

OFFICIAL CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

July 14, 2014

S. Couture called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Steve Couture, Chair, Cindy Robertson, Vice-Chair, Phil Fitandes, member, JoCarol Woodburn, member, David Hess, member

Excused: John Turbyne, Alternate and David Ross, Town Council Rep.

Begin by introducing Carolyn Cronin, Assistant Town Planner, to the Conservation Commission staff contact position. She will be taking over for Jodi Pinard. This has been added to Carolyn's job description. This will be a good connection with planning and the Community Development Department.

Public Input: None

Meeting Minutes: *C. Robertson moved to approve the meeting minutes for June 12, 2014, seconded by S. Couture. D. Hess abstained. Motion passed.*

Invoices:

P. Fitandes motioned for payment of an invoice from West Environmental, Inc. dated July 9, 2014 for wetlands assessment in the amount of \$1,750. C. Robertson seconded. Motion passed. Paid for by SNHU wetlands mitigation money required by the wetlands permit for the SNHU connector road.

J. Woodburn: Moosewood Ecological is in the process of going out to property to do a wildlife inventory, they did a timber resources inventory. They are taking about 250 samples of trees. They will be meeting with us in August to give results. Will probably be a two hour meeting. Would like to do outside our regular meeting, because it will be pretty long. This will be our first status update since initial meeting.

C. Robertson motioned for payment of an invoice from Moosewood Ecological, LLC. dated July 1, 2014 for ecological and timber resources inventory and work on stewardship plan in the amount of \$2,465. P. Fitanides seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion of New Hampshire Association of Natural Resource Scientists. Made up of wetlands ecologists and professionals that do wetlands permitting and assessments. They offer training opportunities. The cost is \$20 for the year for Conservation Commission membership.

C. Robertson motioned to pay the \$20 membership fee. Second by P. Fitanides. Motion passed.

Elections:

C. Robertson motioned to nominate S. Couture as Chair. Second by D. Hess. Motion passed.

S. Couture motioned to nominate C. Robertson as Vice Chair. Second by J. Woodburn. Motion passed.

Other:

Grant Opportunities

Discussion of Moose Plate grant opportunity. Money goes to conservation and historic organizations. State Conservation Commission oversees grants we would apply for. Opportunity to get money for work we want to do. Possibly for Merrimack Riverfront project. We have to vote to accept grant, but not to apply. We need to decide what to apply for.

Another opportunity for funds is the Transportation Alternatives Program for rails to trails projects. Up to \$800,000 in funds available. Pays for 80% of project. Could use for Merrimack Riverfront trails. Need to decide how much money to ask for and what to use it for. Letter due August 6th. Need to find out how much to build elevated boardwalk across wetland. Could get rough budget estimate and document it. Could scope out what we want in letter of intent. JoCarol will put together the letter of intent and get letter out. Application deadline is September 26th. Town Council would need to vote to accept funds.

Annual Report

A one-page write-up due August 1st. We could discuss three topics: Merrimack riverfront, Clay Pond, and Jim Walter.

Jim Walter Memorial Services

Discussion of services for Jim Walter to be held September 30th at the Robert Frost Hall Auditorium at 3:30pm.

Appointment:

C. Robertson motioned for payment of an invoice for T.D. Brouillette Land Surveying dated June 13, 2014, for boundary survey of Hanscom-Lambert parcels in the amount of \$5,600. Second by J. Woodburn. Motion passed.

SNHU wetland mitigation will pay for survey. They paid us \$49,000 to mitigate for the wetlands impacts for the connector road and we got two properties. This survey is part of the process to acquire the properties.

Dan Kern, Bear-Paw Regional Greenways

D. Kern: It would be helpful to have a key to the gate on Chester Turnpike.

Hanscom-Lambert: Spent over budget on Attorney fees, saved \$250 for Mark's work. Don't have conservation easement draft yet. Will bring to next meeting.

S. Couture: Are we closing with deed restriction like Quimby?

D. Kern: Deed conveyance will meet DES requirement and then will do conservation easement later this summer. Deed language conveys deed restrictions to DES associated with wetlands permit. I will have a draft conservation easement and distribute via e-mail.

