

Washington Conservation Commission

Minutes – July 21, 2010

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Present: Carol Andrews, Arin Mills, Johanna Young, Nan Schwartz, Jed Schwartz,
Tom Taylor

Visitor: Ken Eastman

1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from June, Jed made a motion to approve, Tom seconded, all voted in favor.

2.0 Old Business:

2.1 Tax Sale – Ken was here to talk to us about the lots taken for taxes. He said that in the past the Selectmen have gotten a letter from us about these sales. They get questions from time to time about conducting a sale of these properties, he said about once a month. He had talked to the Planning Board about it and wanted to ask the Conservation Commission to do a lot by lot survey of the lots to see what could be sold. He wanted CC to send a comment letter to the Planning Board who could then add their comments and send the letter to the Selectmen. Carol commented that the vote at town meeting taken when Phil brought his question forward really put the issue to rest. Ken thinks there is a need for further analysis. Carol said storm water is a big factor in LAE and we aren't able to judge this, you would need to hire a wetlands scientist. Jed said that looking at all these lots would take time and you would need a clear set of criteria for commenting on them. Nan suggested merging the abutting lots to create larger lots. Everyone felt that land values are really low right now and they shouldn't be sold. Tom said there is a dichotomy, we have restricted building on marginal lots but if we put these lots out for sale people will assume they are buildable. Nan said that these lots would only be sold to abutters and merged, but there is the chance that some one with a marginal lot will add more marginal land and build where they wouldn't otherwise. Carol thinks that LAE needs a storm water plan and that could be costly. She doesn't know where the point is where the Selectmen would request that LAE to do a plan. Tom said they should ask LAE to come up with a plan before we allow a sale out there. Carol said that LAE comes up very high on the list as having large amounts of wetland. Ken said the Selectmen are looking for guidance, we can suggest things and they will act on them. He is also looking for interactivity of boards to deal with this. We will draft a letter send to the Planning Board then it will go to the Selectmen.

2.2 Land Protection Committee – Carol gave an update on the Eccardt Farm project. The Eccards are selling the easement at a bargain price. We are applying for grants from LCHIP, Q2C, using money from our Conservation fund and will be trying to raise the balance through fundraising. We will need the Selectmen's approval of our holding secondary executory interest in the easement. The Forest Society will hold the first interest but we will monitor the property for the town. We will need to hold a public hearing and have the Selectmen's approval. The Eccards will have a forest management plan and lose only development rights in the easement, they will still be able to use the land and put up a sugar house if they want. There will be public trails for hiking, horseback riding and snowmobiling that will hook into the trails on Journey's End, which is Forest Society land. We will need support from the Selectmen for our LCHIP application. We will meet with the Eccards to figure out how we should talk about the project during Olde Home Days. Ken mentioned he went to a workshop about grants and there are many out there. Nan and Carol said that the two grants we are applying for are the two that fit the criteria of the land in question.

2.3 Permits Committee – Nan and Sandy went out to look at a PBN for MacDougall at 283 Ashuelot Drive. It was for beach sand replenishment, they plan to build a wooden box to help retain the beach sand in place and avoid runoff into the lake. Nan signed off on it.

We received an Expedited Minimum Impact application from Joyce on the Marlow side of LAE, Carol had looked at the site and approved and Nan reviewed the application materials. Carol mentioned they had done a previous shoreland permit for a retaining wall. Tom made a motion to approve, Jed seconded, all voted in favor, Carol signed the permit.

There was a Standard Dredge and Fill application from the Town for the replacement of the Freezeland Pond culvert on East Washington Road. Nan and Jed had gone out to look at the site and felt that everything was in order. Nan explained that the plan is to replace the existing deteriorated metal culvert with a concrete box culvert. We decided there was no need to comment on this application, unless Ed wants us to, because we have no objections to the plan.

2.4 Olde Home Day – We looked at a print out of the Trail Map that Arin and Nan had done, everyone approved with the addition of "some trails are winter use only, please respect signs and property owners' wishes". Nan will get it printed this week. Tom have two little trails to add in the Andorra Forest area

– Blue Trail, Jeft's Road, White trail (Nan will add these). We will print 75 and sell them for \$5.

