

# Washington Conservation Commission

## Minutes - April 20, 2011

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

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

Visitors: Jim Crandall, Tom Marshall, Steve Terani from the Planning Board

1.0 Carol thanked the Planning Board members for coming to met with us about the Tax lot assessment criteria and plans. We looked over the 2 sets of criteria. Tom Marshall suggested combining the two forms into one. Ken didn't agree saying that he thought the Conservation Commission was going to go out first and then the PB would go out. Marshall suggested we go together as a group to look at the lots, each board will have their own criteria/checklist when we go to a specific lot. Jed agreed we do joint visits and maybe the Assessors could go out and label the lots. Nan said the map/property analysis should be done first. Tom Taylor commented that Ashuelot is overbuilt already and the stormwater runoff runs right into culverts that then feed the water into the lake. The empty lots catch lots of water and let it seep into the ground. Tom Marshall thinks that merging the empty lots will protect these lots from being built on. There was a discussion about merging and putting deed restrictions. Ken commented that the visits and subsequent observations will be the basis for any deed restrictions. Sandy commented these lots should be required to merge with other possible restrictions. Nan said she and Jed will take the required pictures during the lot visits. Arin will contact NHB to see if it will cost us money to do the lot inquiries. She will go ahead and do them if it doesn't cost anything. Nan will coordinate a schedule for visits with the 2 boards, she will contact everyone and see who wants to go. We need a few people from each board but are not looking for everyone to go. She will see what she can get done on the map analysis before the PB meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was suggested to add the presence of invasive species to the criteria. We will start with the 15 LAE lots. Steve asked that the list of lots be emailed to him. Arin said she would do new maps of each lot using new satellite data that has one-foot resolution.

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

2.0 Old Business:

2.1 Permits Committee – Peter Mellen joined us to discuss a minimum impact expedited wetlands permit he is doing for a project on Millen Pond Road for Janet Feeney. He showed the plan which involves an existing camp built in the 20's. It used to be Copps and is across from Mugar, TM 11-48. The plan is for a temporary road for demolition and construction that crosses an intermittent stream. They will impact 91 sq. ft. but will have to do some blasting of ledge in order to run pipes for septic and water. They will install a temporary culvert. The permits committee will go out and take a look and contact Peter afterward. He offered to have someone from his office accompany the committee to answer questions.

There were two other notifications from DES. LAE's Dredge and Fill permit application requesting more information and Capra's shoreland permit application also requesting missing information.

2.2 Election of Officers –Carol said she doesn't want to be the Chair this year, she would like to give someone else an opportunity to do it. She suggested Jed take over as Chair, Sandy stay on as Vice Chair and Nan remain the Secretary. Nan put the slate forward as suggested by Carol, Arin seconded it and all voted in favor.

2.3 Vernal Pool Visit – Arin said that the school visit is going to be this Friday at 1:30 PM. Arin asked if anyone had suggestions for additions for her powerpoint presentation. Nan suggested adding some pictures from previous years. She will post some for Arin to grab. We have changed the date of the pool visit to May 7<sup>th</sup>. The weather has been too cold and there isn't enough activity in the pool. Ken will tell Michelle to put the new date in the Selectmen's minutes. Jed will record some sounds for Arin's presentation. She will get together with Jed and Nan on Friday morning to get some live creatures for the presentation. Jed will shoot video at the pool visit.

2.4 Taking Action for Wildlife Workshops – Carol asked for ideas of ways to use the information we received at the Taking Action for Wildlife presentation. Arin suggested looking at historical wildlife reporting and going out to look for things to report to Fish and Game. For instance, she said there were reports of timber rattlesnakes in our area. We could look for areas and natural communities where these animals and reptiles were found and see what we can find. There are many species that F&G keeps records on.

Tom mentioned that he has been out checking on the timber cut done on Oak Hill, he said they have done a good job on it. He saw signs of moose out there. They seemed to open up areas for wildlife, you can see Millen,

Ashuelot and Highland lakes from the top of the hill now. He also checked the cut done on King Street. Carol said we could map wildlife corridors and collect information from town's people. Sandy said she can think of four crossings on East Washington Road. We could look for grants after we settle on a project. Tom said that the wildest place in town that he can think of is the Farnsworth Hill area, it is loaded with wildlife. We will all work on thinking up a project concept.

