

Conservation Commission Minutes 11/3/09

Contributed by Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Wednesday, 16 December 2009

Conservation Commission

Minutes

November 3, 2009

Official as of December 1, 2009

Chairman Steve Roy calls the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Present: Chairman Steve Roy, Jim Ryan, Paul Lussier, Loren O'Neil, Wini Young, Board Administrator Linda Smith, and Board Secretary Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

Absent: Vice Chairman Steve Hampl, and Mike Matson.

Minutes

October 6, 2009

Page 2: Punctuation correction.

Page 2: Change: fees to costs; Add: ...this

Page 4: Add: up to; annual

Loren O'Neil makes a motion, second by Steve Roy, to approve the minutes of October 6, 2009, as amended. Motion passes unanimously; 3/0/2. Jim Ryan and Wini Young abstain, as they were not at the meeting.

Appointments:

Mark West, Bear-Paw Regional Greenways (BPRG). Conservation Plans.

Mr. West, Chairman of BPRG, is present regarding the current BPRG conservation plans. He explains the co-occurrence map and the scoring of land for its value based on the number of resources on a particular property. He states that the original vision was to protect Pawtuckaway and Bear Brook areas and to connect other corridors throughout the seven town regions. He mentions protecting species and presents an individual town map of Northwood depicting areas of protected areas and conservation lands. He also provides a chart of areas noting data and the wildlife action plan and how it ranks with habitat types of the area.

Mr. West plans to encourage BPRG to secure funds for larger maps and he notes that 16% of the land is protected now by BPRG and they are moving forward to protecting other areas.

Mr. West notes upcoming events and explains that easements are open to the public and most have parking areas. They hope to have a guide available soon for the parcels open to the public.

Consideration of Applications

Bob Averell, Averell Landscaping & Design. PBN: 22 Frost Rd.

Bob Averell of Averell Landscaping Design, is present representing the Williams. He explains that the Williams are submitting a PBN to reconstruct a retaining wall on Frost Rd. on Pleasant Lake. He states that the retaining wall has been on the property for 50 years and due to high water levels over the past 2 to 3 years, some of the wall collapsed into the lake this summer and it must be rebuilt. He states that the lake is now drawn down.

Mr. Averell explains that the proposal is to reconstruct the wall in the exact location. Mr. Roy asks if the existing stairway will be included in the center of the wall. Mr. Averell replies that the homeowners would like to add granite steps in another location to make it easier to access the dock. He states that the new location of the stairs would eliminate the need for the homeowner to access the dock through the water. Mr. Roy explains that if there are any changes proposed the PBN would not be the appropriate application. After discussion, Mr. Averell requests to proceed with the PBN proposing only to repair or replace existing retaining wall with no repairs to the non docking structures.

Additional discussion is held regarding the setbacks. Mr. Averell explains that the retaining wall is approximately 50' and there is at least 20' between the applicant's property and the abutter's property; however, he is not exactly sure as to the property lines. Mr. Roy suggests that the approximate distances be outlined on the plans.

The checklist is reviewed and a discussion is held regarding erosion control. Mr. Averell explains that they will be using

silt fence and hay bales between the wall and lake. Mr. Roy suggests that the location of siltation control devices that will be used be annotated on the plan. Additional discussions are held and the commission deems that the following information be indicated on the plan:

- Note that the project will be repairs only, #12, not #4 as originally notes as there will not be repairs to the structures.
- Note to be added to intent worksheet that the applicant will proceed with option "B" of the two proposed designs.
- Indicate on the plan that the retaining wall is approximately 40'-50' long.
- Indicate the distances between the applicant's property and the activity.
- Add proposed erosion control measures to the plan.

Mr. Ryan makes a motion to approve the PBN as amended by Mr. Averell at this meeting. Mr. Lussier seconds. The motion passes unanimously; 5/0.

Pending Files

Guptill, First NH Turnpike, Map 222; Lot 30.

