

**DEERFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**1967 - FIFTY YEARS AND COUNTING - 2017**

Meeting Minutes – **March 13, 2017**

**Members Present:** Erick Berglund, Deb Campelia, Serita Frey, Wes Golomb, Kate Hartnett

**Members Absent:** Jim Deely

**Visitors:** Frank Mitchell – Dan Kern

**At 7:10 pm** Chair Serita Frey called the meeting to order.

Prior to calling the meeting to order, **members and many long-time friends of the commission enjoyed refreshments in celebration of the Deerfield Conservation Commission's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1967.**

**Town Forest Protection:**

**Boisvert Town Forest – Permanent Protection:**

Frank Mitchell and Dan Kern were present to update members on the progress of the **research and survey work being undertaken in preparation for the conveyance of a conservation easement on the Edythe H. Boisvert Town Forest to Bear-Paw Regional Greenways.** While the **Town of Deerfield remains the owner of the property**, the easement will permanently protect the town forest for conservation purposes, as **voted by the Town on March 14, 2014... the 47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Conservation Commission!**

**Frank Mitchell has been researching the history of Dow Rd. which serves as the access road to the parcel.** As noted in his written report, **Mr. Mitchell interviewed the Deerfield Building Inspector** who provided his understanding of the history of the road. Based upon this information **Dow Rd. was never a public road**, but through an agreement with the Dows, was maintained by the town in exchange for land used to create Swamp Rd. Numerous other “roads” had been created by the Dows for access to Mt. Delight, Griffin and Swamp roads. Maintenance to Dow Rd. was discontinued pursuant to a Town Meeting vote in 1932.

**In 2011, representatives of Deerfield and Epsom jointly perambulated the boundary between the towns. Officials of both towns agreed on the mutual boundary**, the results of which are recorded in both a written report and on an aerial map. As noted in Mr. Mitchell's report, it was also agreed that a current tax map “overlap” is the result of match line errors. The aerial map was on display during the gathering that preceded the meeting.

Kate Hartnett also provided original documents she obtained that indicate that the **western boundary of the Boisvert parcel is the town line.** It is unclear whether the Green Crow property that abuts the Boisvert may or may not have rights to the use of Dow Rd. based on un-dated and un-signed memos. **It is hoped that the survey work will clarify these boundary and access questions.** The clerk was asked to copy and share any pertinent pieces of the documentation with Mr. Kern and the surveyor. Mr. Kern reported that the **surveyor has performed the preliminary title research and that physical surveying of the property will likely begin in April or May.**

According to Dan Kern, the **easement deed created for the seven town forests and conservation areas was used as the template for the easement being drafted for the Boisvert Town Forest**, and the two are almost identical. It was recommended that a new instrument be created for the Boisvert rather than amending the existing town forest easement deed, making it simpler and easier to review. Mr. Kern is looking for **DCC to provide any changes or comments to the draft.** The new easement will incorporate any special purposes or unique/historic characteristics (home site/cemetery). In addition to several housekeeping edits, Ms. Hartnett flagged for discussion and offered an edit to page 5, paragraph E. *Parking Areas.* Believing that not

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all conservation land needs to be treated the same, **it was hoped that the property could be managed differently; perhaps being reserved or undisturbed and not encouraging a lot of activity.** It was noted that donor intent, unique features, and the existence of historic sites shaped the overall management objectives, policy & plans, purposes and levels of access for the 2011 town forest easement deed.

**Serita Frey will assemble the group's comments and forward the final comments to Mr. Kern.** Mr. Kern's goal is to have the final version of the easement deed signed and ready to record upon completion of the survey. **Mr. Kern will send a copy of the title report to Serita Frey.**

**Easements and Land Protection:**

**Project #31:**

**Dan Kern, Kate Hartnett and Serita Frey met with the owner** of the subject property to discuss the owner's plans and vision for future use. Given the historic and land conservation significance of the project, Kate Hartnett and Serita Frey met with representatives of the **Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)** in order to gain a better understanding of the process and to get feedback from them on the current structure of the project.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion by Serita Frey to approve the **minutes from the February 13<sup>th</sup> regular meeting** was seconded by Erick Berglund. The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Finance:** Mr. Berglund reported the balance in the **Conservation Fund on January 31<sup>st</sup> was \$316,252.80 reflecting interest of \$39.65. Also included in the balance is DCC's 50% share of the Land Use Change Tax for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2016.** Mr. Berglund was dismayed that conservation funds intended to cover payments requested and made in September and October of 2016, were not moved from the conservation fund until January 2017.

**Northern Pass Update:** **Serita Frey moved with a second by Erick Berglund, to authorize Kate Hartnett to continue to represent the DCC** and to prepare testimony to be presented at the upcoming SEC proceedings. The motion passed unanimously. Members once again thanked Ms. Hartnett for the work that she is doing in her capacity as DCC's Northern Pass representative.

Ms. Hartnett reported that the previous design plan for the **Northern Pass Transmission Project to cover a vernal pool** with "temporary" wetland matting for in excess of two years, has been modified. The new plan proposes to move the construction pad away from/slightly to the side of the vernal pool, which Ms. Hartnett reports, will "only" cause the pool to be seriously degraded, not totally destroyed.

