

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION EASEMENT WORKSHOP NOTES

March 14, 2016

**Attendance:** Cindy Robertson, Vice-Chair; Phil Fitandes, member; JoCarol Woodburn, member; Deborah Miville, alternate; Carolyn Cronin, staff support; Dan Kern, Bear-Paw Regional Greenways; Matt Lavoie, Code Enforcement Officer, Mila Paul, former easement intern.

### SUMMARY:

#### Dan Kern Input:

- At Bear-Paw, easement monitors address violations and issues. If they can't address them, they bring them to the Land Protection Committee. Handling violations is about establishing good relationships with property owners. Send a letter depending on the level of the violation. Notify them that there is conservation land. You would want someone employed by the Town to enforce them.
- Need to blaze property lines, monitor, and mark violations. Come up with steps for the process.
- Ultimately, it's the landowners' responsibility to abide by the easement.
- May want to talk to the Town Attorney about getting rid of conservation easements that have no conservation value (for example, buffer strips in University Heights).
- It is worth it to continue monitoring this year.
- Future properties: If the only issue is that you don't want the land to be developed, you can do that through the Planning Board process without involving the Conservation Commission.
- Need to prioritize which properties need boundary marking the most.
- Check plans to see if the developer ever monumented the boundaries. If not, you can make them do it. If the properties are still being developed you can make them go back and mark them.

#### Mila Paul Input:

- Prioritize properties with the most conservation value (wildlife habitat, sensitive areas, large, unfragmented tracts).
- Volunteer monitoring could work, but we need well-defined boundaries.

#### Conclusions:

- Need to come up with an easement policy that includes outreach and landowner education, monitoring plan, and violation policy.

- Policy should include setting up a budget for monitoring.
- Need to add “re-blazing of property lines and re-monumentation to the easement” policy.
- Need to put up conservation medallions in order to establish a presence and let people know this is conservation land.

For Next Meeting:

- Discuss prioritizing tasks for easement properties, establishing 2016 conservation property goals, and shared stewardship position.