

Washington Conservation Commission

Minutes – May 19, 2010

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Present: Carol Andrews, Nan Schwartz, Jed Schwartz, Arin Mills, Rich Cook

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from April, Jed made a motion to approve, Rich seconded, all voted in favor.
- 2.0 Old Business:
 - 2.1 Re-appointment papers – Carol had reappointment papers for a few more people to sign for the Town Clerk.
 - 2.2 Permits Committee – Meridian sent us a copy of their new planting guide for the waterfront area to satisfy the concerns of Fish and Game. We received copied notices from DES on Smith and Svitok, both had requests for more information.
 - 2.3 Vernal Pool visit – Carol and Arin did a presentation at the Elementary School and felt it was a great success. The Vernal Pool visit was well attended and enjoyed by all. To see pictures of the outing click here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/Vernal2.html
Project Learning Tree lent us some equipment as well as Mrs. Lull from the school, thanks to both of them.
Arin reported that she was job shadowed by a high school student who was interested in what she does for work after talking to one of the moms at the Vernal Pool visit.
 - 2.4 Old Home Day – We will get a table and share it with the Energy Committee. Jed asked if we wanted to do some smaller NRI maps printed to display. We will consider this. Arin asked if we might want to do a hike. Nan suggested that the Forestry Committee, Tom and Steve in particular, might want to lead a hike. Rich asked about a town trail map that showed town forests, some cultural spot and sites of interest. We could sell these at Old Home Day. We could also include some habitat info or Wildlife Action Plan info. Arin said she would take the data layers that are available and see what she can come up with. Jed also volunteered to help with the map. We discussed doing a display about what species have historically been found in Washington and talk about how things have changed. We talked about the Whippoorwill and

why it isn't found in Washington anymore (loss of crucial habitat). Jed made a motion to spend up to \$50 from the Conservation Fund to secure a table at Old Home Day, Arin seconded the motion, all voted in favor.

- 2.5 Energy Committee – Johanna wasn't in attendance but sent an email to Nan with her notes. She reported that an engineer had come to assess load bearing of town garage and will send his report soon.

The audit report of Old School House came back, lots of issues with energy loss there like the Town Hall. There is some pink stuff that has disintegrated in the walls that apparently is old blown in insulation that is now no longer used due to its toxic nature. The auditor thinks it is no longer toxic since it has almost evaporated. With Michelle's and Bob's help Al has completed gathering energy usage data for 2009 input in EPA portfolio. Bob has officially rejoined the Energy Committee and the selectmen approved.

Johanna and Al have signed up to attend the energy conference, both Bob and Lindley have a conflict that day.

The Committee still would like to do a booth with the WCC for Old Home Day. Johanna, Al and Bob will look out for gizmos related to energy to give away. They hope to do another green film night in the summer (maybe something on food and energy usage)...perhaps at the TH now that they have a projector. The date and movie to be determined later.

- 2.6 Planning Board – Nan said the Planning Board has completed work on updating the road standards in the Subdivision Regs with Ed Thayer and a hearing has been scheduled for June 1st at 6PM for those interested in attending.
- 2.7 Land Protection Committee – We are waiting for decisions to be made. Nan and Sandy are going to attend the LCHIP grant workshop and we will fundraise if we have a project and put something together for Old Home Day if possible.
- 2.8 Nan and Jed put up the posters at the boat launch on May Pond and on the bulletin board at Lake Ashuelot warning of high mercury levels in fish in those waterbodies.
- 3.0 What's Happening in Nature?
Johanna said there are lots of ticks around her place and said her beaver is making a new dam upstream of her pond. It is about 4 feet high and very nicely engineered. She wonders how it will affect her pond that is down

stream, the water level there is dropping.

Rich commented that his beavers are making their pond bigger, too. He said there is not much water in the brook now and there are ducks and geese living in the beaver pond.

Carol mentioned the herons in Halfmoon Pond. She thinks the swan decoys are scaring them away. They have nested there in the past.

Rich found some old pictures of his house and property that were from the time the previous owners built the pond. The trees on the island have grown really large now.

Jed mentioned a fox family (a mother and litter of kits) living under or near Tracy's barn on the East Washington Road. They are very cute and can be seen playing together in the yard on warm, sunny days.

Rich reported that there is a bear making the rounds in East Washington and Ed said he showed up on Charlene's back deck to empty out the bird feeder.

He has recently been spotted in other places and some back yards in EW.

Take those bird feeders down.

Arin talked about the Hognose snakes that she is tracking on the NH National Guard property using telemetry. She works as a biologist and conservation specialist for the Guard. She is tracking a female who Arin thinks is pregnant (she's looking pretty bulgy these days). They lay their eggs in June or July and the eggs hatch 1 1/2 to 2 months later. Unfortunately, the battery in her radio device is set to expire soon so Arin hopes they don't lose track of her just as she is about to lay her eggs. She said a veterinarian has to surgically insert the radio device for them. She has ordered some new devices but won't have them for a while because they are custom built. She sent a few pictures of her Hognose snake and you can see them here and learn a little more about this unique snake:

http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

4.0 New Business: Carol reported that she has received another donation for the Conservation Fund.

Rich reported that the LAE Road Committee is coming in on Saturday to meet with the Selectmen, Ed Thayer (DPW) and the Assessors to talk about the possibility and logistics of having the town take over their private roads.

Carol has been putting on NHACC workshops for new Conservation Commission members around the state. She has one more to do in Concord.

5.0 Correspondence:

DES Request for More Information, Svitok Standard Dredge and Fill File#2009-01876 requests plan for wetland restoration for areas outside of the driveway footprint that

were dredged/ditched, plus permission for work [from abutters] in areas that are within 20 feet of abutting property lines.

DES notice of administratively incomplete application, Smith Minimum Impact Application File # 2010-00991 need to notify Ashuelot River LAC, missing information from NH Natural Heritage Bureau.

DES receipt of comments re: Smith File # 2010-00991

Meridian Land Services CC of restoration plan sent to Kim Tuttle of NH Fish and Game Department

DES Supply Lines with The Source newsletter

Postcard from NH Association of Conservation Commissions announcing new commissioners workshops in North Woodstock and Concord (May 22nd from 8:30 - 3:30).

Conference Brochure for New England Wildlands & Woodlands Conference June 4, 2010 \$40 <http://www.newenglandforestry.org/newwconf.html>

Invitation to June 9th UVLSRPC Annual Meeting at 5:30 at Eastman in Grantham \$35 (guest speaker Stephen Taylor speaking on the origin of the term "Upper Valley").

6.0 Adjourned at 8:40 PM, our next scheduled meeting is June 16th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz
Secretary