

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 2, 2010
APPROVED: January 6, 2011**

Chairman Paul Willard called the meeting to order at 7:05pm in the Old Library

Members Present: Paul Willard, Wendy Sisson, Don Ritchie, Jim Breslauer, Janet Waldron and Patrick Doherty

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin), Al Futterman (Nashua River Watershed Association), Cara Sanford (AmeriCorps), David Coffin, Rachael Coffin, Kit Holland, Linnea Currie, William Currie and Janis Dyer

Nashua River Watershed Association – Forest Legacy

Al Futterman, from the Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA), was present along with Cara Sanford, from AmeriCorps. Mr. Futterman would like to follow up on his previous presentation on forest management plans as well as discuss the USDA Forest Legacy Program. Ms. Sanford explained that she is a Lancaster resident who came into AmeriCorps because she is very interested in land conservation. An initiative called Mass Lives, a consortium of Land Trust and several watershed groups across Massachusetts, hired twenty AmeriCorps people for land stewardship to include baseline monitoring, outreach and regional conservation. Ms. Sanford started with NRWA in October, with a large focus on the forests within the Nashua River Greenway Forest Legacy Area. This area contains over 400,000 acres in which Harvard is included. Ms. Sanford would be able to assist Harvard in the application process of the USDA Forest Legacy program.

Mr. Futterman wanted to discuss the thoughts of the Commission on developing a forest management plan for the Town of Harvard. Mr. Futterman's analysis of about 1,000 acres of Town land would certainly do well to have a forest management plan. Mr. Futterman stated there are State monies available for Towns to engage a forester to do a forest management plan. Mr. Futterman stated that a management plan could be a plan for old growth, as an example of an endless number of things you can do. A Management Plan is probably a wise thing for a Town to do. Mr. Futterman mentioned that a good reason to develop a Plan is that the proceeds from the timber harvesting could be put back into Conservation by way of management or the purchase of new land.

Paul Willard stated there are very few lands in Harvard that are not swamp, floodplains or ledge. Mr. Willard included that there are very few marketable trees in Harvard; there is no money there, but he was not saying the Commission should not have a management plan because of that. Wendy Sisson stated the Land Stewardship Committee (LSS) did obtain some quotes previously and it was too expensive (\$20,000+) to get these plans done. Ms. Sisson added that the funds the Commission currently has are from Community Preservation Act (CPA) and can only be used for the purchase of land or the maintenance of land purchased with CPA funds. Additionally, the Conservation Fund is

dwindling as it was removed from the budget when CPA was enacted. There is now a new LSS that can do another Request for Proposal and see what the cost would be now. Mr. Futterman suggested not requesting a full forest management plan, but rather a scaled back version.

Mr. Futterman discussed the Forest Legacy Program. Since 1992 the US Forest Service has had the Forest Legacy Program, which pays 75% of appraised value of either Conservation Restriction or fee. The Program is focused on preserving timber lands across the Nation, about 40 States are currently eligible, and it may not be the entire State but a designated Forest Legacy area. We are in the Nashua River Greenway Forestry Legacy Area; NWRA is the sponsor of this area and the largest of six or seven within the State. Each project has a six million dollar cap on it; the State as a whole can get up to ten million dollars. Mr. Futterman stated that what must be done to be competitive at the National level is to put together a large application of multiple large land owners, to create about 15,000 acres as a threshold.

The Commission thanked Mr. Futterman and Ms. Sanford for their time this evening. Ms. Sisson will pursue the Forest Legacy Program further with the LSS.

Notice of Intent Hearing – David & Rachel Coffin, 8 Westcott Road, DEP#177-588, Harvard#1110-01. Opened at 7:41pm

Appointments to the Open Space & Recreation Plan Implementation Committee
Patrick Doherty explained the top three priorities of the Conservation Commission within the goals and objectives of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Mr. Doherty, Paul Willard and Liz Allard reviewed the goals and objectives earlier this week and made suggested assignments of Commission members to each of the goals and objectives that the Commission is responsible for. Mr. Doherty reviewed those assignments with the members.

The following individuals were recommended for appointment to the Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Committee: Bill Johnson, Board of Selectmen, Mark Mandozzi, Park & Recreation, Rose Anne Saalfeld and Ken Swanton, Historic Commission and Wayne McFarland, Planning Board. Names for representatives from the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee and the Harvard Conservation Trust will be submitted in the near future. Wendy Sisson made a motion to appoint those listed above to the Conservation Commission's Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementations Committee. Jim Breslauer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Update of the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee

Jaye Waldron informed the members that at the October meeting of the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee the Committee discussed the letter sent by Commission in regards to the review of the draw down data. The Committee is still confused as to what it is the Commission is looking for.

The Committee requested that the bio-mat within the pond swimming area, which is now exposed due to the draw down, be cut out and removed. Members agreed to review the area and discuss further at the next meeting.

The Committee would like to start implementing community outreach around the pond in association with the Commission. The Commission agreed that a survey would be helpful to learn what town residents want to do with the pond.

Tree Cutting Policy

Wendy Sisson informed the members that she has shortened the tree cutting policy as requested by the members. Members will review and further discuss at the next meeting.