Mr. Roy explains that he received a phone call from Cindy Broning, realtor for Ms. Richards who represents the Guptill's property, 103 acres. Mr. Roy states that the parcel has been listed for sale for \$299,000. He states that Ms. Broning has copies of the letters from the conservation commission and feels that the listed amount is acceptable due to the fact that she has comparable properties on Rte 4. that have sold for much higher. He states that Ms. Broning felt that this parcel was worth more than the CC's offer of \$1,000 per acre. Mr. Roy states that the realtor feels that the parcel is more developable due to the abutting parcel, which is owned by the town.

Mr. Roy states that the realtor requested that the commission consider \$275,000. for the property. Mr. Roy states that the last offer from the commission was for \$1,200./per acre. Discussion ensues as to how the commission would like to proceed. All members are in agreement that the counter offer of \$275,000 is an unreasonable request and there is no further interest to counter the offer. Mr. Roy states that Ms. Broning requested that she be contacted regarding the counter the offer. Mr. Roy adds that he had asked Ms. Broning if Ms. Richards had indicated if an appraisal was going to be done on the property and the reply was no, they were not pursuing an appraisal.

Jim Ryan makes a motion, second by Paul Lussier, for Mr. Roy to contact the listing agent for the Guptill property noting that the conservation commission is not interested in the counter offer. The motion passes unanimously; 5/0.

Mr. Roy states that he will draft a letter for the next meeting to the listing agent noting the commission's decision and the development restrictions on the property.

Sharon Smith Purdy, Route 107 and Blaisdell Drive, Map 104; Lot 31.

Mr. Roy states that he has received an email from Ms. Purdy who appears to be inclined to move forward with gifting this parcel to the town. He states that there are some questions relative to an appraisal and other expenses involved.

Discussions are held regarding covering appraisal fees and title transfer fees. The commission members support the appraisal costs through the land fund, and all are in agreement to solicit quotes from prior contacts. In addition, the commission also would support covering costs associated with the title transfer and registry of deeds; however, each party would cover their own attorney fees.

Further discussion is held regarding conservation value of the parcel and the possible uses. Ms. O'Neil notes that this would make a nice recreation area for a park, something with public access.

Mr. Roy notes that the selectmen must approve the commission acquiring the property on behalf of the town. Mr. Roy requests to meet with the selectmen at their November 24 meeting.

Other Business

Forester Contract

Final copies of the forester contract are distributed. The forester agreed to the commission's request for two annual meetings. Other changes made were relative to the insurance for the town.

Special Reports

GPS Maps Information ~ Steve Hamp

Ms. Weaver states that the GPS unit was purchased and has arrived. The software is still being researched.

Mr. Roy states that the Friends of the Northwood Meadows State Park Group will be approaching the commission regarding a mapping project to map out exotic and invasive species.

Narrows Brook Conservation Area ~ Wini Young

Ms. Young states that Sarah Ward, a natural resource teacher at CBNA, has requested to do another cutting of the Johnson's property. Ms. Young states that Ms. Ward has been previously approved to conduct these cuttings on this property, which was donated to the town with the stipulation that the view of the boat house be kept open. She adds that it has been years since any cutting has been done.

Ms. Young states that Ms. Ward has received a USDA grant for the cutting and would like the approval to cut during November and December. Ms. Young states that Ms. Ward has a confirmed chipper and suggested that any wood cut be given to a family in need, in the area. Ms. Young notes that she has previously been given permission for Ms. Ward to cut the existing barb wire fence too.

Discussion ensues relative to the actual parcel and ownership. Mr. Roy notes that the lots are specified as the Town of Northwood Conservation Commission 24, 23, and 21. Ms. Young states that the work that occurred a few years ago was on lot 21.

A draft memo is discussed:

In reference to your request for input regarding the proposal to perform maintenance trimming of brush on lots 22 and 23, this memo constitutes permission to proceed with the requested effort in order to maintain the view to remain consistent with the original conditions of the gift of the property to the town.

Ms. Young requests that this be forwarded to her to provide to Ms. Ward. Mr. Ryan suggests that the selectmen be copied on the memo.

Loren O'Neil makes a motion, second by Jim Ryan, to send a memo to Ms. Ward granting permission for maintenance trimming of brush. Motion passes unanimously; 5/0.

