

**HANOVER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
9 FEBRUARY 2011**

Meeting convened at 5PM by Ed Chamberlain (chair)

In attendance: Athos Rassias, Douglas McIlroy, Anne Morris, Vicki Smith (staff), Ruth Bleyler, Michael Mayor (scribe), Ray Hogue, Adair Mulligan(from Conservation Council).

1: Current Business

Rinker Steele management plan amendment discussion and scheduled public hearing. Mountain biking issues discussed at recent meeting; suggestion to put recommendations in writing, with draft distributed with mailing. Trail maintenance policy also amended per distributed wording. Adair Mulligan and Nancy Collier have reviewed the wording, with approval of content. Meeting provided a sense of approval also. Motion to take the document to public hearing approved unanimously.

Memorandum of Understanding: King Memorial (supported by Adair) Removal of invasive plants timing included in the discussion. Adair provided perspectives.

McIlroy suggests sanctuary processes should be compatible with adjoining conservation easement lands so they are not constrained by what is done in the sanctuary. The document contains language to assure such sensitive management. Mulligan made explicit the Council's interest in deferring to Commission's determinations. Consensus emerged not to include cultivated plants in a natural area. Invasives policy brought up, but no stand exists that the Commission has established. Invasive removal program recognized as an on-going commitment of both organizations. Apple tree pruning unaddressed by Conservation Commission or William Desch. The wording about pruning will be moved to the memorial bench paragraph. Commission does hold positive feelings for multiple uses for the apple tree, as well as other aspects of use of the outdoor area including welcoming family activities for all ages. McIlroy suggests doing something to acknowledge the "namesake" for the sanctuary. The kiosk paragraph was moved to a more appropriate part of the document. Granite structure described by Mulligan to suggest more than a simple bench, to include inscriptions/engravings in one or more locations on the granite. Design still being pursued, first by Fern Meyers, expecting later input from the Council and Commission.

Agreement paragraph 8 clarified to include reference to the Nan & Alan King fund = "the fund".

Kiosk to be established low on the property as an introductory structure, together with self-guided tour information, also available in the library and on the web site. (10.c) As an informational display appropriate to site and purpose.

Maintenance issues were discussed, too with sensitivity to family concerns. How to respond if vandalism occurs? The Town will apply usual and customary corrections should any damage occur. Improvement facilities will become the property and responsibility of the town.

The well-publicized celebration of the unveiling, etc. will happen at an undetermined future date, not June, 2011. Planting plans are not constrained to spring or fall.

Delete all references to specific dates to avoid any implication of failure. Delete references to Reeve's role, also.

Ornamental garden planting paragraph should not contain reference to the Hanover Garden Club. Delete Alan King's sundial reference, p3, 2.f

Mulligan will draft changes. The Commission will support her efforts to pursue, endorsed by and voted for unanimously. Rassias agrees to bring the process to the Selectmen to ratify the project as a town supported endeavor. This should include establishment of the name of the memorial at a moment appropriate to the project.

Discussion of the MOU followed with items appearing underlined and/or grayed.

Additional item to be added specific to town's ownership and responsibility of maintenance of the property. Mowing issues will need further development since the town doesn't have the capacity required for mowing the upper reaches, possibly by volunteers, possibly by Peter Keene.

Remove calendar references for planting, etc.

The MOU will be re-formatted and resubmitted for signature to Chamberlain . Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Discussion ensued regarding the 250 celebration project, with concerns expressed about feasibility and appropriateness, in some respects to be determined through action by the Select board.

2. Resource Stewardship

Balch hill meetings attended by V. Smith. Trail re-routing away from big oak planned to protect users. Concern expressed that a large branch is weak and could fall. Trail maps were distributed. The Commission decided to spend up to \$800 on the plan for forest management, comparable and complimentary to the Council's management plan. Ben Hudson will be contacted. Deer management to protect native plants also involves efforts to contain invasives.

