

Washington Conservation Commission
Minutes – October 17, 2012

Assembly time: 7:00 PM.

Members present: Jed Schwartz, Carol Andrews, Nan Schwartz, Arin Mills, Johanna Young, and Ken Eastman.

Public present: Jim Grenier

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes: Minutes from September meeting, the October 10th special meeting and Public Hearing, Sandy made a motion to approve all as written, Carol seconded, all voted in favor.
- 2.0 Permits Committee – We received a Copy of DES notice of acceptance of Shoreland permit application for Johnson, 735 Washington Dr., TM 12-74, we looked at the permit application description online and determined no action was needed.

Arin asked about some forestry being done out on Highland Haven Road, she wondered if there was a shoreland permit. No one knew but we will look into it.

- 3.0 Committee and Board reports:
 - 3.1 Forestry Committee – Tom was not present to report. There was discussion about how often the Forestry Committee meets and whether there are minutes. Nan will ask Michelle about it.
 - 3.2 Land Protection Committee – Sandy said that The Farnsworth Hill Forest land protection project is moving forward and they are still raising money for the project. Jim Crandall and the fundraising group are feeling positive and it looks like it will be a go. You can donate directly to the Forest Society for this project and all donations are 100% tax deductible. Help bring this project to a successful outcome! You can make donations here:
<http://www.forestsociety.org/howyoucanhelp/special-projects.asp#sp40>
Time is short and the total they need to raise is \$208K by October

31st. Jed reported that at our public hearing we had mostly very positive comments on the project. The Snowmobile club is concerned about getting on the property to reconstruct their existing trails. Jed spoke with Brian Hotz and the Forest Society will let them on the property, as soon as they close on it. John Brighton is contacting Mr. Hertel to see if he will give permission for them to access the property sooner. John has been in contact with Tom Marshall about the issue. Jed mentioned that there was some confusion at the hearing about the CC being a regulatory body and that we are against development. We tried to clear this up at the hearing saying that we are neither regulatory nor against development. Sandy thinks we should find a low-key way to let the public know what we are and what we do. Jed mentioned looking at our NRI maps and pinpointing areas for development. Nan said this is a Planning Board issue and concerns zoning. Carol said we have zoning in town but people are mostly against anything further. Nan said the town could benefit from having differently zoned areas (smaller lots in town and larger lots further out instead of 4 acre zoning everywhere). Ken mentioned the development that the Seventh Day Adventists are considering and thought maybe that area would be good for more of that type of development. Carol said our NRI outlines where the most important parts of town are for protecting. If the PB comes to us about a development, we can comment based on the NRI. Right now we are working primarily with landowners who want to protect their land. Carol thinks we could be proactive in the Ashuelot Headwaters area, as was advised in the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the NRI, if we decide to. We all feel we have to leverage our limited resources for what we feel are the important projects in town.

- 3.3 Planning Board – Nan reported that the PB is has rewritten the RV section of the LUO and is holding a second hearing on it prior to their next PB meeting, November 6th, at 6PM in the Town Hall. They are also working with the CIP subcommittee on their buildings and departmental findings and will be using that to reconcile the CIP requests from the town departments.

3.4 Energy Committee – Johanna reported that they are holding their Solar movie night on October 29th at 7PM at the Congregational Church Fellowship Hall. They are showing “Here Comes the Sun”, with demonstrations, with industry professionals, of solar installations and comparisons of electric and hot water systems to follow. It is free admission and they are serving light snacks afterward. Please let anyone who might be interested know about this. She had posters for the event that she shared with us.

3.5 Legislative update – Carol said she hadn’t yet looked at the legislative requests for next session. The election is coming up and could alter the landscape. Jed asked Jim Grenier if he had any issues he wanted to bring up and he said no, but he wanted us to know that if he is elected he wants us contact him with any issues we might have. Jed assured him that we would.

4.0 Public Presentations and workshops:

4.1 We discussed the recent Oak Hill Hike that took place on October 6th. It was lots of fun with about 13 people attending. Arin made up a scavenger hunt for the kids, which was a big success. The view from Oak Hill was spectacular and the weather was nice. Nan said she will post the information about the hikes we have done this year and the maps Arin made for them so people can do them on their own. We discussed where this should be on the website for easy access.

We discussed planning a winter hike. Arin thought we could do a presentation at the school on tracking, perhaps, just before Christmas vacation and then do a snowshoe hike on a Sunday. People have said that they can’t make a Saturday hike so we will schedule the next one for a Sunday. She would like to make some molds of tracks if possible. We will look into whether this can be done in snow.

Arin also mentioned that there are PowerPoint presentations available through “Speaking for Wildlife” program. They have one on bats and one on beavers. She thought bats would appeal to the

kids. We will discuss this more, later.

- 4.2 Nan mentioned the annual NHACC meeting and conference scheduled for November 3rd at the Rundlett School in Concord. You can sign up and register online here: <http://www.nhacc.org/annualmeeting42/registration/>
At our special meeting, we voted to pay the conference fees for those who want to attend and can't afford to otherwise. Please sign up by October 25th to take advantage of the discount.
- 5.0 Adopt-a-Highway – Our last pick up day was Saturday, October 13th. There was some confusion about the meeting time but 4 people met and picked up 6 bags of trash. We are done for the year and will start up again next spring.
- 6.0 New business –
- 6.1 Arin said that her boss at work is on his town's conservation commission and they have been successful in getting some grant money for projects. She will get more information from him and bring it in next month.
- 6.2 Nan said we received an invoice for our NHACC membership fees for 2013. Carol recused herself from the vote and discussion. Sandy made a motion to pay our dues for 2013, Ken seconded the motion and all voted in favor.
- 7.0 What's Happening in Nature?
Johanna said she saw a Porcupine in her back yard and lots of Northern Flickers.
Sandy said she has lots of migrating Bluebirds in her yard. She had 6 of them in her tree at the same time.
Jed mentioned the 4.0 earthquake that occurred here yesterday. Some people felt it and others missed it. Ken said he was with Charley at the Red Cross shelter training in Concord and Charley, who is from California, knew just what was happening.
Jed mentioned the crazy squirrel activities that continue to go on this year. Ken said that he had squirrels biting the tomatoes in the

garden and he found a tomato up in a pine tree. Jim said that he has a hybrid Chestnut tree that makes loads of burrs that ripen, drop and open in late September. He said the squirrels took them all right off the tree early, before they were ripe and ate them. He has had apples taken right off his trees and is going to put skirts on the trees next year to keep the squirrels from climbing them. Everyone has observed some odd behavior this year. Nan found an article in the Concord Monitor about squirrels and the reason they are behaving in crazy ways.

To learn more about this plague of squirrels, click here: http://www.washingtonnh.org/WCC_Html/NewinNature.html

A chipmunk menaced Johanna in her yard; he was chipping at her and charged her.

9.0 Correspondence:

- NHACC brochure for 42nd annual meeting and conference, November 3rd, at Rundlett Middle School in Concord

- Copy of DES notice of acceptance of Shoreland permit application for Johnson, 735 Washington Dr., TM 12-74

- Copy of DES Wetland permit for Wolfe, Rt. 31 N, TM 4-3

- Copy of DES notice of acceptance of permit application for septic system, 493 Long Pond Rd., TM 20-152

- Copy of latest CC account balances

- Copy of DES notice of Complete Forestry Notification for minimum impact wetlands, Hertel, TM 15/56

- Invoice from NHACC for yearly dues

10.0 Adjourned at 8:15 PM, our next scheduled meeting is November 21st at 7 PM in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Schwartz, Secretary