

Jaffrey Conservation Commission

Minutes

April 1, 2009

**Present:** *Jim Bearce, Nora Barton Bryant, John O. Field (Chair), Carolyn D. Garretson, Bill Graf, Pat Weiner, Kathy Batchelder (Selectmen's representative)*

**Absent:** *Ron Rogstad*

**Guest:** *Jeffry N. Littleton*, conservation ecologist and director, Moosewood Ecological, LLC of Chesterfield, NH.

The Chair welcomed *Kathy Batchelder* as the Selectmen's new representative to the Commission.

*Minutes* of the previous meeting, held on February 4, 2009, were reviewed and approved on a motion by CDG, seconded by NBB.

#### **GRAY GOOSE: BASELINE DOCUMENTATION REPORT**

*Jeffry N. Littleton* reviewed his Baseline Documentation Report (BDR) for the Gray Goose Farm property, for which the Commission now holds the conservation easement on behalf of the town.

Mr. Littleton will provide the Commission with a CD of the report as soon as he obtains Temple Pond's signature (required by law). He obtained the signature of Larry Anderson, owner of the 31-acre parcel, on March 14, 2009.

Concerning use of the BDR in annual monitoring of the easement, Mr. Littleton noted that he has provided photographs with GPS coordinates along with reference maps. Annual monitoring is best done in May and should include both walking the boundaries and assuring that changes contrary to the terms of the easement have not been made to any part of the property.

Mr. Littleton recommended signage to mark the property as a conservation easement. This can be accomplished by blazes or tags. He also recommended identification of the line between the two parcels.

In response to inquiries from members of the Commission, Mr. Littleton estimated that the fee for a professional to monitor the easement would be \$500 - \$800, including preparation of a formal report. If a professional were to monitor the property on an ongoing basis, the annual fee would be less, perhaps \$400 per year. The Commission

discussed the possibility of accompanying Mr. Littleton on an initial monitoring exercise for a year or two to train Commission members for future monitoring on their own.

## **NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY**

Comments on the draft report were sent to Kane & Ingraham on March 16, 2009. BG suggested -- and other members agreed -- that the Commission be provided with a final draft copy to review. JOF will contact Chris Kane with that request. *Postscript: After consulting with Jo Anne Carr, JOF advised Chris Kane that the Commission believes it has an obligation to review and edit all new material in the text, in particular those sections not included in the draft report (email of 4/2/09). In his reply, Mr. Kane concurred. He promised the entire final draft, in electronic form, soon.*

JOF spoke with Jo Anne Carr about laminating the NRI maps to preserve them from wear and tear. She endorsed the idea, and Commission members agreed. Laminating a set does not preclude printing out additional copies on paper, even in large (36 X 36) size.

## **COMMISSION FINANCES: CONSERVATION FUND AND LINE-ITEM TRACKING**

CDG provided an updated **2008 balance sheet** of revenues, expenditures, and anticipated expenditures (funds committed but not yet paid), and the uncommitted balance. As of December 31, 2008, \$6,500.54 was available for discretionary spending.

**LUCT revenues** have been updated and are now in agreement with town figures. (The discrepancy noted earlier reflects 2008 tax abatements that were not recorded in our records.) Total receipts for 2008 came to \$23,931.39.

- JOF proposed that the Commission donate a portion of the LUCT revenue received each year to the new **Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund**. This will be discussed at the next meeting on April 22, 2009.

CDG also provided a year-to-date **2009 balance sheet** of revenues, expenditures and anticipated expenditures based on prior commitments.

Balance sheets for the **CPCA**, **Gordon Fund/Children's Woods**, and **Gray Goose** were also presented. Of the \$1,000 transfer to the CPCA account, \$909 remains following reproduction of the CPCA Management Plan. In the Children's Woods fund, \$2,648.29 remain for use in 2009. This will entail some combination of project expenses and reimbursement drawdown.