D. Hess: I talked to Dean Shankle today and told him about this because we need to close by July 31st. We need Town Council vote and public hearing by July 23rd.

D. Kern: For the last one for DES, we did our own hazardous waste assessment based on Fish and Game template. We plan to use that again. There is one little area of trash associated with the road, other than that it's remote. If something caused alarm we would pay someone to look at it. I'll have it to you before you close. Other updates: there will be a wetlands study this summer for MSG. We came to agreement and will probably close on it this summer. I don't have total acreage but with the MSG parcels it will bring Bear-Paw conservation properties in Hooksett to over 1500 acres. Closing on MSG will be sometime next year. According to David Campbell they will do wetland crossings and the conveyance to the Town and Bear Paw in order to vest the project. I owe you some work on other parcels near Chester Turnpike, but haven't had a chance to work on it.

S. Couture: We need to set a meeting date for Moosewood to discuss the preliminary work for the Stewardship Plan.

J. Woodburn: We need to make some decisions and get back to them and schedule public meeting. We should plan for about a two and a half hour meeting and have an evening meeting in Council Chambers.

D. Kern: I want to mention we will have Kevin Gardner again if you want to do a joint event October 21st. I haven't done any publicity yet. It will be associated with membership drive in Hooksett. I'm trying to get more members. We will have our annual meeting in January at library.

S. Couture: You will send us revised map, deed language and then the proposed conservation easement language?

D. Kern: Yes

S. Couture: We will put you on the August agenda.

Merrimack Riverfront

D. Hess: Today went out with Town Administrator Dean Shankle and DPW Director Leo Lessard on a site walk at Amoskeag Rowing Club. We looked at access at rowing club. Leo Lessard did not believe the abutments on either side of Brown Brook could support a bridge capable of carrying cars and trucks, but probably could support a pedestrian bridge with a thirty foot span, also sufficient to support ATVs. He thought he might have enough space outside the current Rowing Club compound to access and construct a bridge there, but wants to wait until the foliage disappears in the Fall before firmly deciding that. He will do an estimate of how much it is to put a bridge there. He will provide HCC with estimates for accessing the property both via a pedestrian bridge at that location, and to construct an 18 to 20 foot driveway and 20 space parking lot at our middle access to the property off Merrimack Street. He thinks that there's enough space between existing fence and trees. For access at the rowing club, it is within 25 to 50 feet of the river and protected by the Surface Water Quality Protection Act. What can you not cut?

S. Couture: You can cut and under trail applications there is an expedited permit process for trails.

D. Hess: Sent an email to rowing club and want to work something out but we may not need to. Keep in mind lease to rowing club is 2 year lease, renewed by lack of decision in December of last year. If Town asks to reconsider, it has to give written notice before January of next year.

S. Couture: Sounds like we can get an access point without changing their footprint.

C. Robertson: The cost estimates will be useful for asking for grant money.

Non-Public Session:

S. Couture motioned to enter non-public session at 6:53pm. Second by C. Robertson. Motion passed.

NH RSA 91A:3 II (d) *Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.*

S. Couture motioned to move forward with acquisition of the Hanscom-Lambert property per the conditions of the Purchase and Sale Agreement. Second by C. Robertson. Motion passed.

Other business:

S. Couture: We have a permit application for Mammoth Road but plan is approved by Planning Board. No review needed. NHDOT putting in new signs relevant to Welcome Center on I-93. They are within their existing right of way. No concerns by commission. Dave, I will get you meeting date that I went to Town Council. Cindy will find motion. JoCarol, I'll send you Moose Plate grant info. We can make a decision about event on Oct 21st at the next meeting.

P. Fitanides: Are we doing anything for Old Home Day September 20th?

S. Couture: I assume. Jim always did something. Another thing to mention, we have one alternate position open.

S. Couture motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15p.m. Second by C. Robertson. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Cronin

Assistant Planner/Conservation Commission Staff Support