

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Town of Upton



Massachusetts

508-529-6286
concomm@uptonma.gov

1 Main St, Box 9
UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01568

Upton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes August 13, 2014

Members Attending— Chris Scott, Mike Penko, Marcella Stasa, Sandy Lajoie, Alan Miano, Tom Jango, Scott Heim
Mary Overholt (Associate Member), Selby (Agent) and Bill Taylor (LSC)

7:30 pm Public hearing for changes to proposed Storm Water Bylaw.

See attached revisions.

Ashland will have different stricter stormwater standards because they are in Charles River watershed, while Upton is in the Blackstone River watershed.

Motion was made to approve the proposed changes, 2nd and approved.

7:39 pm Beavers

Tom received two bids to take care of the beavers at Baker Pond. The State will pay for culvert fencing off 140, but not for leveler. Tom explained that he and Mike Callahan disagree. Mike does not think beavers will dam it if it is two feet deep. Tom says the second bid is more realistic at \$2500 instead of \$1200. Mike does not think we should do the job until beavers move in.

State will not do culvert fencing until we do a leveler. Because we are working with the state, we might want to do it soon. However, it won't be as effective if you don't wait until we have beavers. Additional piping can go in at another time. Tom's recommendation is to wait. The beavers might not need to be trapped if we wait, because they will not want to build a dam.

Beavers might just try a slightly different spot, if you put it in now.

A Motion was made to expend \$2500 for Baker Pond when the beavers come back. 2nd and approved. Tom will send an email stating the position of the Commission to board of health, and Blythe.

8:00 pm Five Forks Farm discussion – Grace and Daniel Lam came looking for guidelines on how to make a farm plan. Bill explained that a farm plan will include farming technique, sanitation etc. The plan should allow the Commission to assess impacts of farm activities on conservation restriction (CR) and on cultural resources. Irrigation is an example. Drilling a well is okay, but building a retention area in the wetland might have some negative impact. Stone wall are historic resource, don't add stones to them. Agriculture is a protected value too. Alan explains why a farm plan is important, so that there is communication between town as CR owner. Daniel says it is hard to come up with a management plan. Grace said plans change from day to day, so it is hard to make a plan. Bill says that does not matter, we just need to know what you might do. Grace is working with NRCS and they have prepared conservation plan, which is different than a farm plan. Bill says that can be used in your appendix. Pesticides are allowed in farming. Grace says they could get organic certification, but it is a lot of work. The CR does not require organic practices. They need a secondary water source. The old cabin well is not sufficient. They could possibly run temporary line from pond across street uphill or

make a secondary retention area near shed. If they drill a well it may not have a good draw. They should put all of their options in the plan. Chris suggests making a list of broad categories of things, compost pile, solar panels, building projects, energy water, and to keep things general.

Marcella will be the contact person on the commission for the Lams.

Alan says to think of the elements of business plan and include those kinds of things.

Daniel doesn't really want to have a fence along trail.

9:00 pm Peppercorn: Ashby Hobarts Eagle Scout Project

Marcella explained that Ashby is rerouting trail and putting a stream crossing in at Peppercorn. See attached pictures and explanations. Ashby will be building before winter. All cutting will be done off site. The bridge will be supported by concrete piers. Sono tubes will be poured on site. Ashby will bring materials in through Rockwood Meadows development. The Commission made a motion to approve the use of ATVs to bring materials in. 2nd and approved. There are eight holes for posts. He was told to be careful not to get dirt in the stream. He will incorporate extra dirt as part of trail diversion. He was also advised to put a DEP number up, notify Lobisser when he will be working, and build brush piles to discourage use of old path.

9:14 pm Forestry Discussion

We discussed the details about selecting a Forester for our Forestry plan. Final plan is due Jan15.

Dec, 10 - First draft to commission

Dec. 17 – Commission discusses draft at mtg.

Dec. 18 - Comments to Forester

Jan 5. 2015 - Final draft due

Jan 7 – Commission reviews

Commission members filled out Forestry goals sheet. Mike has the compiled results.

For November and December the Commission decided to meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays to avoid conflicts with the holidays. So that would be Nov. 5 Nov 19. Dec 3. Dec. 17. We will also meet Jan 7.

9:45 pm Agents Report

Per the submitted report dated 7/10/14 – 8/12/14.

K. Lobisser asked about removing trees for view of the pond at Rockwood meadows. Maybe say no on that. Selby identified the invasive plant Water Chestnut at Lake Wildwood and removed two large trash bags.

10:00 pm – Consolidation of Priority Preservation Areas

Kurt Gaertner from the State Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs suggested that all the land in northern Upton be grouped together for Priority Preservation Areas. The Commission made a motion to support grouping the lands together. 2nd and passed.

10:15 pm North St. Parcels –

There are two town owned parcels the Commission would like to include in the Forest Management Plan. The Commission made a motion to send a letter to the selectman asking permission to manage the two parcels, 5-5 (13 acres) and 4-12 (22 acres). The Commission also suggested possible names for the parcels, Kenniston, and Thompson.

10:35 Rockwood Meadows -

Lobisser sent an e-mail answering some of the Commission's questions. The Commission is disappointed that Rockwood Meadows does not want to allow horseback riding, mountain bikes or hunters to use the trail that goes through the open space land. The Commission will not be responsible for enforcing that. The Commission will also explain their concerns to the Planning Board. Also in the e-mail was a restriction on the use of any vehicles on the trails. The Commission will ask for use of vehicles for trail maintenance and emergencies with approval by the homeowner's Association. The Conservation Restriction also should use the language that is from the state template for Section IIIA,

10:55 Adjourn

Submitted by Mary Overholt

Minutes approved on _____
