications was needed and Serita Frey moved to approve the applications for expedited review**. The motion was approved unanimously. Chair Frey will sign the applications as soon as the permission letters from the property owners are made part of the applications.

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Approval of Minutes: The **minutes of the March 12th meeting** were approved unanimously as written.

Finance: Erick Berglund has authorized payment of an invoice from Upton and Hatfield in the amount of \$58.50 for a consultation with Serita Frey. **The February 28th ending balance was 207,643.73. The balance for March was as yet unavailable.** Mr. Berglund reminded the members that the DCC is operating under the default budget for 2015. This resulted in an increase in the overall amount available; however, there will not be a line for *Trails* in the budget for this year.

Appointments: Serita Frey informed the members that the recommend **appointments for herself and Erick Berglund for new three-year terms were accepted by the BOS.** New terms will run through April 1, 2018. Note: **Terms of office for Dave Linden and Deb Campelia will expire on March 31, 2016.**

Easement Monitoring: Serita Frey updated the members on the status of easement monitoring on the Merrill property (Kay Williams easement). Frank Mitchell will coordinate the walk with participants who are scheduled to meet on Saturday, April 18th at 9 AM.

Phragmites: Serita Frey has been unsuccessful in reaching the residents on Mountain View Road since her initial contact with them regarding the **establishment of Phragmites**, a non-native invasive plant, on their property. DCC hopes to discuss **potential alternatives for management of the invasive** with them.

Land Conservation: Serita Frey reported that DCC is continuing to monitor potential opportunities for future conservation projects.

Town Forest Protection: Serita Frey will contact Dan Kern of Bear-Paw Regional Greenways and request an estimate for a survey to be taken of the Edythe H. Boisvert Town Forest, Map 404 Lot 2, which was acquired on behalf of the Town in 2013 and declared a Town Forest by vote of the town on March 11, 2014. The passage of Warrant Article #11 also authorized the permanent conservation of the parcel by conveying a conservation easement to “...one or more qualified conservation organizations which will permanently restrict its use to open space purposes...”, and was approved 898 to 279. **The survey will be the first step in creating the easement deed, and the recent easement deed created for the existing seven Town Forests and Conservation Areas will become the template for the Boisvert Town Forest easement.** The Town Forest easement deed can be viewed at:
http://townofdeerfieldnh.com/Pages/DeerfieldNH_BComm/Conservation/Town%20Forests%20and%20Parks/
See *Deerfield Forest Easement Recorded 20140701*. The Clerk will confirm whether there is an existing survey of the property.

Northern Pass: Last month, Select Board member Rebecca Hutchinson, approached Erick Berglund with a copy of **correspondence received by the BOS from Northern Pass, inviting the Town to present mitigation opportunities for consideration, to offset the inevitable disturbances to the environment that will result from the project.** Ms. Hutchinson requested that the DCC submit suggestions for potential conservation projects and in answer to that request, **Erick Berglund and Kate Hartnett collaborated with other individuals to prepare a response for the BOS.** The original deadline of March 27th has since been extended, and as such, the DCC’s reply was not taken up by the BOS; however, it was the opinion of the members that there is still value in conveying the DCC’s position on the matter by bringing the statement of opinion to the attention of the Select Board. It was agreed that Mr. Berglund would present the letter to the BOS at their next scheduled meeting.

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It was speculated that the correspondence from Northern Pass **could be a fact-finding survey**. Additionally, it was **unclear whether proposed projects were intended to be part of, or in lieu of, the Aquatic Resource Mitigation process**. It was noted that no conservation project selection criteria were given, the Northern Pass project has not been approved, and the environmental impact statement is yet to be issued. The potential for additional outreach to the community was discussed and Serita Frey offered to respond to any misinformation conveyed on Facebook regarding DCC's position on the Northern Pass project.

Trails: Jim Deely has **scheduled a combination pot luck supper/meeting for April 14th at 6 PM at the Historic Town Hall** which will have an open agenda. Kat Deely has been asked to speak on the topic of trail maintenance. It is hoped that the meeting will **generate excitement and a desire for involvement** among the attendees, resulting in **volunteers to serve on committees and for trail maintenance**. It is anticipated that there could be 25 to 30 persons signing up and Mr. Deely felt that a structure for work groups could be put in place at a later date along with a possible Adopt-A-Trail program. **Legal language for trails on private property is also being explored.**

New Business: Serita Frey reported that a number of Towns have expressed **interest in Deerfield's Town Forest project and would like to know how to place easements on their Town Forests**. Nik Coates has been fielding questions regarding the process after using Deerfield as an example in his presentation at "*Saving Special Places*", citing a case in which a Town gave permission to quarry gravel on its Town Forest. Mr. Coates has Deerfield's Town Forest easement document which can be used as a template and indicated that he would be **interested in DCC's involvement in a fall workshop on the topic.**

Correspondence: DCC is in receipt of a *Shoreland Impact Permit, #2015-00576, for Charlotte & John Crowley for their property at 2 Ridge View Lane, Tax Map 207 Lot 5 on Pleasant Lake*. The DES approval is for the removal and replacement of an existing home, construction of a garage and decks, and reconfiguration of the driveway.

Chair Serita Frey adjourned the meeting at 9:05 PM.

The Next Meeting is Scheduled for Monday, May 11th

(Please check the website for scheduling changes)
townofdeerfieldnh.com

The draft minutes were prepared and submitted by Judy Marshall. Final revisions to these minutes will be contained in the minutes of the following meeting, after approval by the Deerfield Conservation Commission