

Washington Conservation Commission

Minutes - May 18, 2011

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

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

1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from April, Sandy made a motion to approve, Carol seconded, all voted in favor.

2.0 Old Business:

2.1 Permits Committee – The group went out to take a look at the Feeney minimum impact expedited wetlands permit and decided not to sign off on the permit. There were parts of the plan which didn't look like they would have minimum impact so Peter Mellen said he would just go ahead and do the standard dredge and fill application and then we will comment on it. Jed had offered to go out and look at the site with the surveyor who said that maybe the owner and septic designer would like to go out with the committee.

Arin asked if anyone knew about the tree cutting that is going on further down the road on Millen Pond, whether there was a permit associated with it. Noone knew of one and Ken said he would take a look.

There was a PBN application for Lafferty, TM 16-49-1. We will take a look at it and decided whether or not to sign off on it. Nan kept one copy and left the rest with the check for Sandy Poole.

DES sent notice that LAE's Dredge and Fill permit application was approved for their beach restoration project.

DES sent notice that the conditions in the Ursini's previous letter of deficiency have now been brought into compliance.

2.2 Lake Host Program – Ken wanted a few minutes to report on the Lake Host Program that was started a few years ago. He said that this year they have brought in Highland Lake to participate for certain events. The lake association in Stoddard is being paid \$500 to do inspections on the Washington side of the lake during the bass tournaments this summer. Millen Lake is getting \$1500 for the summer season for having paid hosts on duty during weekends. He said the program is working well and in 2010 we returned a match of \$7800 of volunteer time for the \$1000 the Lake Host program gave us. This year they are getting \$1250 from the state. Melissa

Cole is joining as one of the paid hosts this year, their first volunteer. They usually have about 12 hosts each year and everyone is trained by DES to do the job. He explained that the Lake Host program is all about educating the boaters and making sure no plants are present on the boats as they go in the water.

Ken reported that Charley was in Agway and saw what she thought was Milfoil among the aquatic plants they were selling. Ken got a sample to send off to Amy Smagula for identification. Ken said that 2 lakes in NH are lost each year to invasive plant species (like milfoil).

2.3 Adopt a Highway – Jed reported that the first pick up was a heavy one and we found all kinds of stuff. Pete and Sandy did the upper part, which was especially messy. Carol reported that the new state coordinator, Frank Linnenbringer, will join us at our next meeting to give us a safety update and bring us our new sign. Arin said she saw people picking up trash on Lempster Mt. Road and felt we should encourage people to do trash pick up along their local frontage. Sandy commented that along East Washington Road it seems pretty bad. Ken said that the Selectmen are trying to clean up the town and have sent letters to people encouraging them to clean up their yards. It doesn't give people a good impression of the town if they are passing through and see a lot of messy yards along the main roads.

2.4 Vernal Pool Visit – Arin reported that we had a very successful vernal pool visit on May 7th. The crowd wasn't as big to start but a lot of people came and went during the time we were there. There was a lot of enthusiasm and we found things that we hadn't seen in the past, such as fingernail clams and midge larvae. Jed shot video and pictures at the pool visit and we will get them posted online soon. We are looking for another pool to visit next year so the pool on Faxon Hill doesn't get stressed. If anyone knows of a good one with good access and not too deep (safe for the little kids) let us know so we can check it out. Carol mentioned that the rhodura will be blooming soon in the Bradford Bog and it is a good place to visit with kids. To see some pictures, a movie and read about our third annual Vernal Pool visit our website: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/Vernal3.html

2.5 Energy Committee – Johanna reported that the solar panels at the town garage are not online quite yet. Ken said that they were working on the wiring and the plan is now to go overhead with the wires instead of underground. Johanna said there is a trip planned to go to the Wind Farm on June 13th, Monday, leaving the school parking lot at 9AM and returning at 11AM. The

trip is being coordinated with the senior group. There is extra room on the bus if anyone wants to join the trip with the school kids and seniors, call Bob Fraser, the trip is free.

- 2.6 Carol gave us a legislative update. She said that HB 409, has turned out OK in the Senate and won't keep a member of the CC off the PB. Nan and Ken let our representatives know that we thought about the pending bills. Carol said that the Shoreland Protection Act is getting a big revision and she will send out a link to those interested. The repeal bill was retained in committee and Senator Bradley's bill is moving forward. She said NHACC is concerned with prime wetlands and a bill threatening to take the designation away. She said that VLAP and VRAP are going to take some cuts and the Senate bill puts the programs in danger, she said we should write letters to our senators about the value of these programs and stating our support for them. Nan has already done this.
- 2.7 Taking Action for Wildlife Workshops – Jed mentioned that we are looking for a project to do and we will continue discussing this and keep it on our agenda. Sandy wants to set up an place online where people could record wildlife and nature sightings and Arin mentioned it would be great to have a map component so they could pinpoint a location for their sightings. We will look into how this could be done. Johanna mentioned she has been doing a blog for the last 4 or 5 years and records what she observes around her pond and bog. She has noticed that she has heard frogs much later this year than in years past.
- 2.8 Tax Lot Assessment – Nan updated us on the progress being made on the tax parcel assessment project. She showed a notebook being put together with information about the lots including property file information, deeds and great maps generated by Arin. Nan has concentrated on the LAE lots to start and will gather the information about the other lots later. She has gotten some input about LAE stormwater issues. We discussed the site visits and we will schedule a them soon.
- 3.0 What's Happening in Nature?
Carol was the first to mention how much rain we have had lately and everyone agreed that it has been an especially cold and rainy spring! Johanna saw a Pileated Woodpecker by her pond and behind her house, also a Turkey Vulture and Heron and heard loons calling out in her bog.

Arin also saw a Pileated Woodpecker on Faxon Hill.

Sandy commented that there were Canada Geese in the fire pond near Garvin's for the first time ever and asked if we could put a swan down there. Jed and Nan have an extra swan and will check it out.

Arin mentioned that we should start to see turtles crossing the road soon. Jed commented that he saw a snapping turtle crossing on Coolidge Road recently, but unfortunately it didn't make it across. You should stop and move turtle off the road if you come across them (but be very careful with a Snapper!). Just move them to the side of the road they were pointed toward so they can go and safely lay their eggs. For some tips on what to do if you find a turtle crossing the road, click here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

Johanna mentioned that she saw a small very blue butterfly and Arin said it was probably a Spring Azure Butterfly. Jed and Nan saw one recently also, they knew it wasn't a Karner Blue but didn't know what it was.

4.0 Other Business:

4.1 Arin had mentioned doing a Whippoorwill walk sometime this spring and Jed asked about a plan. Arin thinks she saw Nightjars or Nighthawks (which are in the Whippoorwill family) last year in August at dusk, on Island Pond. She said there is no known record of them here. We will coordinate a trip to see what we can find. Carol has the information from Old Home Day and will contact some people who said they heard the Whippoorwill.

5.0 New Business: None

6.0 Correspondence:

Supply Lines with the Sourc, DES Newsletter

DES letter of Compliance File#2008-00227, Ursini, for letter of deficiency
#SP 08-002

DES Wetlands permit #2011-00272 copy, LAE beach project

Copy of PBN application, Lafferty, TM 16-49-1

6.0 Adjourned at 8:15 PM, our next scheduled meeting is June 15th at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Nan Schwartz

Secretary