

## **Lyndeborough Conservation Commission Minutes**

July 19, 2017

In Attendance: Sharon Akers, Theresa Berna, Kurt Berna, Kris Henry, Greg Kreider, Mike Decubellis

Absent: None

Budget as of 6/30/2017: \$52,899.78

Other present:

Jeff Rapson, realtor

Russ Boland, Town administrator

Chris Wells, PLC

Fred Douglas, Member of the Board of Selectmen, present as a member of the public

This meeting was duly posted as a public hearing and was scheduled to run before the regular Board of Selectmen Meeting as a presentation to the selectmen who, due to unforeseen circumstance could not be present.

### **Public hearing commenced at 6:11pm**

The conservation commission presented to the public our plan to help conserve two parcel's by contributing to the Piscataquag Land Conservancy's fee purchase. The project consists of two non-contiguous tracts owned by the Proctor Family: Map 206 Lot 3, which may be anywhere from 60-69 acres, and 212/2 which is a 21-acre property. The 21-acre parcel is a cold-water trout habitat containing two tributaries of the Cold Brook flowing from the abutting Rice Preserve, which is owned by the PLC already and is managed as a recreation area with trails along the waterfalls of Cold Brook, known as Senters Falls. This tract also contains the northern end of an esker that currently is mined for sand and gravel and the NH Fish and Game have expressed interest in protecting this piece. The 69 +/- ac. property will preserve 1,700 feet of frontage on Mountain Road and 1,700 feet along the Class VI Richardson Road. Protecting this road frontage will help maintain the rural character of Lyndeborough. The 69 +/- ac. property also protects Cold Brook of which it has 2,787 feet.

Piscataquog Land Conservancy (PLC) is looking to purchase both of the parcels from the Proctors, to preserve against future development, and to keep open to passive recreation, trails, wildlife and to protect water resources.

Total project costs are estimated at \$292,675 and funding sources include Lyndeborough Conservation Commission, LCHIP, Merrimack Partnership, Moose Plate, NH Fish and Game.

The hearing was open to discussion:

The conservation commission previously discussed contributing \$40,000 to the project with the idea of going up to \$50,000 if it would be the difference between success and failure. Chris Wells expressed that

starting with the \$50,000 would make a difference. The conservation funds are from land use change tax ("LUCT"), which does not grow quickly but is allotted for projects like this.

Selectman Fred Douglas, speaking as a member of the public, asked if the land would be open for public access without restrictions or postings for activities like hunting and whether the Town of Lyndeborough would have executory interest over how the land is used. The land would be owned by the PLC, and not the town of Lyndeborough, and therefore the PLC would control land use. However, the PLC does not post their land and could not close access to land purchased with funds from Fish and Game and LCHiP.

Chris Wells, added that the 21 acre property is adjacent to the Rice preserve and is essentially an expansion of the rice property. "If you are comfortable with how we are managing Rice then you should be comfortable with what we are doing with this property."

Fred Douglass expressed concern that public access especially to hunters has been cut-off in other towns because of safety concerns of other users and stated that this was "not right" noting that there should be strong language for protecting open access.

Sharon Akers, "Does PLC foresee cutting?" Chris Wells, "The large piece was already cut, and so would not be cut for some time if ever. The piece by Rice preserve is not good for lumber, so most likely will not cut in the near future."

The PLC won't know if they have LCHip money until later in the year, and they have up to June 30, 2018 to close on the larger piece. The PLC will protect the small property first since it abuts their property and is lower cost. Mike Decubellis added that they are both important to protect the brooks. Chris noted that he is hopeful that they can get the funds for both properties. The Conservation commission agreed to commit to the funding amount. Use of Con Com funds do not need to be approved by the Selectmen. Sharon Akers motioned; "I make the motion that we pledge up to \$50,000 to the Piscataquog Land Conservancy towards fee acquisition by the PLC of lot 206/3 and/or 212/2. Contingent upon the final language being approved by the conservation commission in consultation with other parties of interest."

Theresa Berna voted to approve, Mike Decubellis seconded. All were in favor.

### **Close public hearing 7:18pm**

Other business:

Selectman Fred Douglas expressed concerns about the logging on the Grossman property, especially for water run-offs and potential road destruction. The loggers need to stabilize the class 6 road, improve it, or access when frozen. He suggested that we reach out to the owners to discuss that we have had issues in the past with logging operations and water management.

### Woodmont Orchards Project

Sharon Akers motioned to rescind the allocation of funds of \$30,000 to the Russell Farm and Forest Foundation towards the Woodmont Orchards Project. Theresa Berna seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The funds for this project were approved and voted on in a public hearing on February 12, 2015, and then was never expended since the rest of the funding was not secured. Private donations given to the Souhegan Valley Land Trust (SVLT) for this project were returned.

#### Purgatory Falls Signage

Kurt, Greg, and Sharon met at the parking areas at both ends of Purgatory falls to discuss sign mounting and location. Kurt returned later and mounted the signs and also mounted new trails maps on the existing wood plaques. A long-term goal is to replace the maps with permanent metal sign maps.

The barrels placed at the parking areas are working as people are depositing trash in or near the barrels and not in the parking area or surrounding woods.

#### Community Day Hike

The hike will start at 9:30 and follow the interpretive trail on the Rice property. Piscataquog Land Conservancy will bring some maps of the property and the interpretive text. The PLC will post the hike on the website and newsletter.

**Adjourned 7:37**