- 2.5 Carol gave us an update on things happening in the legislature. She mentioned HB 409, which would make it so towns couldn't have a member in common on the PB and CC. This has passed the house and is now in the Senate but not scheduled to be taken up yet. The Municipal Association is opposing it. She asked the Selectmen and CC to send a letter in opposition, Bob Odell is on the Public and Municipal Affairs committee and the Senate Finance committee. Carol will send contact info to us. We feel that having a member in common helps with communication and cooperation between the boards. She also talked about the VLAP, VRAP and other DES programs, which are in danger of disappearing because the legislature is cutting funds to DES. We feel these are vital programs to keep an eye on how healthy our water bodies are. We should let our representatives know that we support continuing these programs that rely on volunteers to do the testing work.
- 2.6 Adopt a Highway – Carol finally contacted the coordinator who is new, Frank Linnenbringer. She will contact him about coming to our next meeting (May 18<sup>th</sup>) to talk to us about safety and bring us a new sign. We set dates for our trash pick up – May 8<sup>th</sup> (Sunday), June 18<sup>th</sup> (Saturday), August 28<sup>th</sup> (Sunday), October 2<sup>nd</sup> (Sunday). On each date we will meet at the Library parking lot at 9AM.
- 2.7 Carol had an advance copy of a new book published by the NHB called "Natural Communities in New Hampshire", it to be used for identifying natural communities around the state and will be for sale soon.
- 3.0 What's Happening in Nature?  
Carol said she had seen and heard 3 loons on Halfmoon Pond. Tom said there were 2 loons on Ashuelot. Ken said that Millen Pond still has a lot of ice on it so he wasn't sure if the Millen Pond loons had been able to land there yet. Jed said that East Washington's pond has had ice out for a few weeks and there were several mergansers and other ducks staying there. He got his swans out

to scare off some Canada geese who came in, setting them on the shore and it did the trick.

Johanna mentioned to Nan that she had a large bear print in her driveway.

Lindley had seen a muskrat. She and Lindley had observed their resident beaver slide down the waterfall going over the beaver dam. They have lots of wood ducks, a mallard couple and occasionally Canada geese. Their salamanders are awake and the wood frogs are in full throat.

Carol said her brother saw a juvenile bald eagle on Halfmoon Pond.

Ken reported that his wildlife camera caught a fox and a raccoon.

Arin showed the Spotted Salamander pair she found on her way home the night before. She will try to keep them for the school presentation on Friday. This is the time of year when the Salamanders are on the move to their vernal ponds to lay eggs. You can find them crossing the road on a warm damp night, if you are lucky.

For more information about Spotted Salamanders click here: [http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC\\_Html/NewinNature.html](http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html)

#### 4.0 Other Business:

- 4.1 We took up the request from the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee for funds to continue water testing on the river. A motion was made by Sandy to send them \$100, seconded by Jed, all voted in favor. Ken spoke about the Selectmen sending donations to SPACE and the NH Lakes Association. He suggested that we do the same. Sandy said we don't have a lot of discretionary funds and we should look closely and discuss further whom we might want to donate to.

#### 5.0 New Business: None

#### 6.0 Correspondence:

- Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee request for funding
- DES Drinking Water Source Protection Workshop Tuesday, May 10th in Concord. \$40.00 per person. Register at [www.agwt.org](http://www.agwt.org)
- Friends of Mount Sunapee newsletter and donation solicitation
- DOT Adopt a Highway program announcement of new coordinator, request for a meeting with local safety person, and reporting forms
- DES request for more information, LAE file#2011-00272
- DES Application returned do to missing information, Capra, Shoreland Permit Application #2011-00754
- Letter from NH Lakes Association thanking us for a \$50 donation, this should have gone to the Selectmen who made the donation.
- LGC brochure for 2011 Local Officials workshops, May 9 – June 11

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz  
Secretary