



Falmouth Conservation Commission
Minutes of November 4, 2013

Meeting convened at 7:00 pm

Members Present: Sarah Boudreau, Mel Dickenson, Susan Gilpin, Jerry Goodall, Nancy Lightbody, and Aaron Svedlow

Additional Attendees: Caleb Hemphill, LMAC

Vernal pools

It was brought to the attention of the FCC that numerous vernal pools have been identified in Falmouth over the last several years that have not been added/included to the original Vernal Pool map developed for Falmouth. To provide an understanding of the vernal pool status in Falmouth, Caleb Hemphill was invited to present a summary of the vernal pool history for the town. Caleb told us that the town of Falmouth adopted a map of vernal pool locations in 2002. The map was based on aerial survey, and it shows that the town has approximately 100 vernal pools. The pools were initially divided into a 3-tier classification system developed by Maine Audubon. They tend to cluster in upland valleys, such as north of Falmouth Road, and Hadlock Forest. Subsequent to the Falmouth classification of vernal pools, the State of Maine developed a classification that focused on “significant “ vernal pools. Significant pools were identified based on their volume and specific type of egg mass present in the pools.

Falmouth adopted the revised state classification system, and classified the mapped pools. Trained volunteer citizen scientists observed these pools and found out that 38 are “Significant,” based on the presence of certain amphibians, fairy shrimp, and their egg masses. New vernal pools have been identified in Falmouth, however these newly identified pools have not been classified and are not included on the Town vernal pool map. The town has no mechanism for recording and classifying additional vernal pools.

The committee thought that it would be worthwhile to develop a process to update the vernal pool list, classify the new vernal pools, and include the results on the “Vernal Pool” map. Our process would be to gather information, define the issues, and plan how to go forward. We decided to set up a new subcommittee focused on the vernal pool issues. We delegated Aaron, Mel, and Steve DeCosta to initiate the process, and identified Caleb as a key resource for the effort.

Following the Vernal Pool discussion Caleb departed.

Review of Minutes



The minutes from the October 7, 2013 meeting were approved as written.

Subcommittee Discussions and Reports

- **LMAC** – Mel circulated the minutes before the meeting. Highlights: LMAC is getting bids for the River Point Bridge, and it is looking at an acquisition on Route One near Johnson Road.
- **Stormwater**- The inter-local stormwater working group (ISWG) met recently. The state stormwater regulations, “Chapter 500,” are being revised, a process which will take several years. Towns are being reminded that flushing fire hydrants releases chlorine into the ecosystem, so it is important to minimize the amount released to ensure compliance with a NIPTES permit. This should not be a problem for Falmouth.
- **Planning Board**- No new planning board issues for natural resource issues for the Nov 5 Planning Board Meeting.
- **Invasive Species**- Nancy and Jerry have met twice since October. They have produced a colorful new brochure, which they brought along. They will have a display at the polls tomorrow. In order to educate the public, they are planning three workshops for next year. They are going to develop policies on invasives for town properties and new subdivisions.
- **Ad Hoc Zoning**
 - The Ad-Hoc Zoning committee has focused on how best to post the combined ordinance on the web. A meeting was held regarding costs, and advantages of different online publication programs, Aaron was unable attend this meeting but minutes may be available.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for November.
 - To-date the committee has not completed any reorganization or rewording of the ordinance. Aaron will continue to attend the committee meetings.

Clapboard Island Purchase and Easement Update: Aaron presented a professional Critical Issues Analysis of Clapboard East which he did in October for the Friends of Clapboard Island. Based on the report, the island has considerable conservation value – variety and integrity of forest trees, nesting bald eagles, mussel beds, seagrass, and a “potential” vernal pool. Aaron will call the state IFW to see if they have any data to add from their visit there in May 2012.

As far as recreational potential is concerned, several committee members expressed concern about accessibility, specifically how people who do not own boats would get there. Susan said that the town already runs summer kayak camps which could go



there, and the Falmouth Land Trust has offered the services of one of its summer interns as well as of its board.

Action Items

- Plans for FCC replacement of Mel. Mel's term is up in December. There are 2 individuals interested in FCC (Peter Dootz, and Rick Scalla). Mel has contacted Peter and will talk to Rick this month.