

**Hooksett Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2010**

Call Meeting to Order: 7:04pm

Attendance: Steve Couture vice-chair, Cindy Robertson member, Jim Walter member, Phil Fitanides alt- member, John Turbyne alt-member, David Hess member, Robert Duhaime Planning Board Rep, Dan Paradise Town Council Rep

Public Input:

Mike Horne 1 Monroe Drive – When I heard the town was obtaining the Pinnacle Property I got excited from a Parks & Rec Advisory Board stand point. We want to be proactive and work with this commission in putting a plan together for access to the Pinnacle. We thought especially with winter coming if it was at all possible maybe we could get the Highway Department out there to trim the trees while the ground is frozen. I would be willing to take the lead with Bear Paw and get the park area going.

David Hess- The deeds have been sent out to the two sisters who own the property. We are looking to close by year end. I believe it is doable. Please keep in mind that Bear Paw Greenways will be the conservation easement custodian. They have been involved in the deed language. Included in the deed is trails, parking, warming huts so that hopefully we can get back to skating on Pinnacle Pond as it was used for in the past. The idea would be to come in off the Pinnacle and put a small parking lot there and then a small park right there. This is the only flat area in the whole property. The rest would be preserved for trails and such.

Meeting Minutes: Jim Walter motioned to approve the minutes October 5, 2010 and November 4, 2010, Cindy Robertson seconded by voted unanimously.

Appointments:

Ravenwood Subdivision – Steve Keach, Keach Nordstrom

Steve Keach – We were last in front of this commission in March 2009, we had gone through wetlands permitting process for this project. We have received the permits from the wetlands bureau and also a separate permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. The Planning Board disapproved this project last year since then we had filed an appeals with the courts and won the appeal so we are now coming back before you to discuss the two lots in the northeast section of the subdivision that you had recommending eliminating.

There was a recommendation to cut out two lots in the back northeast portion that we have obtained a wetlands permit for. We had a general wetland habitat assessment done. Our client thought it appropriate to have Mr. Schauer's firm do a more in-depth assessment in the spring and summer of this year and he will present his finding momentarily. We are here before you because we feel we have the scientific data to support our findings to keep those lots in this subdivision and not have any

major impacts. I know most of you are familiar with the project. The lots in question are located here they are slender pieces and will have a common driveway.

Pete Schauer – I did not do the wildlife assessment that you have in front of you it was done by Jim Fougere who came back in 2010 to continue with this more specific assessment. He did a study in 2005 to get this project approved and when Steve called me we said we would take another look at the findings. This is known as wetland impact #4 in the original wetland permit. Jim Fougere determined that there was not a wildlife corridor in this area. We do not disagree that there is wildlife in this area but there is no defined trails that wildlife travel in a regular pattern. There is a stream about 1 foot wide but there is no contact. This is most likely one of the reasons that the wildlife is not using it as much. This development will most likely push some of the wildlife into another wildlife area over here. This is not to say that the wildlife will not come back once the houses are built. To say that we fragment something I think is untrue. Will we alter their travel pattern for a short time yes absolutely but we do not believe it will be something permanent. There is nothing that will impede travel to the smaller animals as well.

Robert Duhaime – One of the major reasons that we denied this project was there was no forward progress on the project. This subdivision would also now be considered a conservation subdivision. There were too many lots in this subdivision and most of the open space was wetlands. I think it is interesting that we do have choices about what we want to do. We do not have to follow what everyone else does.

Steve Keach – This does meet the requirements of the cluster ordinance that it must conform too. In the process of advancing this project as we have been trying to do, we have done a lot to conserve those buffers. When this was proposed there were 45 lots. There was a need to pay close attention to the areas out there and we feel we have. The lot count including the two lots that are in question is 39. If we remove those lots that would make the subdivision 37. As you know the permitting process to get approval is very detailed and it was approved with the current 39 lots. We are here to ask you to reconsider your recommendation to cut out the lots in the northeast corner. The area of open space is more than doubled as to what was required under the cluster ordinance that we are binded to it as it is what our subdivision was approved under. We have substantial open space in the south by the prime wetlands. This more than exceeded the open space requirements per this cluster ordinance.

Robert Duhaime – Please keep in mind it is not your responsibility to make a living for the developers and realtor. I think it is a little premature for you to think that what you see is what will be approved

Steve Couture – From a timing stand point when are you planning on going back to the Planning Board?

Steve Keach – Our intention is when we go back to the planning board having more detail for them to review. We feel that it was important to have more scientific backup to get those lots back on the plan. I have met with both Dan Tatem of Stantec Engineering and Jo Ann Duffy and they would like your recommendation before forming their recommendation to the Planning Board. We are not saying that you made the wrong decision in 2009 but now we are in a better position to provide you with more scientific data that was not available to you when you made your decision.

Steve Couture - When will you be submitting the wildlife assessment as you stated that you would not be submitting it before our decision is made here.

Steve Keach – We want to submit one entire packet and have it reviewed

Steve Couture – In order to have us make an informed decision it would be pertinent to review that entire wildlife assessment.

Steve Keach – I will have Peter email it directly to you and this memo from September has some questions that were brought to us from Stantec. I also will forward you all of my reports so that you can review all of the information.

David Hess – If the applicant is willing to send us all of the previous reports and have our engineer look everything and they we can make an educated decision I would go along with making a determination after that.

Phil Fitanides – Can you please put together a synopsis of the reports so that we can review that as well.

David Hess motioned once the commission receives all of the information such as reports and memos from the applicant to forward it to Jo Ann Duffy and the Town engineers and get there feedback. Once there feedback is received to have the commission make a formal vote on the 2 lots in questions. Cindy Robertson seconded voted unanimously.

Commission Reports:

1. **Open Space Subcommittee** – N/A

Correspondence:

All correspondence was reviewed

Other:

1. **Sidewalks** – There was a discussion at both the Planning Board and the Town Council and the council stated they did not want sidewalks as they did not want the maintenance to fall back on the town. The Planning Board took it under advisement. I wanted to put it out there to the commission as this is important to connect open space and also gives area to people who cannot hike on trails.
2. **Secretary Position** – Steve Couture motioned to continue with Jodi Pinard as secretary for the commission Cindy Robertson seconded voted unanimously
3. **Bear Paw** - Jim Walter Motioned to pay the \$100 membership fee Cindy Robertson seconded voted unanimously
4. **Mark Dunn Invoice** – David Hess motioned to ratify the email vote to pay \$1886 for the pinnacle property and \$349 for the Merrimack River property Jim Walter seconded voted unanimously.

5. **Bear Paw Invoice** – Cindy Robertson motioned to pay \$560 Jim Walter seconded voted unanimously

Non-public under RSA 91-A: 3, II, d

Steve Couture motioned to enter into non public seconded by Cindy Robertson voted unanimously

David Hess motioned to exit Jim Walter seconded voted unanimously

Adjournment –

Jim Walter motioned to adjourn meeting at 9:04pm seconded by Cindy Robertson voted unanimously