

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
DECEMBER 4, 2008
DPW – 7:00 PM**

Members Present: Joan Fishman, Gary Gaudette, Shirley Green, Sue Hagerman, Fred Paradis, Alan Strickland (Chair), Jeff Wells

Excused: Don Crate (Selectman), Dwight Marchetti

Staff: Steve Schneider

Guests: Ginney Frankenstein, Curt Goddard

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

1. DISTRIBUTION OF MINUTES / REVIEW OF NOVEMBER MINUTES:

It was moved by FISHMAN, seconded by PARADIS, to approve the minutes of 11/06/08 as amended. The Motion carried.

2. REMINDER OF MEETING PLACE CHANGE FOR JANUARY: COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING

An email from Alisa Bonnette regarding the Commission's January 2009 meeting was distributed.

It was moved by HAGERMAN, seconded by WELLS, to defer meeting in January because the first Thursday of the month is a federal holiday and reconvene February 5, 2009. The Motion carried.

3. PRESENTATIONS:

Peter Helm, UVLT, to talk about Brown Property Trust on Mascoma River

The Commission previously granted a funding request for an easement to property along the Mascoma River. The funding was granted with a stipulation that there be public access to a picnic spot from the river on the land. The land in question recently changed hands. The new landowner has expressed concern for public misuse of his land and has questioned the size and location of the public access area.

Peter Helm, Stewardship Director with the UVLT, said there is nothing written in the current easement that says the public access area must be at a particular site. STRICKLAND said prior to the Commission's funding approval, it was clearly understood that a specific site was

picked. HAGERMAN agreed adding that the original site was chosen as a result of a site visit attended by the Commission and members of the public.

An alternative spot, suggested by the new landowner, is 100 yards farther down shore. STRICKLAND reported that the alternative site is very wet and steep. PARADIS spoke in favor of the alternative site due to the view of the pond it provides. He expressed concern that the new site would require steps and that a large tree in the area that could potentially fall into the river, rip out the banking, and block access to the area. STRICKLAND asked if the alternative site could be cleared and whether the clearing would require Shoreline Protection permitting. Mr. Helm said the clearing would be allowed per the current easement. He could not speak to any other permitting. STRICKLAND said he was open to the alternative site if it could be developed in a manner that would be a pull-out for kayakers.

The issue of site maintenance was discussed. STRICKLAND said there is no formal maintenance agreement. The Town provides the current picnic table and the property owner mows the current site.

Commission members expressed a desire to post a sign advertising the public access to the area. Mr. Helm said the current easement did not provide the Town authorization to post signs on this property. GREEN reiterated that the Commission donated funds toward an assumed public access. She said they have to let the public know the access exists. HAGERMAN agreed that was clearly the intent of the Commission's funding approval.

STRICKLAND shared MARCHETTI'S comments on the issue. MARCHETTI wrote that the Commission has a right to the original site but that he wants to work with the new landowner to resolve the issue. WELLS spoke in favor of working with the new landowner as long as it does not impinge on the public's rights. STRICKLAND said he talked with the new landowner and understood his point of view. However, he wanted it clarified that if the Commission chooses the alternative site, it is doing so in an effort to maintain good relations with the new landowner.

HAGERMAN expressed concern for the Commission's relations with the Land Trust. She said the Commission needs a better understanding of what they agree to prior to authorizing funding. GREEN said she thought the Land Trust was overseeing the easement writing. It appeared the language was such that there is no protection for the Town. Mr. Helm apologized for any hard feelings. He said these agreements are difficult to administer. Good relations are important.

It was moved by WELLS, seconded by HAGERMAN, to reconvene a site visit as soon as the river allows, to view alternative sites and make recommendations. The Motion carried.

Collette Trail Maintenance

There was no presentation on this matter.

4. BUDGET (CURRENT BALANCE & CONSERVATION FUND):

HAGERMAN will present her budget research at the February 2009 meeting.

5. TRAIL MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY:

Feedback from Fish & Game

STRICKLAND said he talked with Elizabeth McNaughton, of NH Fish & Game, who advised him that “Fish & Game is not responsible for trail maintenance”. If the Commission wants to officially conduct trail maintenance, they have to apply for a Special Use Permit.

The Commission agreed not to conduct any formal maintenance.

Suki Marsh Trail

The Commission agreed to revisit their continued commitment to the Suki Marsh Trail in the summer.

Upper Valley Trails Alliance continued membership

It was moved by HAGERMAN, seconded by GREEN, to renew the \$30 annual membership to the Upper Valley Trails Alliance. The Motion carried.

6. CORRESPONDENCE / UPDATES:

NH Lakes, DES, John Keen, Map 10?, DES, Peter & Susan Weaver, Shoreline Permit Tax Map 22, Lot #13, Webster Brook Subdivision, Map 15, Lot #77

STRICKLAND advised of a few septic system approvals the Commission received.

7. INTENT TO CUT: FOLLOW UP MAP 15, LOT 84 – 1A (ALONG SIDE OF MASCOMA RIVER), TALKED WITH JIM TAYLOR

Intent to Cut applications are filed with the Town as a courtesy. The cutting is regulated by the State. Town representatives are not to enter private land without the property owner’s permission. STRICKLAND advised of a local Forest Ranger (Doug Miner) who could be contacted regarding violations. Complaints should be forwarded to the Forest Ranger via Jim Taylor. **It was moved by STRICKLAND, seconded by HAGERMAN, to submit a letter to Jim Taylor expressing concerns that logging along side of Mascoma River may impact wetlands, and request the Forest Ranger look at it. The Motion carried.**

PARADIS expressed concern for another logging expedition occurring on the Haffenreffer lot. **It was moved by STRICKLAND, seconded by HAGERMAN, to have PARADIS talk to Jim Taylor about the logging site on the Haffenreffer lot. The Motion carried.**

8. OLD BUSINESS:

Report on Crystal Lake and road drainage

There was no discussion on this matter.

Jeff's letter to Troup #44

WELLS read into the record the letter he drafted to Enfield's Boy Scout Troup 44. (Attached) WELLS was asked to list the Commission members' names on the letter, sign the letter on behalf of the Commission, and send it to the Scouts.

9. CITIZENS FORUM / ABSENTEE EMBERS COMMENTS:

MARCHETTI: see attached

10. NEW BUSINESS: SCA (Student Conservation Association) to do trail project?

There was no discussion on this matter.

11. ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Rivard, Secretary