

Washington Conservation Commission

Minutes – June 16, 2010

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Present: Carol Andrews, Sandy Robinson, Johanna Young, Nan Schwartz, Jed Schwartz, Rich Cook

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from May, Jed made a motion to approve, Sandy seconded, all voted in favor.

- 2.0 Old Business:
 - 2.1 Permits Committee – We received a copied notice from DES on the Smith permit stating it was administratively complete. We received notice that the Kimballs were granted their Dredge and Fill permit after making the approved changes to their plan. Nan reported that the Selectmen had agreed to give the Kimballs their building permit since the Kimballs pointed out an ambiguity in the LUO. Nan is going to go meet with the Selectmen on Thursday to discuss, as a member of the Planning Board.

 - 2.3 Adopt-a-Highway – We rescheduled our previously rained out pick up day to this Saturday, the 19th, meet at the Library parking lot at 9AM. Nan will send out an email reminder. We received a letter from DOT to re-sign up for our route, Sandy made a motion to do so, Johanna seconded, all voted in favor. Carol will sign and send it back to the state.

 - 2.4 Olde Home Day – Carol talked about the Whippoorwill and doing a project to map where they have been heard historically and today. Arin had contacted Fish and Game to see if they had any historical record of Whippoorwills and found that they didn't. Fish and Game was encouraging us to do a survey and Arin suggested we do a field trip to find birds in the Night Jar family (which includes Whippoorwills). Chris Kane mentioned finding Night Hawk habitat in town but didn't elaborate on it in the NRI report. Sandy will look in the history for more information. Nan reported that Arline France recently heard one near her house at dusk, we should follow up with her for more information.

Arin provided us with a copy of the trails map she has been working on and she is looking for input. We looked at the map and discussed it. A suggestion was made to make the trail lines solid but not opaque. A few things were mentioned – add labels on the Moose Loop and Ed's Corner, and show

Huntley Mountain Road as a trail. Rich suggested adding the Nuthatch way piece and the Meadow piece to the Town Forest areas. We made some notes on the map and will pass it back to Arin. We discussed what we want on the other side of the map. We will fold to 4 panels with the map on the inside and put informational things like the Conservation Priority Areas map, habitat areas, website info, fundraising info and a cover. Nan and Jed will work on this stuff and get prices for printing.

Johanna said the Energy Committee will have handouts and informational stuff to give out.

Sandy will confer with Jane Thayer about the table.

2.5 Land Protection Committee – Sandy and Nan attended the LCHIP grant workshop. We hope to know soon if we have a project to work on, Brian is going to talk to the family this week and get a decision. Sandy made a motion to go into non-public session at 7:40 PM, Jed seconded, all voted in favor. We came out of non-public session at 8:10 PM after voting to seal the minutes.

2.6 Planning Board – Rich thought it was a good time to mention that the Selectmen have been approached again about holding an abutters sale and they would like some guidance from the Conservation Commission. Carol said there was just a vote at town meeting and the town was very much behind the idea of holding these lots for now. Sandy made a motion to have Carol write a letter to the Selectmen and reference the vote at Town Meeting, Nan seconded, all voted in favor. Carol asked Nan if the Planning Board would also be willing to write a letter, Nan said she would bring it up at the next PB meeting. Nan suggested that the town merge any abutting lots together, she pointed out there were 3 places where there were 2 lots adjoining.

2.7 Energy Committee – Johanna reported that an engineer had assessed the town garage roof for load bearing capacity and found that it would be unable to hold the weight of the solar panels. The Selectmen and EC are now looking for alternate ground level sites for the panels. Jed suggested maybe putting them across the street on the old landfill site as this is a large open grassy area that gets lots of sun exposure.

Johanna said 2 people are going to attend the energy conference on Saturday.

3.0 What's Happening in Nature?

Sandy spoke about seeing a small deer and a wild turkey grazing together in a field. It was obvious that they were sticking together while grazing and she thought they were providing protective cover for each other. She said she had a deer in her garden in broad daylight today. She has been seeing lots of foxes and kits lately around East Washington Road. She saw a fox go after some wild turkey poults near her house and there was a lot of commotion when that happened. Jed said that for about five nights in a row a big flock of Canada geese would fly in at about 8 PM and land on the Mill Pond, they would be gone in the morning. He found out later from George Eccard that they were spending their days in his fields eating the little corn plants and had destroyed 10 acres that required replanting. They seem to be gone now. Jed mentioned that his corn is being eaten by crows along with some squash plants, he has used every trick he can think of to discourage them and may have finally turned the corner.

Rich had a flock of geese almost land in his garden recently. He mentioned that Lionel had some baby chicks eaten right out of his brooder area by ravens. Sandy said she has had good luck using a chicken tractor for protection. Rich will mention it to Lionel.

Johanna recently saw a Heron near her pond and had a porcupine mother and baby crossing her yard, the mother stopped to let the baby nurse at one point. She thinks they may have been eating her eggplants in her garden. Her new beaver pond is getting larger and is approaching her driveway

Rich had some animal sneak into his chicken run through a small hole in the fence near the top and it got one of his guinea hens

Jed had a question for everyone about whether they were seeing any bats this year. Carol said she had seen evidence of bats but no actual sightings. Jed said he saw one but usually he sees many because they nest in his barn in the summer months. Carol said she knows they are in trouble in New Hampshire because of White Nose Syndrome (WNS). For more information about bats and why they are in trouble in New Hampshire click here:

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

4.0 New Business: Carol announced that the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the town is now complete and approved by the state. There are a few things referenced in the plan that need to be done by the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board (working together).

5.0 Correspondence:

DES notice of Dredge and Fill permit granted with conditions to Kimball.

DES notice of administratively complete application, Smith Minimum Impact

Application File # 2010-00991

6.0 Adjourned at 8:45 PM, our next scheduled meeting is July 21st at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz
Secretary