

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes, May 27, 2015

Present: Pat Elwell, Donna Jensen, Brad Jones, Bill McCarthy, Allison Knab, Dan McAuliffe, Bob Keating, Select Board Representative Tim Copeland, Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, Town Planner Lincoln Daley, Recreation Department Director Seth Hickey

Public Session

The nonpublic session was called to order at 7:05pm.

Mailbox

There is tree pruning scheduled in June at Stratham Hill Park for the communication lines.

Short Conservation Easement

Duane Hyde from Southeast land trust (SELT) was in attendance reviewing the language of the Short Property easement. The draft he presented allowed forestry and agricultural uses. The draft was not final as it was missing mention of a right of way on the south side of the property to allow public point of access.

The baseline monitoring report is in development.

Seth Hickey mentioned the Stratham Hill Park Association would like to repair a bridge on the short property that is a part of the continuous looping Barker Trail. The easement would allow that.

Paul Deschaine stated that a public hearing would be held to discuss the easement at the June 15 Select Board meeting. The commission would hold a joint meeting with the selectmen at that time to approve the purchase of the easement.

Tim C moved and Bill M seconded a motion to recommend that the Select Board approve the Short conservation easement purchase. The motion passed unanimously.

Zarnowski Property Easement

The SELT will hold the easement on the property, which will require a management plan. The easement will allow water withdrawal from the spring located on the property. It would allow access for adjacent landowners (Frost and Scullers). No agricultural uses will be permitted; the site will remain forested. There will be allowances for parking and trails.

A May 2015 monitoring report identified that a property marker was missing. It may have been moved by a snow plow on the driveway. Lincoln D. will speak to the town enforcement officer about unauthorized tree cutting on the property near Raeder drive.

Stratham Hill Park Kiosk

Seth Hickey stated the Recreation Department would like to put up an information board in the forest immediately adjacent to the entrance near the park. There a map of the trail system will be posted.

Rollins Hill Residential Development

Mark Stevens (Rollins Hill Development LLC), Rob Graham (Rollins Hill Development LLC), Jim Gove (Gove Environmental), John Ring (Jones and Beach) and Rob Roseen (consultant) were in attendance to review revised Rollins Hill Development plans.

Stakeholders for the development and the commission had met with Dr Richardson earlier in the day to discuss the plans. A site walk was discussed.

After some discussion the commission voiced a number of concerns with the plans:

- Inadequate buffers were provided for the vernal pools and Atlantic white cedar swamp. Wetland buffer recommendations have been discussed previously by the commission and are as great as 1000 feet (Army Corp of Engineers; the current development plans show buffers in the range of 50 to 125 feet.
- The roadway and 4 house lots proposed between the 2 vernal pool-containing wetlands would not allow amphibian passage between the wetlands, nor would it provide needed adjacent upland habitat for amphibians within the vernal pools.
- Commissioners continued to voice concern that wetlands may not have been delineated accurately at a specific area on the plan; a peer review of the wetlands at that location would be appropriate.
- Of concern was the cost of the proposed porous roadway's maintenance, repair, and eventual replacement (the expected lifetime of the pavement is 10-15 years) to the development residents. An economic feasibility study may be needed.
- The proposed porous pavement roadway would require education of residents regarding porous pavement management and the use of fertilizers and deicing agents in the association.
- An association land management plan would be necessary to ensure residents would not encroach on wetlands, cut near buffers, use fertilizers; residents would be encouraged to plant native species.

Mark Steven mentioned a possible easement on the open space at the site.

Pat moved and Bill M seconded a motion that Allison write a letter to the planning board recommending 750 foot buffers for the vernal pools that contain the Atlantic cedar swamp. The motion passed unanimously.

At 9:25pm Pat moved and Tim seconded a motion to move into nonpublic session. The motion passed unanimously.

At 9:35pm the nonpublic meeting was discontinued and the minutes were sealed.

At 9:35pm Pat moved and Tim seconded a motion to adjourn the public meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2015 at 7pm at the municipal center.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Jensen