

Conservation Commission Workshop Minutes - February 25, 2014

Chairman Sam Demeritt opened the meeting at 6:38. Other members in attendance were Celia Abrams, Deb Kimball, and Raelene Shippee-Rice, Alternate, sitting in for Susan Mooney.

Guests: Joe Falzone, Mark West, John Terninko

Maple Ridge Subdivision: Falzone and West reported on the status and requirements of the WRP application, to include a total of 98 acres for the middle section of 15 house lots, as well as the open space portion of the 154 acre subdivision between Oak Ridge and Friar Tuck Roads. Falzone has had conversations with the owner of a 9.36 acre gravel pit abutting the subdivision and extending to the North River. This could add ranking points to the WRP application as a reclamation site. There is a 2 year ownership requirement for WRP applications, so the gravel pit property will remain under current ownership and Falzone will ask NRCS if his property, along with the gravel pit, can be considered together. There is also a 50% wetlands requirement for WRP, although this may be waived if Fish and Game provides a letter describing other factors that add ranking value. Terninko's property, abutting to the east and containing additional vernal pools, will also fail the 50% rule and need a similar letter.

The Farm Bill has now been passed, but several months will elapse before our local NRCS office receives authorization to proceed, so it may be June before an application can be submitted. West stated that there are some 23 supporting documents to be submitted with the application and that there is a new person who will be reviewing applications (Dave Price?). West will talk with Sue Knight at NRCS and provide Falzone and Terninko with a list of information, such as egg mass counts and rare plants and natural communities, we can submit that will add ranking points. West will do maps for Terninko showing vernal pools.

Falzone, West and Terninko left at 7:10pm

Meeting with Board of Selectmen We discussed the email from Dawn Wirkkala requesting information for the April 21 non-public meeting with the Board of Selectmen on pending easements. Abrams will request an updated download from Strafford Regional Planning of the GRANIT conservation layer data and provide this to Wirkkala so they will have all data columns available for all conservation properties in town. This comes with an explanation of codes and terms. Abrams will also send Wirkkala the latest spreadsheet of easement properties monitored by NCC. The BoS has requested details on the pending properties, including owner names, locations, and acreage. We will need to confirm with owners if they are agreeable to this. Demeritt will check on P1; Abrams will check on P2, P3 and P4. We did not assign anyone for P5. The August email on P1 states that the information is to be kept among CC members

and other town officials on a need-to-know basis and only discussed in non-public sessions. We need to be sure that the appropriate RSA is invoked during the meeting to seal the minutes indefinitely.

Building and wi-fi access - We discussed the need for Demeritt to have a key to the building. Currently Mooney is the only member who has a building key and she was not present this evening. This is not an issue on our usual meeting nights, when other meetings are going on in the building, but tonight we would have been unable to meet had not the land use clerk happened to have arrived and let us in. We might also benefit from access to the town wi-fi network so we could check emails and GRANIT maps and other resources while we meet. Demeritt will make a request for a building key and wi-fi access to Charlie Brown.

Other Business – We have 15 people signed up so far for the winter wildlife walk on Sunday, 3/2. Our next planning meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 3/4 at 6:30.

A motion to adjourn was made by Kimball and seconded by Abrams. All votes were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Celia Abrams, Temporary Secretary

These minutes were accepted as read at the meeting held on July 14, 2014.