- **Children's Woods projects** were discussed, with particular attention to repair of the trestle bridge on Rails-to-Trails. JB has researched this and learned that the bridge is owned by the NH Department of Transportation and is on the railway

line. The Monadnock Sno-Moles, the area snowmobile club, may be able to apply for a grant to repair the bridge. The Sno-Moles have a trails administrator who would make the grant application. JB will follow-up.

- JOF reported that Jo Anne Carr states that the Town of Jaffrey is responsible for maintaining Rails-to-Trails. JOF will talk with Frank Mieso, a trustee of the trust fund, to determine whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to contribute financially to repair of the bridge using Gordon Fund revenues currently in the Conservation Fund.

JOF informed the Commission that the *town's annual appropriation* for 2009 to the Conservation Fund (\$200) cannot be reinstated on advice of town auditors. (The appropriation was applied to dues to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions before it could be protected for the Conservation Support Fund, as voted by the Commission on February 4, 2009.) JOF is looking into alternative revenue for the Conservation Support Fund; and, if received, the Commission will be able to consider the request for support from The Thorndike Pond Conservation Association when the Commission meets on April 22, 2009.

## **CHESHIRE POND CONSERVATION AREA**

JB will organize a group of people to begin clean-up of the CPCA. JB will pursue possibilities of establishing a parking area at the Nutting Road access and will talk with Rick Forcier regarding development of the parking area.

## **TOWN WEBSITE**

The Commission agreed to add the Gray Goose BDR to the website and to replace the draft NRI with the final version when completed. It was noted that meeting dates (the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month) are not listed after April 1, 2009. This is to be corrected.

## **BREMNER/GILMORE POND ROAD**

DES has granted Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bremner a wetlands permit to construct a 4X20 foot seasonal dock on Gilmore Pond waterfront owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Michele (letter dated February 13, 2009). This would seem to settle the matter unless there is an appeal.

*Postscript: The Micheles have submitted a Motion for Reconsideration to DES dated March 13, 2009. The Bremners have objected to this motion (letter to DES dated March 19, 2009).*

## **BULLET POND**

JOF has conveyed to Selectman Frank Sterling the Commission's sentiment (mostly favorable) concerning a proposed timber cut/clearing on one of the 160 acres owned by the Town of Jaffrey encompassing Bullet Pond in Rindge. Mr. Sterling had solicited the Commission's advisory input.

## **THE PENDING EASEMENT ON CHILDREN'S WOODS**

The Monadnock Conservancy has not received an approved easement from the town. It is reportedly still with Attorney Kelly Dowd. JOF has again requested that the town's review of the draft easement be expedited.

## **UPDATES**

JOF reported that there have been no recent updates on the following:

- *Peter Dublin/82 Hunt Road*: retaining wall
- Incorporating *children's education* into conservation easements and open space management
- *High School track area*: culvert repair and stream flow
- The Commission's responsibility for managing various *Town Forests*
- Permitted and not permitted uses of *email* in the conduct of business

## **THE COMMISSION'S MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP**

The Commission began consideration of recruiting new members. There are currently two openings for full membership if the Commission chooses to fill them. Numerous names were suggested, and these will be reviewed in greater detail at the next meeting on April 22, 2009.

JOF has offered to remain as Chair for another year.

## **OPEN TALK**

1. NBB presented information on the *Asian Longhorn beetle*. The Commission recommended that this information:
  - Be put on the website
  - That *Francie von Mertens* be asked to write an article on it for The Monadnock Ledger-Transcript
  - That information be posted at the library and on other bulletin boards

2. JOF noted that DES has disallowed an expedited review of the application submitted by the *Troy Water Department* to expand its infrastructure off Route 124 in Jaffrey (see minutes of February 4, 2009). The application will be reviewed as a standard application instead.
3. JOF showed the Commission several flyers concerning upcoming meetings of possible interest.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 PM. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission will be on Wednesday, *April 22, 2009*, 7 PM at the Town Offices.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn D. Garretson