Neighborhood residents are sensitive about deer slaughter via other acceptable methods. A survey is projected to gather perspectives from the neighborhood. A sample of Ben Hudson's Forest Management planning was brought to the table (Easton, NH for Roy and Debby Stever's 160 acres.) Water Company land's forest management plan is being pondered, including the issue of deer management on that land, together with control of invasives.

Hayes Property work: V. Smith reported on the Open Space meeting: If Ken Pelton will not mow the fields, then another person who can mow will be asked to submit a bid for the work (Peter Keene, or others).

(Rassias exits the meeting at 6:30P)

Wilson's Landing update: e-mail from Weingeist states approval previously issued has been re-approved. New owner of property across the street has expressed her opinion. Zoning board submission is expected to be forthcoming soon. Specifics regarding waivers are pending.

3. Minutes responsibilities reviewed.

Hogue and Morris exchange dates.

4. Committee Reports

Open Space: Morris related last week's meeting focused on the Hayes property and other issues between Council and Commission. Joint display is being developed to provide insight for public education. Work is ongoing for a sandwich board for town meeting. David Roby's forester has been made available without fee to deal with Hayes/Trescott and then Marshall Brook. The conservation plan for big field along with corner property is ongoing.

Adjustments are being made to the open space subdivision plan for conformity with Zoning. Once acreage is established, valuations can be done with establishment of easements to follow. Quabbin-to-Cardigan partnership application is due shortly, which may constrain the acquisition of grants monies for the project. Commission commitment to the application was sought and given by motion and unanimous approval.

Mulherrin Farm's encroachment settlement that had been organized with the prospective buyer was rejected by the current owner. Realtor was also involved with questions regarding details. Town Counsel and Town Manager recommended relieving the current and/or future owners of the house of any constraints imposed by the conservation easement on that lot. Commission agrees to a letter crafted to uphold conservation easement constraints and processes and a proposed resolution of the infringement. Stewardship funds can be made available to provide objective mapping of the problem.

Trails Committee: Request from Doug McIlroy was registered regarding trails maintenance, from Commission to put some bridging structures (punchcons) to bring trail across boggy regions. Approved unanimously.

Bill Mlacak from the Conservation Council has joined the trails committee and created a website to keep the records of trail volunteers' contacts with landowners.

Slade Brook foot bridge can proceed without waiting for an approval. Steve Lubrano is on board. The DOC may provide grant monies for the construction. ZBA may need to be involved, or situation may only require an administrative permit. A thank you note will be generated for the trails volunteers. Volunteers also may deserve recognition via a special wearable item like gloves or a baseball cap or other recognizable item.

The possibility of purchase of Stanhope/Mill Gardens riverside property by the Town may come before the Select Board. Hogue may bring the topic up with Kate Connolly to broach the issue.

Biodiversity: The meeting accomplished a preliminary comparison of positions. Minutes from Barbara McIlroy were distributed. Concerns were expressed with focus on invasives. There is a need instead to broaden the discourse to cover habitats and the inter-relationship with fauna, etc. The focus currently is on plants, but encouragement should be extended to evolve to a broader consideration of ecosystem priorities for the group. Doug McIlroy adds that the subcommittee's purpose includes approval by the Commission. A policy statement will be forthcoming, for approval by the commission.

The Trescott Company has not announced another meeting. Deer and invasive plant control is at issue, as both impact tree growth and regeneration by self-propagation. There is a focus on generating sufficient revenue through forest marketing to cover the Company's expenses.

Minutes reviewed and approved as amended.

Other Business: Judy Reeve is requesting a Sat, June 4 session about rain gardens. The proposal is to allocate funds from CC budget in support of the meeting. The meeting suggested \$100 contribution with information to Larry Litton and Judy Reeves. Audience intended: contractors and landscape designers.

Randy Shuey of NE Environmental, Inc. cites monies that might be released to support Girl Brook additional work, from ARM Fund program. V. Smith will bring the issue to Town Manager to evaluate the process.

Adjournment: 8:00PM