

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 8, 2012 at 5:00 PM
TOWN HALL, 41 SOUTH MAIN STREET**

In attendance:

Members: Ruth Bleyler, Ed Chamberlain (Chair), Shelley Gilbert, Doug McIlroy, Alan Saucier

Alternates: Jim Kennedy, John Trummel

Staff: Jonathan Edwards, Jessie Levine, Vicki Smith

Others: See Attendance Sheet

1. CURRENT BUSINESS

Results of Commission Survey

Survey response summary distributed to attendees. Jessie reviewed results with the Conservation Commission and opened the meeting for discussion and questions and encouraged suggestions for workshop topics, etc.

Vicki recommended that the Commission review the State Statutes that clearly define Conservation Committee responsibilities.

Doug noted that the Commission has mandated responsibilities and discretionary responsibilities.

John asked that the mandated responsibilities be clearly articulated and understood and discretionary responsibilities be kept to a realistic and manageable amount.

Jonathan posed the Commission prioritize discretionary responsibilities.

Ed stated he considers the Commission's priorities are preservation of land and trails.

Vicki added the identification, mapping and eradication of invasives as a priority.

Ruth expressed interest in learning more about what other commissions in the state are doing. She mentioned that, at the recent UVCC meeting, she was made aware of commissions engaged in interesting and "fun" educational programs. Vicki suggested the Commission consider more events in partnership with other local / regional organizations.

She also posed the question to the Commission on how we see spending next year's budget. Jonathan suggested the Commission consider approaching folks like John Joline, a local outdoor enthusiast, to participate in public educational programming.

It was agreed that the next step in Conservation Commission Workshop Planning should be to contact Carol Andrews to set agenda for the first workshop session. Ed suggested that the commission utilizing CC meeting nights with 'light' agendas for workshops. Jessie will look at March meeting as a possibility for first workshop.

2. RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Road Improvements at Baum Property, Goss Road

Tim McNamara, Associate Director, Dartmouth Real Estate Office summarized his January 24, 2012 letter to Vicki Smith regarding the need for and extent of proposed driveway improvements to the Baum Cabin.

Ed noted that the Open Space Committee had given their approval of the proposal.

Tim stated, with preliminary approval of the Conservation Committee, Dartmouth College would prepare, submit an application for expedited State of NH approval and, following state approval, would come back to the Conservation Committee for their final approval.

Ed asked for clarification on wetlands. Jonathan asked about Pasture Road access and the need for improvements.

Tim stated that Pasture Road is traversable but, that there are likely wetland issue (standing water in roadway ruts). By right, Dartmouth College can access the cabin over Pasture Road. Tim addressed the intensity of use of the cabin. He stated that the cabin is used year round; rented approximately once or twice a month and access in the winter is on foot, snow shoes or x-country skis. It was noted by the Staff that the cabin is in the Forestry Zone which limits occupancy to a maximum of 180 days per calendar year. Tim assured the commission that occupancy is well below the threshold.

Doug raised the question of the location of the property line for the Baum Property along Pasture Road. Vicki will have property line verified. Jonathan recommended that the survey work be paid out of the general fund.

Motion for preliminary approval by Doug; seconded by Ruth; unanimous approval by committee.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

John Trummel is the March minutes taker

Vicki to determine note taker for the April meeting

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Biodiversity Committee

Ruth reported on the UVCC meeting.

Vicki updated commission on the progress of Rinker Pond Area invasives eradication measures planning; expressed her interest in seeing resource inventories completed on existing town properties (with Jim Kennedy's assistance) and introduced the idea of the combined recently acquired Hayes Property town land and Trescott Ridge Wetlands.

Open Space Committee

Ed summarized Baum Cabin access review and approval by the committee at its last meeting.

Vicki updated the committee on the Hayes Property regarding preparation of a conservation management plan and plans to transfer conservation easement to the Conservancy. Jonathan recommended delay of transfer of conservation easement until a lower land development plan and wetlands mitigation are worked out. Please reference February 2, 2012 Open Space Committee Meeting Minutes for additional information.

Trails Committee

Vicki informed commission of the Signage Forum scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at Tracy Hall in Norwich. She encouraged members to attend.

Doug discussed the existing wetland / trail conflict at the Tanzi Tract and asked the commission to vote to approve re-routing of that portion of trail in conflict with the wetland. John moved to approve; Ruth seconded; commission unanimously approved motion.

Trescott Board

Nothing to report.

- 5. MINUTES:** The minutes of January 11, 2012 were reviewed, amended and unanimously approved by the commission.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Ed raised the issue of no Vice Chair on the Conservation Commission presently. The commission agreed Doug should be considered for the position. Ed moved to elect Doug Vice Chairman of the commission; Ruth seconded the motion; the commission voted unanimously to elect Doug.

Jessie thanked all in attendance at the monthly meeting for “putting up” with her dog ☺.

7. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alan Saucier, Commission Member