Ms. Hartnett also reported that the **NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) has approved the Wetland Permit Application for the NPT project with stipulations.** Since there will be no opportunity to comment further, Ms. Hartnett **will not be submitting the results of the work she and volunteer Frank Mitchell have done on vernal pools to the DES** as previously intended.

Erick Berglund reported that **momentum is building to have a large Norther Pass demonstration in Concord in April.** Serita Frey suggested that the organizers may wish to coordinate their demonstration with **Earth Day events that will be taking place on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

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Kate Hartnett put out a request for public comments on the NPT project in view of the important consideration being placed on public interest. Comments can be submitted very simply from the **SEC Welcome page** at <https://www.nhsec.nh.gov> > Click here to [submit Public Comments](#) on open dockets> Select **2015-06 Northern Pass Transmission-Eversource** from the drop down box for *SEC docket where your comments will be filed*>Complete the **public comment form**. You can also cut and paste your comment from a Word doc. onto the form.

If you would like to **read comments others have submitted**, on the *Welcome* page for the SEC website, select from the left-hand column, **Projects> 2011-2021> Northern Pass Transmission-Eversource (SEC Docket No. 2015-06)**> **Click Here for Comments to SEC Docket No. 2015-06**.

### **Easement Monitoring:**

**Lindsay-Flanders Conservation Area – Off Cole Rd:** Deb Campelia reported that there has been no new ATV activity since the letter to the abutters was mailed in January. **Ms. Campelia will contact NH Fish & Game if any new unauthorized activities or violations are observed.**

**McNeil Conservation Area – Blake’s Hill Rd:** **Wheeled vehicle tracks, a breach in a stone wall and signs of timber trespass were discovered during routine monitoring** by Kate Hartnett, Frank Mitchell and volunteers. Monitors were unable to determine if the cutting on McNeil was deliberate or incidental to logging on an abutting property, Northwood Map 240 Lot 6, which appeared to have been cut within the last year. Members decided at the February meeting to contact the property owner of record to alert them to the situation, and to extend an invitation to attend a DCC meeting. Attempts to contact the Northwood resident by phone were unsuccessful and it was decided that DCC would send a letter to the property owner.

**Trails:** Deb Campelia, Alan Perkins and Dan Kern from Bear-Paw plan to **mark a new section of trail through the Lindsay-Flanders Conservation Area off Cole Rd**. The addition of a loop to the existing system was proposed and tentatively mapped in the Fall of 2016.

### **Brown’s Mill:**

Kate Hartnett reported on the **progress being made in conserving the open space associated with the Brown’s Mill subdivision on Mt. Delight Rd** noting that the last few lots are being developed. The 26 acres of open space is the result of collaboration between NH Fish & Game, the Deerfield Planning Board, the DCC and the developer. The soon-to-be preserved **area is adjacent to the Corey Wildlife Management Area**, and when completed, the land will be managed under a conservation easement held by the Town of Deerfield, as resident-owned open space, including a parking area and boulder-lined access to Corey WMA. The easement area **will be reclaimed in a unique manner that will create a habitat for bank swallows, turtles/reptiles and other small creatures and non-game species** in keeping with the goals of the NH Wildlife Action Plan. **Deerfield’s Planning Board approved the plan on March 8<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Deerfield Open Space Plan and New Hampshire GRANIT Updates:**

**Volunteer Linda Lee, Volunteer Anne Deely and the DCC clerk are working collaboratively to update the Deerfield Open Space Plan as well as the NH GRANIT layer.** Existing information for the *McNeil Conservation Area* and the *Alvah Chase Lot* is being corrected in GRANIT. Both the *Boisvert Town Forest* and the open space area for *Cottonwood Estates* are being added to the data base. Serita Frey suggested that DCC should check the status of the gate at the entry to Cottonwood. **Kate Hartnett has requested the help of volunteers to work on specific areas of the DOSP.**

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**Membership:**

Serita Frey will explore the protocol to be followed for filling openings on the commission.

**Regulated Wetlands:**

- **Wetland Notifications**

- **Shoreland Impact Permit #2016-03479 – 4 Loon Ledge (Pleasant Lake) Map 207 Lot 19 –**  
Thomas G. Thorne
- **Wetlands Utility Maintenance Notification – PSNH dba Eversource Energy**  
Conduct maintenance on the G-146 transmission line to ensure the continued safe and reliable operation of Eversource’s transmission & distribution systems.

**Announcements/Correspondence/Reminders:**

Serita Frey announced that **April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Earth Day**, will be commemorated with a nationwide, *March for Science*. Ms. Frey noted that the primary reason for the march was to raise awareness of the importance of science in society and that a recent survey found that 75% of Americans say they don’t know a living scientist. Rallies are being held in most major cities across the country as well as Washington, DC, Boston and Concord, NH. Chair Frey encouraged everyone to find a march and participate!

**We here in Deerfield, and more particularly at the DCC, are fortunate to have Soil Scientist, Serita Frey and Geographer, Kate Hartnett as exemplary role models, sharing their science-based skills and extensive knowledge to make Deerfield, and the world, a better place to live!**

Chair Frey adjourned the meeting at **8:30 pm**.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2017**

*(Please check the website for scheduling changes)*

[townofdeerfieldnh.com](http://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*