

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes, May 28, 2014

Present: Allison Knab, Bill McCarthy, Donna Jensen, Bob Keating, Pat Elwell, Brad Jones, Tim Copeland.
Also, Deb Foss, Nik Coates (NHACC)

Public Session

The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm.

Mail

The AutoFair application was received by the NHDES. In the cover letter it stated that 280,000 square feet of earth will be moved during the site work associated with building the dealership.

The History of Dairy Farming book received in the mail. The book was edited by John Porter.

Deb Foss noted that the commission should look into the invasive species mitigation at the development at 32 Bunker Hill.

NH Association of Conservation Commissions

Nik Coates, executive director of the NHACC was in attendance to talk to the commission.

Mr Coates reviewed 4 bills in the NH legislature that had environmental application.

He reported in NH there are 215 conservation commissions. There are 235 cities, towns, and hamlets. He spoke of a number of important conservation advances that occurred this town-meeting season: Temple, NH raised money to conserve an 80-acre CSA farm (Wilton Farm); Rye passed a bond for land conservation; and Windham voted to conserve a historic farm.

He noted the NHACC will be conducting 6 workshops for CC members; these are listed on the website and highlighted in the newsletter.

He reported the NHACC has a new stewardship initiative to inventory land in towns and find lands appropriate for agricultural use. The NHACC hopes to match farmers with lands that can be bought or leased for agricultural use.

Mr Coates made a number of recommendations

1. Defend the Land Use Change Tax. Stratham CC currently receives 100% of money received by land developers when land in current use comes out of classification for other uses (residential/business).
2. Create a natural resources inventory that documents the town's resources. This was done a few years ago with RCCD's Teresa Walker.
3. Itemize the importance of conservation in the town's master plan.
4. Create a conservation plan of open spaces in town.
5. Know the commission by laws and develop further.

6. Develop a method of fund raising.

Pat mentioned that the commission is concerned with wetland impacts <10,000 square feet; DES does not assign mitigation funds into the areas in which the funds are collected when wetlands are filled in. Mr Coates mentioned this should be articulated at the NHDES listening sessions.

Mr Coates said that he had not received the Stratham NHACC membership for 2014. Pat noted that the \$317 membership had been authorized by the commission on March 12, as shown in the meeting minutes.

Commissioners thanked Mr Coates for the visit and information.

At 8:24pm, Pat E. moved that the commission go into non-public sessions. This was seconded by Bill M. and passed unanimously.

The meeting came out of closed non-public session at 8:36pm.

The Tim C. moved and Pat E. seconded that the meeting adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:36pm.

The next meeting will be held June 11, 2014.