Suncook Valley Sun Article ~ Ecological Assessment

Mr. Roy offers to draft an article for the Sun regarding the NALMC Ecological Assessment and bring it in for the December meeting.

New Business

Letter from Town Facilities Committee

Ms. Weaver states that the facilities committee replied to the commission's letter regarding the status of Lucas Pond. The letter noted that the project is a "work in progress" and funds are in a trust fund until the completion of the project. Mr. Roy requests that the letter be forwarded to Mr. Matson.

Letter Mike Coumas, Northwood Lake Homeowners Assoc.

Ms. Smith explains that Mr. Coumas emailed her regarding the status of the fence at Northwood Lake Beach. She notes that minutes from a selectmen's meeting are included in the letter which reference that a volunteer had offered to replace the fence by building a stone wall in its place and they are now unable to do so. Ms. Smith states that she feels that this is a facilities committee issue. Ms. Smith states that she has forwarded the email to the town administrator.

A discussion is held regarding the races on the lake and the beach access. Ms. Smith states that the beach is the access for the races. The commission expresses concern with the fact that this could bring possible pollution and damage to the beach area and the end result of the beach becoming contaminated. Mr. Ryan states that this issue deserves to be addressed with the selectmen. Mr. Roy expresses concern with the access becoming a winter parking area as there is already limited parking. Mr. Roy suggests some type of temporary fence. Mr. Ryan makes a motion, second by Ms. O'Neil, for Mr. Roy to address this issue at the BOS meeting, November 24. Motion passes unanimously; 5/0. Mr. Ryan feels that nothing should be driven on the lake. Ms. Young agrees. Mr. Roy requests Mr. Ryan propose that NH Fish and Game bar the statute relative to driving vehicles on the lake.

Ms. Smith will reply to Mr. Coumas.

Mr. Ryan explains that there are two properties on Old Mountain Rd. totaling 22 acres that are now a part of The Pauline Lemelin Trust. He states that the request was for these parcels to be placed into a conservation easement. He asks about beginning the process. Mr. Roy asks if the Town of Northwood would be the primary easement holder and Mr. Ryan replies yes.

Discussion ensues regarding the process and through the discussion it may appear that a lot line adjustment and/or a subdivision may be something that would be done as well. Mr. Roy makes a motion, second by Ms. O'Neil, to send out an easement packet with a letter from Mr. Roy noting that the conservation commission, per the wishes of Pauline Lemelin, are interested in pursuing the easement. Motion passes; 4/0/1. Mr. Ryan abstains.

Internal Business

Town Report

Ms. Smith reminds the chair that the town report from the commission is due in January.

Ms. O'Neil leaves at 9:35 p.m.

Public Input

Arthur Slade, former commission chair, expresses interest and concern with forest management. He notes that it is important that the cuttings be implemented and the forest management plan be adhered to. Mr. Roy reviews the history of the forest activity and states that there is now a new contract in place and the commission is inclined to be more proactive.

Mr. Roy states that at the last NALMC meeting the state forester was present since there is a large portion of the land owned by Fish and Game and DRED. He adds that the state park is there as well as properties owned by UNH. Mr. Roy explains that the ecological assessment pointed out that the town also owns land in this area, the Parsonage Lot.

Mr. Roy states that the recommendation for December is that the town's forester, the UNH forester, the state forester, and the private entities hire their own forester and work together to create a regional forest management plan for the 4,000 acres. He notes that an item to discuss in December will be if the conservation commission considers this to be one of the annual meetings with the forester or it will be \$40. per hour for him to attend.

Mr. Slade mentions town leased land and states that the leases are expiring soon and the commission should check into these leases. Ms. Smith explains that the town allowed the owners of the leases to purchase the land lots. Mr. Roy appreciates Mr. Slade's comments and history. He encourages him to attend the meeting regarding forestry activities.

Adjournment

Mr. Ryan motions to adjourn. Mr. Lussier seconds and the motion passes at 9:45 p.m. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Board Secretary