

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of Meeting of June 6, 2011

Present:

Members: Laura Gund, Bill Humm (Chair), David Meeker, Tim Moody, Richard Weyrick, Emeritus Member

Alternate Members: Catherine Fisher

Ex Officio: Laurel Cox, Land Protection and Community Development Administrator,

Visitor: Bambi Miller, Strafford County Conservation District

Approval of Previous Minutes: Minutes of meeting held on May 2, 2011, approved as written.

Updates and Announcements:

LCC Bank Balance: The balance in the LCC account as of May 31 2011, was \$14,767.47 composed of

LCC Funds	\$11,362.70
Dave Allan Fund	\$3,404.77

ZBA Report: The Weesner variance was approved with a minor restriction on the installation of awnings on the river side of the home.

Easement Monitoring: During May members of LCC visited the Aldag, Jenkins, Ford, Henry, and Quigley easements. The only item of concern to appear was in a wetland portion of the Quigley easement where an abutter had driven a vehicle and created extensive and deep ruts. After informing the interested parties and contacting the abutter, there has been remediation which will prevent sedimentation into an adjacent stream. Mr. Quigley has asked B. Humm and A. Hartgerink to meet with the offending abutter to impress upon him the importance of avoiding such activities in the future. L. Gund presented a proposed schedule for June monitoring visits including a Saturday visit to the Ellis Oyster River Reserve on June 25. A notice inviting the public to participate will be written by R. Weyrick and sent to the Lee e-Crier by L. Gund.

Culvert Replacement: B. Humm has been notified that the NHDOT will be replacing a 24” culvert at the Rt. 152/155 intersection. An informational session is scheduled for 7pm on June 14 at the Safety Complex.

Proposed Development on Goss Property: The Workforce Housing Coalition is proposing a development on the 240 acre Goss property in Lee, Madbury, and Durham. Preliminary plans include a “green” housing project on 24 acres in Durham.

Maud Jones Memorial Forest: R. Weyrick presented a draft letter to be sent to abutters of MJMF informing them of the planned boundary marking project and inviting them to participate in the activity.

Lee Fair: The Lee Fair has been scheduled for September 10.

Land Protection Report: L. Cox presented a summary of current and proposed land protection activities.

Old Business:

Lee Five-Corners Reserve: B. Humm reported on the recent visit to the site by representatives of LCC, NRCS, and US Fish and Wildlife Service for the purpose of assessing the suitability of the reserve for the restoration of habitat for the NE Cottontail (a NH endangered species). The site is judged to have potential for reestablishing the species and a staged program is being considered. The first stage would involve an effort to alter plant succession by vegetative management. Many of the more mature trees and shrubs would be removed or chipped to allow increased immature growth. They suggested that the Autumn Olive shrubs should be shredded but the Multiflora Rose plants, which provide food and protection for the animals, would be retained. A later stage could involve excavating and removal of Japanese knotweed and, possibly, further chemical treatment of regrowth should permission be granted by Durham (due to the presence of their well adjacent the site). The possible alteration of the boundary in the area adjacent to the current trail so that the trail could lie completely on Town property was discussed by LCC representatives. It was decided the B. Humm, R. Weyrick, and L. Cox would meet with Mr. Dembowitz, the abutter, to discuss the issue.

Bannister Property: The BOS has negotiated a possible purchase of the Bannister property adjoining the Town Hall for the price of \$179,000. They are seeking a partial contribution to the payment from the Land Protection Trust Fund. After considerable discussion of possible uses of the property, including a “pocket park” with an informational kiosk, it was decided that LCC should meet with the Town Center Committee and other interested parties and develop a conceptual plan for the site before final financial decisions are made. B. Humm will attempt to schedule such a meeting.

Palmer Easement: R. Weyrick agreed to write a letter thanking the Palmers for their effort and willingness to grant the easement on their property.

New Business:

Lee Old Home Day: L. Gund reported that Selectman DeRocchi is working with the Agriculture Commission and the Recreation Commission to plan a “Lee Old Home Day” celebration in conjunction with the planned Little River Park Fest on September 24. The Agriculture Commission is planning an antique tractor parade and exhibit, farm visits, and a pig roast. She suggested that LCC might conduct nature walks in Little River Park. R. Weyrick and C. Fisher each volunteered to plan and lead at least one walk during the day.

Strafford County Conservation District: Bambi Miller of the SCCD announced that she has been awarded a grant from the Lamprey River Advisory Committee to advise and assist landowners along the Lamprey River in assessing and caring for their septic systems. She noted that as SCCD is not a regulatory agency they are free to advise landowners without legal responsibility on either side. The primary focus of the grant is the landowners on the main branch of the Lamprey in Lee and Durham. In response to a question by R. Weyrick, Ms. Miller stated that she was unaware of any new product or procedure to reduce nitrogen output from septic systems. She asked the LCC to co-sponsor the initial informational session which will begin the grant activities and this was approved. Ms. Miller also spoke of the financial needs of SCCD resulting from the withdrawal of support from Strafford County. SCCD is circulating letters to town governments and agricultural and conservation commissions in the district seeking supplemental funds to support minimal activities throughout the remainder of the year. Various possibilities for obtaining such support were mentioned but no decision was made.

Capstone Student Housing: A 600 bed student housing project adjacent to the Oyster River on the Durham side is being proposed. The developers are considering a small conservation easement on a portion of their site. The lawyers for the project contacted B. Humm as they have been discouraged in this action from all the local monitoring agencies. After discussing the issues involved with them B. Humm contacted the Strafford River Conservancy and asked them to reconsider the matter. In this action he was joined by the Oyster River Watershed Association. After a discussion of the proposed easement, LCC was pleased to concur with the action of their Chair.

Wadleigh Falls Island Farm: L. Cox asked for LCC support for an appraisal of the Meeker property at Wadleigh’s Falls for a potential conservation easement on the fields and the adjoining island in the Lamprey River. L. Gund moved that the LCC pay up to \$1200 for an appraisal of the property. The motion passed without negative vote and with D. Meeker abstaining.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 5, 2011

Submitted By _____
David Meeker