

Jaffrey Conservation Commission

**Minutes**

June 24, 2009

**Present:** Jim Bearce

Nora Barton Bryant

John O. Field, *Chair*

Bill Graf

Kathy Batchelder, *Selectmen's representative*

**Absent:** Carolyn Garretson

Ron Rogstad, *Alternate*

Pat Weiner, *Alternate*

**PRELIMINARY**

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM, with *Nora Barton Bryant* as scribe.
2. **Minutes** of the Commission's last meeting, held on *May 27, 2009*, were reviewed and approved.
3. **Comments from the Chair**

JOF stated his intent to make "comments from the chair" a regular feature at the beginning of each meeting. The comments are intended to highlight events of the past month, note areas of concern, and identify key issues on the agenda.

During the month of June:

- The *Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)* was completed.
- The final, completed text of the *Baseline Documentation Report (BDR)* for Gray Goose Farm was received.
- Both of these documents are now on the *town website*.
- Town Counsel has approved the *draft conservation easement deed* for Children's Woods prepared by the Monadnock Conservancy. The final version is now in preparation. MC will also do a BDR.
- JOF will meet with Peter Throop of the Monadnock Conservancy on June 26 to discuss Jaffrey's participation in the next round of MC's *Community Conservation Partnership*.

Areas of concern:

- There has been no progress on the design and responsibilities of an **Open Space Committee** for review by the Selectmen.
- There has been no progress on preparing *pamphlets/fliers* for Children's Woods and the CPCA.

- Considerable work still needs to be done to get the Commission's *financial records* in the desired format.

Key issues for decision on the agenda:

- Reproduction of the **NRI report and maps** (#4.d.1 below).
- A six-year proposal for funding the **Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund** under the Capital Improvement Program (#4.d.3 below).
- Finalizing arrangements for the Commission's participation in **Riverfest** (#5 below).

## PRIORITY ITEMS

### 4. Commission Finances: The Conservation Fund, Line-Item Tracking, and Issues for Discussion and Decision

a. **Conservation Fund** overview: Consideration was postponed in CDG's absence.

b. **Tracking:**

- (1) **LUCT revenues:** No information to report.
- (2) **NRI:** Final payment (\$3,725) was made to Kane & Ingraham on June 26, 2009 following review of the final report and other deliverables (see #8 below). This payment closes out the account except for incidental expenses associated with printing copies of the report, reproducing the core maps, and laminating a set of maps (see 4.d.1 below).
- (3) **Gray Goose:** There has been no recent activity in this account.
- (4) **Gordon Fund/Children's Woods:** Costs associated with repair of the foot bridge on the main trail near Stratton Road have yet to be incurred.
- (5) **Cheshire Pond Conservation Area:** Costs associated with maintenance-related activities on the ground have yet to be incurred.
- (6) **Conservation Support Fund:** With the grant of \$300 to **Camp Wildwood** in support of two Jaffrey campers, this fund is now depleted for the remainder of 2009.

c. **Budget for 2009:** Consideration was postponed in CDG's absence.

d. **Financial Issues for Discussion and Decision**

- (1) **NRI follow-up:** The Commission discussed reproducing multiple copies of the report and an extra set of the large (36x36) maps. It was voted to accept

Savron Graphic's offer to prepare 30 copies of the report, including color photographs and 11X14 maps, plus a laminated set of the large maps (except the Tax Parcels and Zoning map) at a charge of \$997. For display of the laminated maps at Riverfest and elsewhere, it was decided that BG will purchase foam poster boards, cut them to size, and purchase clips of the right size to hold the maps on the foam board.

- (2) ***Conservation Support Fund:*** NBB and BG were to recommend a set of guidelines for the Commission to follow when responding to future appeals and requests for support. This will be done at a future meeting.
- (3) ***Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund:*** The Commission voted to seek an appropriation of \$5K in the 2010 town budget under the Capital Improvement Program. Like all CIP requests, this one will be for one year in a six-year time frame. The request goes to the Town Manager, then to the Planning Board and its CIP Committee for final vetting before submission to the Budget Committee by the Town Manager in October. By the end of the 2015 fiscal year, it is hoped that LACRF will have \$145K, or more, from a combination of town appropriations and transfers from LUCT revenues credited to the Conservation Fund.

## 5. Riverfest (7/25/09)

The Commission finalized plans for its set-up and displays, including:

- Tent, table, and chairs; tablecloth.
- Displays: Seven laminated NRI maps on easels; several Commission documents (NRI, Gray Goose BDR, CPCA Management Plan, and the Cost of Community Services Study); other documents such as a Camp Wildwood brochure, a NH Lakes Association brochure, and a copy of the Handbook of the NH Association of Conservation Commissions.
- Educational materials/handouts: Two large loose-leaf binders with information on the Asian Longhorn Beetle and other invasive species, the Lake Host Program, and other topics of interest.

On a suggestion by Kathy Batchelder, NBB will investigate having a banner made identifying the Commission's tent. The Jaffrey Chamber of Commerce has used a banner company in the area and is pleased with the results.

## 6. Children's Woods

***Conservation easement:*** JOF reported that Town Counsel has approved the easement deed drafted by the Monadnock Conservancy. MC is preparing the final document and will submit it for review by the town in a week or two. MC is also arranging for a Baseline Documentation Report on location and will share it with the

town as well. When both easement and BDR are completed, a closing will be scheduled, at which the two documents will be signed by MC and the town. The process should be completed by Labor Day if all goes well.

