

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
3 JUNE 2015**

Present: Commission members Ron Gehl (Chair), Charlie Berube, Curtis Richard, Bill Malay (Alternate), Bob Craycraft (Alternate), Recording Secretary Amy Smith.

Others Present: Videographer Peter Pijoan, Mark Sullivan.

At 7:04 pm Chair Gehl called the meeting to order and designated Mr. Craycraft and Mr. Malay to sit in as voting members.

Election of Officers

Mr. Berube made a motion to elect Ron Gehl as Chair. Mr. Malay seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Gehl made a motion to elect Mr. Richard as Vice Chair. Mr. Malay seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Natural Resources Inventory/Conservation Priority Areas

Commission members reviewed the Natural Resources Inventory document prepared in 2011. Chair Gehl noted the Open Space Institute did a study on resilient landscapes under pressure due to climate change. Per the study almost the entire Town is in an area that is able to adapt and thrive to climate change. Mr. Malay asked what this means. Chair Gehl stated it is an indication that these are areas to look at as they are less likely to deteriorate as a result of climate change.

Commission members reviewed the Conservation Focus Area map and discussed the overlay districts in the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Malay stated there is an extensive trail network in New Durham that is used recreationally in the winter. Mr. Malay suggested approaching landowners to allow use of the trails during the other seasons. Chair Gehl noted landowners are sometimes hesitant to allow the use of their land other than during the winter months.

Chair Gehl asked Mr. Craycraft if there has been any further discussion of prime wetlands designation on the Planning Board. Mr. Craycraft stated no but the Zoning Ordinance does contain the Water Quality Protection Overlay District. Chair Gehl asked for a volunteer to look into the process of designating prime wetlands and then reporting back to the Commission so they are able to make an informed decision as to whether they want to pursue the objective. Mr. Craycraft volunteered. Mr. Malay agreed to help.

Chair Gehl informed Commission members they can expect help from Moose Mountain Regional Greenways (MMRG) as far as identification and prioritization of potential conservation land that will implement the connectivity concept of conserved land connected to each other in order to maintain greenways.

Mr. Malay asked the status of the Tax deeded parcel of land on Shaw's Pond. Chair Gehl stated the Board of Selectmen agreed to retain ownership of the parcel with the exception of possibly allowing the three small lots that abut it to purchase a small amount of land to slightly increase their size. Mr. Malay suggested pushing for an easement of the property as Town ownership of the parcel may last only as long as the next election. Audience member Mark Sullivan asked if the Selectmen have the authority to sell the property without the vote of Town Meeting. Chair Gehl stated they did.

Public Input

Mr. Sullivan stated he is the President of the Merrymeeting Lake Association (MMLA) and as such he receives a lot of concerns from people. Mr. Sullivan noted he is here as a resident and not in his official capacity as MMLA President. Mr. Sullivan passed out a picture of a recently modified house and mostly cleared lot. Mr. Sullivan noted he did not want to mention any names but wanted to know what could be done in the future to ensure that all the vegetation from the water to the road is not removed from lots. Mr. Sullivan noted the project in question did receive a Shoreland Impact Permit from the State. Chair Gehl stated he did not believe the Town could supersede the State's regulations. It was noted this particular application did receive a conditional use permit from the Planning Board for stormwater management/steep slopes. It was noted the amount of disturbance approved by the Planning Board is less than the amount of the State permit. Mr. Berube suggested sending a memo to the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) asking him to look into the matter. Chair Gehl suggested the memo should come from the Planning Board. It was the consensus of the Commission to alert the Planning Board of the potential violation. Mr. Craycraft (Vice Chair of the Planning Board) stated he would let the Planning Board know.

Mr. Sullivan thanked the Commission for their time and stated he plans on contacting the State Department of Environmental Services (DES) to ask how the permit was issued to begin with. Mr. Sullivan stated he wanted to speak with the Commission first as with previous dealings with DES they had instructed him to speak to his local Conservation Commission. Chair Gehl suggested Mr. Sullivan get the backing of the MMLA as he believed it will have more weight with the State. Mr. Sullivan agreed and noted the MMLA is meeting on Sunday.

Wetlands Permit Application - Ronley Bates Irrevocable Trust - Map 111 Lot 19 - 55A Meaders Point Road

Commission members reviewed the Wetlands Permit Application for the Ronley Bates Irrevocable Trust for property located at 55A Meaders Point Road, Map 111 Lot 19.

Chair Gehl noted the application is for a minimum impact to repair an existing permanent pad 'in kind' and remove and replace an existing pier. Chair Gehl stated the proposed pier is smaller than the existing pier and does not extend as far into the lake. Chair Gehl stated the application meets the criteria for a minimum impact application. Chair Gehl asked Commission members if they had any concerns with the application. There were none.

Mr. Craycraft made a motion to have Chair Gehl sign the Minimum Impact Wetlands Permit Application for the Ronley Bates Irrevocable Trust for property located at 55A Meaders Point Road, Map 111 Lot 19. After review of the application the Commission waives its right to intervene per RSA 482-A:11, believes that the application and submitted

plans accurately represent the proposed project and has no objection to permitting the proposed work. Mr. Berube seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Wetlands Permit Application - Michael & Christine Hudon -Map 110 Lot 2 - 368
Merrymeeting Road**

Commission members reviewed a Wetlands Permit Application for Michael & Christine Hudon for property at 368 Merrymeeting Road, Map 110 Lot 2. Chair Gehl stated the application is to replace a deteriorated rock wall and add steps. Chair Gehl asked Commission members if they have any objections to the application. There were no objections.

Review of Minutes

Commission members reviewed the minutes of 28 April 2015.

Mr. Craycraft made a motion to approve the minutes of 28 April 2015 as printed. Mr. Richard seconded the motion. The motion was approved with three affirmative votes (Craycraft, Gehl, Richard) and two abstentions (Berube, Malay).

Review of Mail

Commission members reviewed the mail.

Holm Monitoring Report

Chair Gehl stated the Holm Monitoring Report was on April's agenda but put off as Mr. Malay is the most familiar with the property and he was not present at that meeting. Chair Gehl noted the report is not due until January 2016. Mr. Malay suggested waiting until the leaves fall before completing the report. Chair Gehl asked Ms. Smith to place Holm Monitoring Report on September's agenda.

At 9:00 pm Mr. Craycraft made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Malay seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Smith
Recording Secretary