

Conservation Commission Approved Minutes December 8, 2011

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

December 8, 2011

7:00PM Auditorium

Members Present: Drew Kiefaber (Chairman), Jeff Goldknopf, Jessica Veysey, Stephanie Coster (Alternate), James Bergeron (Town Council Rep), Valerie Shelton (Planning Board Rep)

Members Absent: George Hilton, Fred Pearson, Bruce Fecteau (Vice Chair) excused

Called to Order: 7:10PM

Agenda Items:

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Drew Kiefaber nominated Stephanie Coster and Jessica Veysey as voting members in the absence of Fred Pearson and Bruce Fecteau.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4. Approval of Minutes

Nov. 10, 2011: There was a review of recommended changes to the draft minutes.
Action

Motion: Valerie Shelton made a motion to approve the minutes as revised.

Second: Jeff Goldknopf

Vote: All in favor.

5. Treasurer's Report

The financial reports were not available for review but are not expected to have any major changes.

Jessica Veysey asked to confirm the time at which a Land Use Change tax should be assessed. Valerie Shelton explained that the Land Use Change Tax should be levied at the time of the use change, not to exceed one year from the date that the Town becomes aware of a land use change. If the property owners are not notified within that time frame, the Town cannot collect the tax.

6. Committee Reports

There were no reports from the Town Council.

Valerie Shelton reported of an upcoming proposal to the Planning Board for a landscaping ordinance at their next meeting. She will provide a report on it at the next Conservation Commission meeting.

7. Chairman's Report

Wetlands Permit for MacIntoch Well Site

A letter from NHDES was received with a copy sent to Administrator Wajnowski stating that a five year permit was approved.

8. Old/New Business

32 Huckins Drive Retaining Wall

The Commission members who attended the site walk confirmed that the property owners will not be able to satisfy the 25' buffer requirement needed for the approval of a Special Use Permit. A letter has been drafted to be delivered to the Town Planner stating this opinion and recommending that the owner apply with the ZBA. Jessica Veysey asked if the Conservation Commission would be permitted to comment on the ZBA application, particularly as it relates to the use of equipment in the buffer during construction of the wall. Discussion continued regarding the potential of establishing a Town Mitigation Fund for instances such as this. If the Conservation Commission were to pursue it further, Valerie Shelton stated that a letter would need to go to the Planning Board to review and update the wetlands ordinance.

Stewardship monitoring – Nostrom/New Roots Farm – Nov. 13

There were no issues or easement violations identified during the site walk. Valerie Shelton completed the monitoring report and sent it to the site walk participants. Valerie Shelton asked all participants to notify her as soon as possible of any corrections or edits so she can send the copies to the interested parties. It was noted that one public easement marker was missing and Jeff Goldknopf recommended replacing it with a Carsonite post and metal marker that is flush with the ground, which can be easily detected if the marker goes missing again.

Action

Motion: Jeff Goldknopf made a motion to authorize Doucet Survey to reset the missing marker with a Carsonite post with a metal base not to exceed \$500.

Second: James Bergeron

Vote: All in favor.

Smith/Audubon – Nov. 20

Phil Brown from NH Audubon attended the site walk and posted several Audubon easement signs. There were two violations of note: 1) Some trees on an abutters land were blown down and there was evidence of trees cut on both sides of the easement; 2) A second abutter created a tractor path that leads onto Audubon fields. A cease and desist letter will be sent to both abutters. There were 3 tree stands found on the Conservation property but it was unclear if that is a violation. However, one of the tree stands had a few smaller trees cut down for sight lines, which is a clear violation. The excavation of the sand pit is under way and they are still in the process of removing some invasive species there. There was a noticeable increase in beaver activity in that area that was not present last year.

Silverman-Schneer

The site walk will be scheduled in January.

Wiggin Farm

The site walk will be scheduled for January in time for the report deadline of January 30.

Annual Report

Drew Kiefaber drafted and distributed the first draft of the annual report for review and edits. He will make the final changes over the weekend and redistribute to the Commission by Sunday. The annual report must be finalized by December 19.

Action Items

Stephanie Coster reviewed the outstanding action items for further updates. Discussion ensued regarding the recommendation for dog waste signage on conservation properties. Several signs were selected and they will be posted at conservation properties in accordance with their proximity to the water supply. The approved verbiage on each sign will be site specific.

Action

Motion: Valerie Shelton made a motion to authorize the purchase of signage relating to the removal of dog waste to be posted on conservation land, not to exceed \$250.

Second: Drew Kiefaber

Vote: Jeff Goldknopf objected. All others in favor.

Discussion surrounding additional ways to inform the public of the need to properly remove their dog waste from public lands continued. Several ideas were discussed but the group decided to start with distributing a "fact sheet" to owners with dog registrations. Drew Kiefaber agreed to contact the Tax Collector's office to discuss the logistics and their ability to assist with this initiative.

9. Adjournment
Action

Motion: James Bergeron made a motion to adjourn.

Second: Jeff Goldknopf

Vote: All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:26PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky LaPense