***Naming and marking of trails:*** JB and BG will report on this at the Commission's meeting in July. Among the naming possibilities are historical names, names of people currently involved, and physical attributes.

***Pamphlet with trails map:*** There has been no progress to date. Actual production logically follows the naming and marking of trails. Issues of size, content, layout, and grant-seeking need to be addressed beforehand. Also whether to do a single pamphlet combining Children's Woods and the CPCA or to make a separate pamphlet for each. JOF asked whether the Commission should form a committee to consider options, draft text, and recommend a course of action (such as doing it ourselves vs. hiring a firm). No action was taken.

***Paul St. Pierre's suggestions:*** Mr. St. Pierre has made two suggestions that the Commission did not discuss at its meeting in May.

- Identify and label trees: This could be a school project. If so, it needs to be arranged well before the new school year begins.
- Establish a volunteer stewardship program to maintain trails, pick up trash, and otherwise enhance the public's use and enjoyment of the park. The possibility of a Conant Conservation Corps was again raised. BG and JB will contact the school to discuss the concept.

***The Commission's oversight:*** With their approval, the Commission agreed to designate JB and BG as regular point persons for all issues pertaining to Children's Woods/Carey Park and potentially for the CPCA as well. JB reported that the grant in aid for repairing the trestle bridge on rails/trails has been approved by the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) and that the local snowmobile club (the Monadnock Sno-Moles) will do the work. A date in Fall 2009 will be set to start re-decking the bridge, which is under the jurisdiction of DRED's Trails Bureau.

## **UPDATES**

### **7. Cheshire Pond Conservation Area**

Because of the priority given to clearing trails and removing hazardous limbs in Children's Woods/Carey Park, there was nothing to report on clean-up activities and other management issues in the CPCA.

## **8. Natural Resource Inventory**

All deliverables – two printed copies of the final report with 11x14 maps; a set of nine 36x36 maps; and three CDs containing the report, maps, and data – were received on June 15, 2009. They have since been reviewed by JOF and Jo Anne Carr. The report itself is satisfactory, but problems associated with accessing information on the CDs containing maps and data necessitated reformatting. With this done, JOF authorized payment of the last invoice from Kane & Ingraham on June 22, 2009. This payment brings the Commission's contract with Kane & Ingraham to a close.

## **9. Camp Wildwood**

Camp Wildwood has notified the Commission that *Anya and Sabrina Shemet* will attend this summer thanks, in part, to scholarship support provided by the Commission (\$300). In the accounting applied, the Camp donated half of each camper's fee from its own scholarship fund, with the Commission's donation being credited against the balance paid by the Shemet family. The regular fee for two campers would have come to \$3,219.

## **10. Town Website**

Both the Gray Goose BDR and the final NRI report, with maps, have been posted. NBB said she would send information on the Asian Longhorn Beetle to Mark Kresge for posting. Other expected additions are an announcement that the trails in Children's Woods are open.

## **11. Children's Education**

With PW not present, consideration of developments since the Commission's meeting in April will resume next month.

## **12. The Commission's Membership**

With CDG not present, no action was taken on bringing new members onto the Commission. At its next meeting in July, CDG will report on contacts with two prospective members who have expressed interest in joining the Commission. The Commission will also decide on next steps to be taken with them and with others on the list of prospects.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

### 13. The Monadnock Conservancy's Community Conservation Partnership

JOF is arranging to meet with Ryan Owens and Peter Throop at MC's offices in Keene to discuss Jaffrey's participation in the second round of the Partnership, which is expected to commence in the fall of this year. (Six Cheshire County towns took part in the first round.) JOF will recommend that MC make a public presentation in Jaffrey to expand awareness of and interest in the Partnership.

### 14. Public Business

JOF acquainted the Commission with recent overtures to and inquiries from the public. Highlights include a letter he wrote to Mr. C. Jerome *Underwood* about the benefits of a conservation easement on family-owned land off Great Road where commercial development is also under consideration. Mr. Tony *Sangermano* requested the Commission's support for raising the trestle bridge on rails/trails to accommodate boat traffic under it. JOF advised Mr. Sangermano that the bridge is outside the Town of Jaffrey's jurisdiction. Discussions were also held with Bill *Rose* concerning ice storm-related tree removal at Emerald Acres Campground on Ridgcrest Road. Mr. Rose is applying to DES. JOF advised him that town ordinances may also come into play and that he should contact Dave Baron, Jaffrey Building Inspector, before taking any action.

## UPCOMING EVENT

### 15. Talk on Invasive Species

The Dublin Conservation Commission is sponsoring a talk by *Douglas Cygan*, Invasive Species Coordinator for the NH Department of Agriculture. The talk will be held in the Multi-Purpose Room on the lower level of the Dublin Library on *Thursday, July 23, 2009, 7-8:30 PM*. Its focus is on invasive upland (i.e. not aquatic) species of New Hampshire, with emphasis on their characteristics and impact and on state rules and regulations governing their management. Members of the Jaffrey Conservation Commission are cordially invited to attend.

## OPEN TALK

### 16. Anything of Interest to Anybody

JOF shared announcements of other events and publications, information about the Harris Center's Environmental Leadership Awards, and tentative plans for this year's Summer Social.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission will be on Wednesday, **July 29, 2009**, 7 PM at the Town Offices. Please note that this is the fifth, not the fourth, Wednesday of the month.