

August 8, 2014

Present: Alan Strickland, Shirley Green, Dwight Marchetti, Steve Schneider, Gary Gaudette

Absent: Jeanine King, Sue Hagerman

Call meeting to order: 7:10

New Business:

Strickland would like to discuss the Commission making a formal proposal to the selectmen and town manger to establish a “recreation area” at the Enfield Reservoir:

Steve related discussion at select board meeting about this issue. Not favorable for various reasons, including safety concerns. No decisions were made. Discussion by Alan re site visit with Jim Taylor in May. Issue is that the location is not under Enfield police jurisdiction. Dwight pointed out that many people are making use of the reservoir with boats. Steve’s perspective is that the dam will need some attention at some point and then decisions will need to be made. We own it, but it is in Canaan. Whatever happens, it is a Wetland. It is a conservation issue. Suggestions have been made to combine with Canaan Conservation Commission. They have been invited to meetings, but haven’t responded. Suggested first step is to lay out plans and ask if they have any interest in preserving the area and for what purpose. Dwight feels that more detail is better. Steve suggests they go to the 2nd Selectman’s meeting in September (15th). Dwight asked about liability if the area is open to the public. Steve said that certain areas could be fenced. No picnic tables; signs; no boats/kayaks. Passive recreation area. Boat removal (of illegally parked boats) is a Selectman’s issue. Steve will bring it up to them. Suggestion made to call it *Harris Brook Recreation Area* rather than the Reservoir. Dwight and other Conservation members will attend the 2nd September Selectman’s meeting to discuss plans for parking, trail from parking lot to reservoir, fencing, signs, trash receptacle, and the site. No increase in maintenance, rather creation of another space for people to enjoy. Dwight asked if Steve could find out if there have been any calls for the Canaan Police to the area in the past 5 years.

Suky Marsh Dam and Wetland: the town went into the area with a backhoe and breached the dam accidentally, and washed out land owner’s driveway. Example of dangers of these dams. Alan is saying we need to coordinate with the town in the spring. It was pointed out that the Select board has dealt with this issue frequently. Discussion of solutions. Lower it in the fall to make room for the spring runoff? Concern about interference with nesting. Keep the water level changes constant. Jim Taylor had said he would be trapping the beaver out of there.

Workshop: Erosion Control Workshop. Deadline for application is August 11th. Interest in attending? Discussion of details.

Kurt Gotthardt: would like to address the Commission on snowmobile trail on Town property. Update from Gary? Discussion of statutes. Decision to ask him to attend a meeting. The issue involves the cutting of trees on town land without permission.

Old Business:

Steve Schneider will help Commission apply for grant monies to be applied to inventory of Town forest. Schneider and Strickland met on 8/5/14 to begin application process.

Discussion of meeting and eligibility for Moose Plate Grant. 6 project categories; we qualify for 3. Two grant levels; \$5,000 and under is the one we would go after. Cost estimate was \$5,500. Matching funds not required, but the more raised the better. In-kind and cash match. We have to provide a series of maps, photographs, letters of support, project description, and landowner consent. Steve talked with Scott Osgood. Need to demonstrate that the town will provide some of the matching amount. 25% approximate. There is a volunteer dollar amount that counts for commission time used.

Correspondence: DES to Chairman Strickland thanking the Commission for the letter sent in regard to Stony Brook. DES encouraged the Commission to file a formal complaint, which Chairman Strickland did on May 19th. Here is the conclusion of the Stony Brook complaint by Alex Marvin:

“Around the first of May I received a phone call from Mr. Marvin stating that there had been an alteration of Stony Brook by a tractor. I went to the site to look at the alteration but realized that a close inspection could not be done since the site was on private property. I left a message for Mr. Marvin, explained that the Commission could not go on to private property, and suggest he write DES, and file a complaint. I told him I would also write a letter to DES on behalf of the Commission. I gave him the address. That same day I composed a letter to DES to inform them that there was a possible violation, and that they should expect a letter from Mr. Marvin. The evening of that same day, I received an angry phone call from Mr. Marvin, basically berating me and the Commission for lack of motivation and concern for the environment. He informed me that the next day he was off to DES to complain in person. He did so, causing a stir at DES. DES gave him information to file a complaint to start an investigation, but he never filled it out or sent it. After a couple of weeks, DES contacted me, and encouraged me to file a complaint on behalf of the Commission, which I did. A file was opened, and DES started its investigation. May 22nd DES sent a letter to the landowner, State Street Realty in Nashua saying they had received a complaint, and they, DES, was giving them an opportunity to respond. On June 11, I received a letter from DES saying that they had conducted a site visit to the property in question. During the inspection DES found no conclusive evidence of a violation of RSA 482-A, NH Wetlands Law. DES personnel observed what appeared to be stream avulsion due to natural causes. Based upon this site inspection, as well as a review of aerial photography dating back to 1998, DES has determined that no further action is required at this time, and will close this file.”

Motion made by Dwight in respect to Alex Marvin complaint to the Conservation Commission re the alleged redesign of the Stony Brook road, that we made a formal complaint to DES who investigated it, and that we forward a copy of the DES findings to Mr. Marvin. Seconded.

Discussion; all in favor; passed.

Issue of mowing of Bicknell property brought up by Alan. Concern about wildlife. Possibility of raising private funds. Discussion. Commission had discussed strategy for alternating areas mowed on a yearly alternating basis. Mow it in the fall.

Motion made by Alan to mow the upper part first this fall not to exceed \$150. All in favor; passed.

Topic brought up by Dwight for Conservation Commission to consider: vote in March re Boat launch. Steve said that two groups are advocating for this already. Permits are in the works. Permits acquired for boat launch last year. Problem involves boat access being adequately marked. This has been brought to town meeting; approved by Select Board. Discussion re pervious vs. impervious areas. One warrant article. Budgeted \$180,000 to do both; seek long-term financing. If it is approved in March, the first opportunity to do it would be fall of 2015. Dwight wonders if it would be beneficial if the CC votes to support it. Gary can speak as town resident. Dwight will be away.

Update on water quality study for Crystal Lake: Shirley just heard back that we didn't make the cut this time. It was very competitive. We have our foot in the door though, so we can try again. They said we are very unique (study Pg. 2) because over the past 10 – 15 years our water quality has been improving.

Dwight: observation about Rail Trail – re a rig coming from Canaan to mow from the trestle. Also, granite mile markers are going to be put in. Discussion re issues with some groups involved in the Northern Rail Trail as related to stopping the Main Street plans. Sullivan County group produced a report citing reasons against creating an at-grade crossing due to historic nature.

Motion made to review May minutes at the next meeting. Seconded. Approved.

Motion to Adjourn; Seconded; Meeting Adjourned at 8:35