

Stratham Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, November 13, 2013

Members present: Tim Copeland, Pat Elwell, Donna Jensen, Dan McAuliffe

Non-members present: Debbie Foss, Lincoln Daley, Paul Deschaine, Kim Woods, Thomas King

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mail

- RCCD monitoring reports for the 3 Jones property easements were received.

Minutes: there were no minutes to review.

Public Service of New Hampshire NHDES Conditional Use Permit

Tracy Tarr of GZA Environmental was in attendance to present the PSNH line maintenance project, which includes areas having wetland, wetland buffer, and upland land impacts. The improvement project will be conducted in fall and winter to be completed by spring time. Ms Tarr reviewed the standard operational methods used to minimize environmental impact; the area is known to have threatened species including spotted turtles.

Dan McAuliffe moved, and Pat Elwell seconded the motion to write a letter to the Stratham Planning Board to recommend approval of the project going forward.

Illegal Hunting at Stratham Hill Park

Kim Woods the park ranger described an incident of illegal hunting at the park on Sunday October 27th. That morning two men were seen and admitted to shooting a “few ducks” at the Stratham Hill Park. Many of the park visitors that morning, in addition to the Gifford Farm tenant were disturbed by the shooting. The farm tenant called Fish and Game and the hunters, two men from Bedford, NH, were later apprehended receiving citations for illegal hunting. However, Kim explained that if the men had been at the park two weeks earlier, it wouldn’t have been a illegal due to the timing of the season. The commissioners discussed the option of limiting hunting by a number of means, and the 2012 failed attempt to create a compact urban zone thereby making hunting illegal there. Kim said that the town have applied for a Fish and Game program to received “hunter awareness” signage for the park to remind people that every day of the year, there could be hunters in the park. Not just fall the deer seasons. The board decided to take no action but would like to revisit the issue at a later date and engage the full board in another discussion. At the present time, hunting is only limited by Federal legislation making it illegal to have a firearm within 1,000 feet of a school.

Oyster Conservation Update

Donna Jensen recapped the end of the season meeting and report provided by the Nature Conservancy, which facilitated this summer’s oyster foster/oyster bed restoration project. For the 8th year in a row, Donna’s house was the poorest performing of all other oyster sites. She suggests that storm water is having a negative impact on oyster growth each year.

Water Quality

Pat said she would forward a survey from the Turf Fertilization Initiative related to fertilizer use and misuse in the area. The survey deadline is Nov 22nd if conservation commissioners would like to complete it.

Intent to Cut

Paul said that an intent to cut permit was sent to the State. Tree removal is needed to remediate a wooley adelgid infestation that is located on a town-owned property near the town forest.

Pat motioned, Tim Copeland seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30. All voted in favor.

The next Conservation Committee meeting will be held December 11, 2013.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Jensen, Co-chair