

## Meeting Minutes

**ENFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING**

**04/04/13**

April 4, 2013

**Present:** Alan Strickland, Chair, Gary Gaudette, Jeanine King, Sue Hagerman, Shirley Green, Steve Schneider

**Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM**

**Motion made by Sue to accept March 13, 2013 minutes. Seconded by Alan. Passed (Jeanine abstained).**

### **Upper Valley Conservation Commission (Alan attended a meeting):**

A survey was done a few years ago about the quality of life in the Upper Valley. One question asked whether or not the role of conservation changed in light of the recent economic difficulties. 500 people were surveyed at random from different areas of the Upper Valley. Enfield is in the South East (of Upper Valley), NH. Question #1: would you vote for a town appropriation for a conservation project? Most people said yes. Question #2: would you be willing to make a donation to land conservation? Majority said yes. People in the lower income range were more supportive than people in the higher income range. Sue suggested that the corollary is that we need to invite high school students to events. Alan suggested that Sue and Shirley come up with some ideas for events along this line. One suggestion is that the Conservation Commission sponsor more activities for kids and families, such as the event Discover Wild New Hampshire, which is sponsored by the Fish and Game Department (April 20<sup>th</sup>, 9 – 3, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord).

### **Update on Watershed Study (Shirley):**

She is still going over plans to decide which direction to take. There is an opportunity to do a pre-proposal, but she was told that the pre-proposals don't tend to be accepted, so it's best to submit a full proposal. Andy Chapman of DES is sending Shirley samples of proposals from people who have received the grants previously. They can accept two – four proposals. The full proposal is due in the fall; no exact date. The current application is not yet available. Andy is the person assigned to work with Shirley throughout the application development process, but as he is transitioning to another department, she will be assigned someone else (She'll still be able to talk to Andy).

### **Follow-up on snowmobile trail on town property (Alan):**

Alan was told by the landowner that he was given permission by the Selectboard, but Steve looked back at the minutes and didn't see any record of the Selectboard saying that it was okay to cut down the trees. While the town can't prove that he cut the trees down, the creation of the auxiliary path, by the homeowner, would have required some sort of permission by the Selectboard and the Conservation Commission. The latter should write a letter to both the landowner and the Selectboard stating that it was not done properly, and that in future we can advise as to placement of trail. Sue offered to write the letter, and Alan agreed.

### **New Enfield Town website:**

According to Steve, the new town website will be up by April 9<sup>th</sup>. The address is: [www.enfieldnh.vt-s.net](http://www.enfieldnh.vt-s.net). It will be on a very fast fiber connected to a fiber backbone. This was done with a federal grant. All the town buildings will be connected. Anyone in the service area who wishes to subscribe has to sign up.

### **Jim Oehler, the State's Biologist with NH fish and Game:**

Alan talked with Jim. They had said they would do logging on Shaker Mountain this winter, but it wasn't done. Alan asked about trails and Jim responded that they are putting a new road in on Shaker Mountain, near recent work off route 4A (this summer they will be building a parking area and access road south of the barn past the stone building— see map – passed review). Steve's assessment was that, as they have not approached the Conservation Commission, they are letting

them know that the work is being done without their input. When asked about signage on the trails we were told we could use, Jim stated that they don't want any signage as the area was being built for logging.

**Registered letter from Town of Enfield RE: April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting RE: land swap:**

Steve explained about the meeting and the land swap agreements (see minutes from March CC meeting). There is a hold-up from the Upper Valley Land Trust, as they have never been through this type of situation before.

**Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> events:**

7:00 AM: Field Trip to look at birds. Meet at Lutheran Church parking lot on Main Street, Enfield, and then proceed on to Bog Road.

10:00 AM: State of the Bird Address at the Enfield Community Building. Advertise to schools; Valley News; Listserv. Coffee and snacks will be provided (at the 10:00 presentation), sponsored by the Conservation Commission. Sue indicated that baked goods were needed, and that this is a big event. Pam Hunt, the presenter, relates very well to the public and has great sense of humor.

**Upper Valley Conservation Commission meeting, continued (Alan):**

There was a discussion of the ADA in relation to "Use of Conserved Land and Trails by Individuals With Mobility Disabilities." The way Alan understands the Act is, that it gives individuals with handicaps the right to access conserved land. The presentation showed ways to provide this access. The gist of it is that this act supersedes any other regulations about trails, in terms of access and use by motor vehicles, in relation to people with mobility disabilities. Refusal to allow individuals with disabilities to have access to these lands can result in legal action. Also, if someone says they are disabled, you have to take them at their word. No specifications about enforcement (such as showing proof). Steve doesn't think it will be a big issue for Enfield, but a notation should be made on the town trails that motorized vehicles are allowed (perhaps up to certain points in some cases, i.e. Bicknell Brook: is there a point at which we can legitimately limit/restrict motorized vehicle access beyond a certain point due to watershed or other issues?) Sue's interpretation is that we don't have to allow access to the general public, but that if an individual with a handicap needs access we have to allow it. Alan mentioned that on a trail such as the Rail Trail, perhaps speed limits would have to be posted. Steve agreed but pointed out that the CC isn't responsible for the Rail Trail. Alan doesn't think this will be an issue as there aren't many trails that could actually be used by a motor vehicle. Alan would like to propose that even though we are not required to change anything, perhaps we should be proactive and start thinking of ways to make some areas more accessible. Sue suggested making the whole upper field of the Bicknell Brook Trail accessible, and Alan indicated that the reservoir would be ideal for handicap access, especially for a picnic area. Alan further suggested that this topic be explored further at the next meeting, with a goal of defining a statement from the Conservation Commission.

**Call for other business by Alan:** No other business.

**Motion made by Alan to adjourn. Seconded by Shirley. Meeting adjourned at 8:04.**

Submitted by:

Shelley Geoghegan

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