

Washington Conservation Commission

Minutes - February 16, 2011

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Present: Carol Andrews, Arin Mills, Sandy Robinson, Ken Eastman, Nan Schwartz, and Jed Schwartz

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from January, Carol wanted the minutes to reflect that she had recused herself from the discussion and vote about the NHACC membership dues, Nan will change the minutes. Minutes from our February 7th meeting had no changes. Sandy made a motion to approve, Jed seconded, all voted in favor.
- 2.0 Old Business:
 - 2.1 Permits Committee – There was one new permit to discuss. LAE is proposing to upgrade the drainage at their association beach and replace culverts with a grassy swale, they also want to replenish the beach sand. We decided not to comment on the application.
 - 2.2 Land Protection Committee – Sandy gave an update on the Eccardt Farm easement project, she said the closing will be Tuesday the 22nd or Wednesday the 23rd. We received the updated appraisal of the land and it had gone up a little due to a few more acres and new sales data. Peter Nault is charging us \$1800 for the update. Sandy said there are 2 outstanding pledges and she is contacting them about sending the money. Everything is in order for the closing, LCHIP has signed off on all the due diligence documents. We ended up raising \$19,000 and will use \$31,000 from our current use funds. Sandy has done a lot of running around getting everything in order and we thank her for making things happen. Nan and Sandy will meet tomorrow to update the final budget and give it to LCHIP. Sandy thinks we need to clarify the vote that was taken on Feb 7th because we are actually spending more than the \$40,000, including the fundraising money, for the project. Sandy made a motion to clarify that the \$40,000 is from Conservation Fund money prior to fundraising and we are spending in addition, the private donation money given for the project. Jed seconded the motion and all voted in favor. You can still visit the project's web pages for information: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/EccardtFarm.html, http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/EccardtFarmHistory.html, and http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/EccardtFarmOHRaffle.html.

Carol mentioned that the next Q2C funding round is in the end of February, we all agreed that we don't have anything far enough along to make an application at this point. We will hope to when there is another round.

- 2.3 Town Owned Lots – Ken spoke about the petition warrant article to make the Selectmen sell all retained lots that have no documented conservation value. He talked about the current plan with CC and PB working on assessing the lots for retention or sale. Arin spoke about someone she works with who is on his conservation commission and did something similar, she will ask him to share the criteria they used with us. We talked further about criteria we will use and what we will look at; wetlands, flood and stormwater storage, proximity to conservation land, abutting lots, potential for trails or expansion of trails, wildlife, endangered species, shoreland zone, and more. Planning Board is working on its own set of criteria. We will need to speak to LAE landowners to get their concerns at some point on the lots in that area. We will begin to do a map evaluation of the lots first, get property cards for all the lots from the assessors, and run Natural Heritage Bureau checks. Next we will do site evaluations starting late spring/summer, when we are done we will make recommendations to the Selectmen, Planning Board will do this also with their criteria.

Arin is working on the map of lots and will have one for us to display at Town Meeting.

Carol asked for a motion to oppose the warrant article along with the Selectmen, in light of the process to assess the lots that the selectmen put into place with the CC and PB. Nan made the motion, Ken seconded, all voted in favor.

- 2.4 Energy Committee – Johanna was absent but sent word that there was no news from her committee.
- 2.5 Planning Board – Nan reported that PB has a ballot for Town Meeting with several items to be voted on, an update to the Telecommunications Ordinance, a few fixes for the LUO and definitions for the LUO. People can find out more information about these on the Planning Board website here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/PB_Html/PBinfo.html or there are informational packets available in the Selectmen's office.
- 2.6 Selectmen – Ken said that they are working hard to get ready for Town Meeting.
- 2.7 Taking Action for Wildlife Workshops – Arin had spoken to Lindsay Webb from Fish and Game about coming to Washington to do an informational workshop for us at our next meeting on March 16th. She we could also invite other nearby towns' conservation commission members. We all thought this was a great idea and she will pursue planning this with Lindsay and let us

know what happens.

- 2.8 Carol gave us an update on things happening in the legislature. She will be attending sessions about the shoreland protection act and wetlands, DES is looking at streamlining the permits process especially for homeowners and more simple projects. She hopes they will keep commenting by the CC.

3.0 What's Happening in Nature?

Johanna mentioned to Carol that she had seen deer and hare tracks near her house.

Arin saw a moose cross the road near the recycling facility on Rt. 31.

Jed hasn't seen any deer tracks but has seen other small animal tracks (squirrels, hares, etc.) in East Washington.

Arin mentioned she has seen Red Polls in the news, she says she noticed that she sees the Red Polls at her feeder around snowstorms. She mentioned that the Audubon bird count takes place in February.

Ken said that he and Charley bought a trail camera to set up in his backyard and he hopes to get some pictures of a red fox, who has been visiting their yard this winter. Nan mentioned that when she was writing about bobcats she found many pictures that were taken by trail cameras, the cameras are triggered by motion and can get some great shots. For more information about foxes click here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

Ken also talked about a set of tracks he found that went down to an opening in the ice on the pond and didn't come back up so whatever it was must have gone into the water. We decided maybe it could have been an otter or mink. Nan said she and Jed saw wild turkeys again, up in a pine tree, while they were out snowshoeing.

4.0 Other Business:

- 4.1 Arin brought up the annual vernal pool event and everyone said they want to do it again this year. We will set a date at our next meeting, for sometime in April. Last year the school visit and vernal pool visit took place on April 23rd and 24th.

- 4.2 Nan asked if we are doing anything special for display at Town Meeting. We decided we will put up our "We Did IT/Thank You" poster for the Eccardt Farm project and display the town-owned lot map.

Carol mentioned we might want to have an Eccardt Farm project celebration and also something for the Solar panel dedication. We will discuss further later.

5.0 New Business: None

6.0 Correspondence:

Shoreland Impact Permit #2011-00157, MP-NH, LLC

Email from Matt Leahy at the Forest Society re: protecting LCHIP funding in this legislative session. He urges the board of selectmen to contact legislators to let them know the importance of the LCHIP program.

DOT Sponsor-A- Highway program- daffodills, elm trees or lilacs are available to towns that do a serious town-wide litter cleanup every year.

Announcement for the Cottrell-Baldwin Lecture Series on the Weeks Act at Fox Forest

6.0 Adjourned at 8:30 PM, our next scheduled meeting is March 16th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz
Secretary