

Fremont Conservation Commission
Fremont Town Hall
Fremont, NH

August 1st, 2016
7:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman Bill Knee, member Pat deBeer, Open Space member Denise Howland, and Recording Secretary Casey Wolfe

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Knee called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. No quorum present.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 11th, 2016

There was no quorum at this meeting, the minutes could not be approved.

III. CONSERVATION COMMISSION INFORMATION

- A. TREASURER'S CC ACCOUNT REPORT - no new accounting report made available for this meeting.
- B. RECENT MISSED OPPORTUNITIES DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS FY15 (NO BUDGET)-
INFORMATIONAL

IV. WILDLIFE CAMERA

Update: the camera has arrived at Mr. Knee's address. Mr. Knee has passed it on to those who are interested in deploying it. Hopefully Mr. Howland and Mr. Harris will be able to get it operating.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

- A. SELT - Duane Hyde

Mr. Knee has received an email from Duane Hyde saying that the Horsburghs have signed the agreement with NRCS. We are now a step closer to putting the Horsburgh property into conservation. A letter has been passed on to the Selectmen requesting that the 10-acre piece abutting the Horsburgh property gets put into conservation. This would help our ranking for the ARM grant application. The Selectmen had no issue with this and a letter of intent has been written. Mr. Knee talked to Mark West about giving the Commission access to shape files created after he completed the Wetlands Functions and Values Assessment on the Horsburgh property.

- B. Open Space

1. Barred Owl Trail update

Mr. Howland and other Open Space members have flagged and cleared trails on both the West and East side of property. Mr. Howland is optimistic about SELT allowing a small detour on their land.

2. Take a hike!

The Take a Hike program was advertised in the latest newsletter. It was also posted on Fremont's homepage and the library recently. The advertisement will also be posted at the kiosks.

3. Proposed Bridge for Oak Ridge North Update

Mr. Howland took pictures of where the new bridge would be. He also talked about the idea of doing poor-man stairs instead.

4. Trail Maintenance

Mr. Howland contacted the local Boy Scouts to see if they'll volunteer to participate in trail maintenance. The Scout Leader will get back to us.

5. Senior Group Presentation

There is now a Senior Group in Fremont. Mr. Howland will do a presentation for the group at the library next week about the trail system in the Town Forests.

C. Jack Mullen and Rita MacPherson – Map 6 Lot 47.1.1

Mr. Mullen approached the Commission. He explained that he has a 38-acre property with his home in the Northeast corner of it. He plans to retire in a year or so and wants to keep about 4 acres for himself and the rest of the land put into conservation. Mr. Mullen and Ms. MacPherson are willing to make a considerable sacrifice to the Town for not having any neighbors. Mr. Mullen talked to neighbor Cindy McCray who expressed to him that she was also put her land into conservation.

Mr. Knee communicated that SELT may be interested in buying the property and that it would be financially difficult for the Town to buy and conserve the property. He didn't know if funds from Current Use would be significant enough to pay for the property. Also, it would take a town vote to release some of the funding. The property would need to be surveyed and appraised. What the property is appraised for is what the Town would be able to offer. Ms. deBeer added that the appraisal would be based on surrounding land and the potential of the land. She said that the Conservation Commission would love to conserve the property, but that the Commission must represent the will of the Town.

Mr. Knee encouraged Mr. Mullen to call SELT. Mr. Hyde (SELT) would be able to give Mr. Mullen an idea if the property is something that SELT is interested in. Mr. Howland pointed out the land in Town that SELT has already purchased. Ms. deBeer explained that SELT has recently become interested in Fremont because of Spruce Swamp. Right now is a good time because NH Fish & Game is interested in

preserving the area. Mr. Howland brought up the idea that if "worse comes to worse", the landowner could subdivide part of the land and conserve another part of the land as has been done in other developments. Mr. Knee and Ms. deBeer wanted them to be encouraged. The only reason why they should approach SELT first is because funding a conservation project is an issue for the Town. Mr. Mullen and Ms. MacPherson left at 8:00.

There was a little bit more discussion about the topic. Ms. deBeer mentioned that on average the Town usually offers \$3,000 an acre. Mr. Knee felt that if SELT doesn't show an interest in the property, then the Commission should show an interest in putting the land into conservation. Ms. deBeer mentioned that there should be changes in the criteria used to evaluate property. Some of the Wildlife Action Plan values should be included in the criteria. Mr. Howland wants copies made of the criteria for the Open Space meeting tomorrow night. Mr. Howland left at 8:15 PM.

D. 2017 Conservation Commission Budget

The Budget Committee supported the 2016 budget last year, but the Town voted for the default budget. Ms. deBeer felt that the process needs to be changed. Maybe we should look at what other Commissions do in surrounding towns. Mr. Knee voiced that he was very frustrated that we were denied the opportunity to say anything. Ms. deBeer felt it was a lack of respect to the people who spend so much time doing things for the town – they are eventually going to leave. We were conservative last year with what we asked for. Mr. Knee asked Ms. deBeer to put together a table of what surrounding towns are receiving for budgets. Also, we need money for training. Leo would be a perfect candidate for training since he is new to the Commission. Ms. deBeer added that we really need a project fund.

E. Buffer Options For Great Bay - Steve Miller and Lisa Graichen Email

Mr. Knee has not contacted Mr. Miller yet.

VI. OTHER

The Commission spent some time looking through the mail.

VII. NEXT MEETING DATE: September 12th, 2016

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Knee Adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Casey Wolfe
Recording Secretary