

MINUTES
NEW DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
26 AUGUST 2014

Present: Commission members Ron Gehl (Chair), Curtis Richard, Bill Malay (Alternate), Bob Craycraft (Alternate).

Excused: Charlie Berube

Chair Gehl called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and designated Mr. Malay and Mr. Craycraft to sit in as voting members.

Review of Minutes

Commission members reviewed the minutes of 29 July 2014. Mr. Craycraft made a motion to approve the minutes of 29 July 2014 as printed. Mr. Malay seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Review of Mail

Shoreland Permit Application – Dorothy Nolan, Tax Map 112 Lot 14. Commission members reviewed this application for drainage improvements along Kendra Lane and an access right-of-way along the shore of Merrymeeting Lake. It was noted that the drainage improvements should improve siltation from stormwater runoff, but no maintenance plan is included.

Revisions to Standard Dredge and Fill Application – James & Louise Barwell, Tax Map 111 Lot 24. This is a revision to plans submitted by the applicant in late 2012; revisions being prompted by 5 deficiencies noted in a Department of Environmental Services review letter dated August 4, 2014. It was noted that the original application was granted a Conditional User Permit by the Planning Board. As-built site conditions are not according to original plans, and Bob Craycraft will ask Planning Board to review.

Other mail was reviewed by the Commission. Members were encouraged to attend the NH Association of Conservation Commissions conference in November.

Town Owned (Tax Deeded) Properties

Chair Gehl initiated a lengthy discussion among members regarding tax deeded properties that the Board of Selectmen are considering selling. Members focused on consideration of conservation and natural resource values of parcels on the list of properties being reviewed, with attention to associated infrastructure impacts (e.g., drainage, street improvements, etc.). Among the properties on the listing, the following garnered more in-depth discussion:

Tax Map 209/Lot 46 – this 54 acre parcel borders Shaws Pond and consists of steep hillsides of mature forest and a significant wetland at the inlet to Shaws Pond, bordering adjacent land subject to conservation easement. It was noted that this parcel is not developable under the Zoning Ordinance. All members have walked the property and agreed that the highest and best

use of this parcel is as conservation land to maintain the water quality of Shaws Pond, given the steep rocky slopes and extensive wetlands. However, there is potential for lot line adjustments for the three very small camp properties along the shore.

Copple Crown Village District residential lots – numerous lots of less than 0.5 acre each. It is noted that the majority of these lots do not front the existing private roads in the District; rather, most run along “paper streets” that were included on the original subdivision plan but never constructed. Environmental liabilities associated with most parcels include steep slopes and drainage issues, making many unbuildable, as reflected in low assessed values. There is potential to merge some into adjacent, already-developed parcels.

Tax Map 210/Lot 140 – this 11-acre parcel in the Copple Crown Village District is “buffer” land that surrounds platted residential parcels but has no access to the platted streets (constructed or not). With intermittent streams that drain the mountainside and steep slopes, it is best preserved as buffer space.

Tax Map 209/Lot 68 – this lot in Village District preserves a right-of-way granted by the Town to nearby undeveloped back land and should be left undisturbed.

Tax Map 240/Lot 56 – it was noted that this tiny parcel provides canoe and small boat access for residents to Jones Pond and should remain as such.

Mr. Craycraft made a motion that the Chair provide a letter for the Selectmen outlining the Conservation Commission’s recommendations regarding the properties considered for sale. Motion seconded by Mr. Richard. The Motion was unanimously approved.

Review of 2015 Budget

Commission members reviewed 2014 budget line items and expenditures to date. **Mr. Richard made a motion to recommend maintaining 2015 Conservation Commission funding at 2014 levels. Motion seconded by Mr. Malay. The Motion was unanimously approved.**

At 9:45 pm Mr. Craycraft made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Richard seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Gehl, Chair