Land Stewardship Subcommittee

Wendy Sisson informed the members that Bob Benson joined the Land Stewardship Subcommittee on their clean up day in November and is interested in joining the subcommittee. With no comments from the members Wendy Sisson made a motion to appoint Bob Benson to the Land Stewardship Subcommittee. Patrick Doherty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

ZBA Request for Comments – Curtiss, 71 Old Mill Road

Liz Allard informed the members that the ZBA has requested comments on a Special Permit application before them for Susan Curtiss at 71 Old Mill Road. Don Ritchie reviewed the plan and stated that the Commission would have no objections to the application as submitted. Ms. Allard will send a letter to the ZBA in that regard.

Update of Bare Hill Pond Stormwater Management Project, DEP#177-575

Wendy Sisson updated the Commission on the Stormwater Management project being conducted by the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee. Ms. Sisson stated that she and Liz Allard met Nick Browse and Bill Johnson on the site of BHP-3 earlier this week to discuss the issues with the stabilization of that structure. It had been determined that the material used for stabilization was not an approved material of the Commission, nor was it installed properly. It was agreed to leave the matting in place until the spring at which time it will be carefully removed and new jute matting will be placed in any areas that are unstable. It was also determined that additional stone should be placed at the bottom of the already existing stone to aid in the reduction of erosion during large rain events. Additional stone should be added to the upper right side of the system to aid in the control of erosion there as well.

Ms. Sisson also questioned the large amount of silt in the first basin of the system. Both Mr. Browse and Mr. Johnson had no idea why there was such a large accumulation, as there should not be. They stated they would further investigate the issue.

Tully Land

Wendy Sisson suggested that the Commission rethink the repair that was conducted to an existing culvert on the Tully land behind the Highway Department. Unfortunately the work done has caused the water level in the wetland area to change. Ms. Sisson

suggested that the new culvert either be raised or blocked to regain the conditions that were present prior to fixing the culvert. Don Ritchie stated he would review the site to determine what should be done to correct the situation.

Adjournment

Jim Breslauer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:38pm. Don Ritchie seconded that motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard
Land Use Administrator/
Conservation Agent

Harvard Conservation Commission
Notice of Intent Hearing Meeting Minutes
David & Rachel Coffin, 8 Westcott Road, DEP#177-588, Harvard#1110-01
December 2, 2010

The public hearing was opened at 7:41pm by Chairman Paul Willard under the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act, Ch. 131 §40 in the Old Library

Members Present: Paul Willard, Wendy Sisson, Don Ritchie, Jim Breslauer, Janet Waldron and Patrick Doherty

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin), David Coffin, Rachael Coffin, Kit Holland, Linnea Currie, William Currie and Janis Dyer

This hearing is for a Notice of Intent filed on behalf of David & Rachel Coffin for erosion reduction within the 100' wetland buffer zone at 8 Westcott Road, Harvard.

David and Rachel Coffin were present to present their plan. Mr. Coffin explained that the work he has done was for the reduction of erosion caused by surface runoff. Mr. Coffin feels that the improvements he has made on his property have done nothing to degrade the environment, rather he has improved it. Mr. Coffin explained that a trench was dug out and stone was placed within it, then wrapped and re-covered. Mr. Coffin at this point intends to do nothing more than stabilize the exposed dirt with either grass or some type of ground cover. Wendy Sisson recommended seeking advice from a landscape architect to see what will grow in that area. Ms. Sisson thinks adding loam may add more sediment to the trench, not to mention the creation of an ideal habitat for invasive plant species.

Bill Currie, an abutter, stated that the work done by Mr. Coffin may have caused the farm pond on his property to dry up within the last few years. Mr. Currie believes that a substantial spring has been filled in over time. Don Ritchie asked if the berm area at the rear of the Coffin property had been filled in. Mr. Coffin stated he had not done so. Mr. Currie does not believe the trench that Mr. Coffin installed has increased the flow of water.

Liz Allard explained what she has seen on the Currie's property that has led her to believe that the Coffins have over time placed fill within the buffer zone and possible wetlands on the Currie property. Jim Breslauer stated that if the wetlands were altered by dumping then restoration maybe involved. A site walk needs to been conducted to get a better sense of what is going on at both locations.

A site walk was scheduled with the Curries for December 11, 2010 at 9:00am. Jim Breslauer then made a motion to continue the hearing to December 16th at 8:30pm. Wendy Sisson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted, Liz Allard Land Use Administrator/Conservation Agent

DOCUMENTAION & OTHER EXHIBITS

Nashua River Watershed Association – Forest Legacy

- The Forest Legacy Program – A Summary for Massachusetts Landowners, prepared by the Nashua River Watershed Association, undated
- USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program Overview Program Description, undated
- Application for the Allocation of Funds over 1,000 acres in the Massachusetts Forest Stewardship & Private Lands FSC Group Certification Program, Draft February 2010
- DCR Forest Stewardship Program, dated November 22, 2010
- Power Point Presentation of the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, undated
- A Land Trust’s Guide to Partnering with the Forestry Legacy Program, February 2009

Notice of Intent Hearing – David & Rachel Coffin, 8 Westcott Road, DEP#177-588, Harvard#1110-01

- WPA Form 3 Notice of Intent Application for David & Rachael Coffin, 8 Westcott Road
- As-built Sewage Disposal System Plan, prepared by Ducharme & Wheeler, Inc., dated 7/31/2000
- Plan for Coffin 8 Westcott Road, Harvard, Erosion Reduction within 100’ Buffer Zone, dated November 18, 2010

Appointments to the Open Space & Recreation Plan Implementation Committee

- Section 9 of the Open Space & Recreation Plan 2008-2015

Tree Cutting Policy

- Revised Tree Cutting Policy , undated