

## **Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes June 8, 2015**

**Present:** Nate Fogg chair, Dave Mankus (7:43 PM) vice-chair, Steve Brown, and Dave Tinkham alternate.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm.

Dave Tinkham was appointed to sit for absent member R Fogg.

### ➤ **Public**

Nancy Spencer-Smith, Connie Twombly and Donna Martin, Videographer

### **Discussion with Keith Fletcher regarding Town owned conservation property**

N Fogg introduced Keith Fletcher of Moose Mountain Regional Greenways who was invited to discuss conservation property owned by the Town of Wakefield that is without Conservation Easements.

Mr. Fletcher stated that the parcels were obtained by the Town of Wakefield in 2006 for conservation, but understands that Conservation Easements were not placed on those properties. He stated there are two ways to add conservation easements to the parcels, one is an ownership conservation easement and the other is a conservation deed. He suggested an easement because it is permanent. He questioned if the Town prefers to keep the land.

N Fogg replied he believes that would be the way the Town would want to go.

Mr. Fletcher stated it would be the preferred way to go and suggested placing conservation easements on the land primarily to protect it. He noted another way would be to have a third party provide an easement, but that would not be a cost free option and a typically the way to handle that is with a Stewardship fund. He stated funds are available to Towns that are interested in this, but the deadline for this year is June 19<sup>th</sup>.

N Fogg clarified the options are to sell the land and hold an easement or keep the land and hold an easement.

Mr. Fletcher replied yes, it depends on what the plans are for the land and if they decide to transfer the land they need a plan for future use and determine what rights the Town would want to keep.

D Tinkham questioned if the Stewardship Fund would be for maintenance.

Mr. Fletcher replied yes it would be used for two parts, legal defense and monitoring, reporting on the land such as Forest Management.

N Fogg questioned if the Town sold the land and kept an easement would the Town of Wakefield need to set up funds for a Stewardship.

Mr. Fletcher replied that the Town may not be the best holder of the easement, it may be better to have a land trust hold the easement as their sole business is conservation.

S Brown questioned if the Town could protect it by owning the land and holding the easement.

Mr. Fletcher replied he is not sure.

D Tinkham expressed his concern that funds were spent to conserve it and would like to find out how they can do that without spending additional funds.

Mr. Fletcher suggested checking with the Town Attorney to see where the funds came from to purchase it and what the restrictions were.

Nancy Spencer Smith stated she recalled it was purchased for conservation with Conservation funds, but suggested checking with the Town Attorney as well as Conservation Commission minutes from that time. She noted an alternative is to sell the land to a conservation group. She noted that MMRG is now a land trust and can hold easements.

S Brown questioned if the Town sold it to the South East Land Trust and the Town of Wakefield held the easement, would the Town of Wakefield need to establish a Stewardship Fund.

N Fogg replied that the problem with that is future Conservation Commissions may not be interested in conserving it.

Mr. Fletcher replied he has never heard of that, but would look into it. He noted that Ms. Spencer Smith's idea is a good idea to avoid the cost of the easement.

N Fogg stated that at this point the Conservation Commission needs to do some more research in order to make an informed decision, such as selling the land or getting an easement or find out if it is already protected.

The Commission thanked Mr. Fletcher for his information.

### **Campership**

N Fogg noted that no campers have signed up to date and questioned if it was brought up to the school board.

S Brown replied it was and he understands information on it will be sent out.

### **NRI**

D Tinkham suggested forwarding what he has drafted to the Conservation Association to find out if it meets the minimum requirements of the RSA.

N Fogg replied he would forward it for review and the Commission can discuss it at a future meeting.

### **➤ *Applications & Correspondence***

\*D Mankus joined the meeting.

The Commission reviewed the following applications & correspondence:

- David/ Paula Doyle-Shoreland Impact permit for Lord Road Tax Map/lot 75/32
- Robert Kennedy-Incomplete seasonal dock
- NH DES Watershed grants
- Great Bay Matters news letter

➤ **Consideration of Minutes 4/25/2015 & 5/11/2015**

**D Mankus made a motion to approve the minutes of 4/25/2015 as amended. The motion was seconded by D Tinkham. The vote was 3-0-1 in favor of the motion.**

**D Mankus made a motion to approve the minutes of 5/11/2015 as submitted. The motion was seconded by D Tinkham. The vote was 3-0-1 in favor of the motion.**

➤ **Union Meadows Dam**

N Fogg stated with regards to a discussion at a previous meeting to use Conservation funds for reclassifying of the dam. He solicited opinions on the matter from both the Conservation Association and the NH Municipal Association. He stated that the Conservation Association stated that using the funds for this purpose is a “grey” area and they are not sure if the Commission can and the NHMA stated the funds are to be used for conservation purposes only according to the RSA. He noted a Warrant Article was suggested.

D Mankus stated the reason the discussion came about is because of the watershed and they thought it was part of the Natural Resource Inventory. He believes the wrong question was posed to them for an opinion and it should be pointed out it is a study to protect the watershed.

D Tinkham suggested forwarding the letter and questioned the process if it is agreed they could expend the funds.

N Fogg replied a public hearing is required.

➤ **Gage Hill property**

D Tinkham stated with regards to the lack of response from the Society for Protection of Forests and he would like to send a registered letter to be sure they have received the correspondence before they proceed.

N Fogg replied he would send a letter.

➤ **Other Business**

D Tinkham suggested putting out a “newsflash” about the Adopt a Conservation Area and to add it to the home page of the website to let the public know it is available.

➤ **Next Meeting**

The date for the next meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

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Being no further business before the Commission, N Fogg entertained a motion to adjourn.

**D Tinkham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by S Brown. The vote was 4-0 in favor of the motion.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Amelia Capone-Muccio*