We are doing a Whippoorwill project for OHD. Arin will print out a big map on which people can locate where they heard them in the past. We will gauge interest a hike in the future to try to locate some. Maybe a Lovell Mountain hike, also. We will put it on foam board and use sticky dots and a notebook (Carol will provide). Nan will look at information from the Wildlife Action Plan, find pictures and Carol will bring her iphone to play the call. Nan has a canopy she can bring and an easel.

Johanna said the Energy Committee is doing a display of boiling water using solar.

- 2.5 Energy Committee – Johanna reported that they are looking at getting racks to hold the solar panels for the Highway Department and getting bids on this. They have added links on the website for a site where you can come up with your own "Energy Plan", www.myenergyplan.net

3.0 What's Happening in Nature?

The commission spent the rest of the meeting talking about Rich Cook, who passed away this past Friday. There is a celebration of his life on Saturday, July 25th at 2PM and everyone is invited to be there. Johanna read a beautiful poem for Rich written by her mother.

New Hampshire Mountains

My hand would touch the contours of a land
of granite bones fleshed soft in spruce and fir.
Familiar features of a distant face,
New Hampshire mountains rise within my mind.
With fingers schooled in childhood I can trace
with their changeless interruptions of the sky,
and conjuring summits all my thoughts expand
until the tether of my time and place
brings me up short, and I am once again
pacing my measured plot with vacant eyes.

Those mountains bred a sinewed restlessness
that peopled lowland living cannot slake.
They ask for answers deeper than their snows
and draw the eye beyond their weathered stone

back to their own vague cataclysmic birth.
As sure as the sun ascends to warm their peaks
I must return to reaffirm my own.

Jed said that Rich was a "Force of Nature" and is still a force in nature. This was evidenced by the big storm that blew in while we talked about him. Carol said that Rich had such an appreciation for farming, land, local food and he loved East Washington and Washington and he also very community minded. She thinks about what we have all lost but also about all that the community gained from Rich. He was so interested in so many things and service to community was important to him. Tom worked with Rich as a Selectman and on the Conservation Commission and he enjoyed his time with him immensely. Nan mentioned that Rich was always full of interesting information and interested in whatever the conversation turned to and he had a way of making hard work fun. The morning of his accident he had emailed information about bats to Jed because we were talking about them at our last meeting. He was one of our charter commission members and was always ready and willing to go look at permit sites or pick up trash on our route. We will miss him terribly. Please also see our tribute to Rich here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

4.0 New Business: Johanna mentioned seeing beer cans in the water off the boat launch in Millen Pond, Ken will investigate. She also mentioned see some fresh water clams in Millen. Tom brought up invasive plants (such as Purple Loosestrife and Japanese Knotweed) that are beginning to be found all over town. He thinks we need to come up with an action plan. Carol said we could come up with a "Washington's Least Wanted" list, she also thought we should map where the plants are found and make an action plan to eradicate them. The best thing people can do if they find these plants on their property is to hand pull and bag them for the trash.

5.0 Correspondence:

The Source: NH DES Drinking Water Source Protection Program newsletter
Rinker Materials (Stormwater technologies advertisement)

Local Government Center 23rd Annual Municipal Volunteer of the Year Awards-
deadline August 31st

Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission- Ashuelot River
Implementation Plan Executive Summary

DES copy of a letter to Brett and Jody Bouma Map 14/Lot 401. A DES inspector documented a sand pile on the property. DES is notifying the landowner of regulations regarding beach replenishment (a permit is necessary) and regulated

activities within the shoreland protection area.

DES request for more information on Minimum Impact Expedited application File# 2010-0099, Smith, Map 14/Lot 22.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Smith regarding File# 2010-0099 request for more information.

Copy of application to DES for Standard Dredge and Fill from the Town of Washington for the Freezeland Pond culvert replacement.

Copy of Minimum Impact Expedited application for a dock, Joyce, Marlow side of Ashuelot.

Copy of PBN for MacDougall at 283 Ashuelot Drive, beach sand replacement.

6.0 Adjourned at 9:05 PM, our next scheduled meeting is August 18th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz
Secretary