

TOWN OF DURHAM
Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 11, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Chairman Brian Ameche at the Durham Public Library.

Members Present: Brian Ameche, Ralph Chase, Casey Cordes, Joe Dattilo, Bill LaFlamme, Bob Melvin

Approval of February minutes: Ralph Chase, seconded by Casey Cordes to approve the February 19, 2008 minutes as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed with two abstentions, Brian Ameche and Joe Dattilo.

Amendments to Agenda / Approval of March Agenda: Casey Cordes, seconded by Ralph Chase to approve the agenda as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Payment of Bills: \$33.75 to Pam Huntley for secretarial services. Bill LaFlamme, seconded by Bob Melvin to approve payment of the bill as presented, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Session: Jack Stahl reported that the road is washed out and impassable at Whites Farm. He continues to express his concern over the extensive flooding of the property. Brian Ameche raised as a topic with the Board of Finance the plan to monitoring the flooding during this season to determine if there were places that berm placement would be of use to impound some of the flood water. This would require a permit from the Durham Inland Wetlands Commission and possibly from Connecticut DEP. Bob Melvin commented that when it was requested to raise the well field by two feet, DEP said no. There are restrictions as to what fill activity is allowed in a flood plain.

There is still 4 wheel drive activity on the fields at Whites Farm. Jack stopped one and confronted the driver. The Commission advised Jack that he was doing that at his own risk. The Commission has advised Jack not to confront anyone on public property as he does not have the responsibility or authority to do so.

Greenhouses on Route 68 – Giuseppe Caturano: There was discussion that a formal request with mapping needs to come before this commission. Ralph Chase spoke with Dick Ericksen of the Inland Wetlands Commission about the situation. The greenhouses have encroached on inland wetlands and instead of requiring the removal of the greenhouses the IWWC has suggested that Mr. Caturano can offer land to the Town of Durham in lieu of paying a fine.

Site Development Plan Review - TBD: None.

Request to use Whites Farm - Blacksheep Squadron of Durham, CT, 2008 General Permit – Mark Chadsey: Bob Melvin, seconded by Ralph Chase to approve the general permit annual request from the Blacksheep Squadron for use of Whites Farm through December 2008, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Request to use Whites Farm – TBD: none

Status of Proposed Open Space Acquisitions & Update on the New Phase of Open Space Acquisition Program: The two appraisals have been passed on and are under review. New letters will be sent out to the property owners that did not respond to the previous mailing. These mailings should be on a 6 months cycle.

Open Space Issues Reports – Dead Hill Road & Creampot Road Gates, Signs, Security, Maintenance at Deerfield Farms, Other: New locks have been placed on 4 gates – Sawmill Road, Dead Hill Road, Creampot Road and the bar way at Curtis Woodlands. Additional keys need to be made for distribution.

Bob Melvin has the pipe to mark the two wells on Whites Farm. He has to paint them orange, get dry caps and install them. The pipes will replace the police tape that is there now.

Open forum with Property Stewards – Final Roster: Whites Farm – Jack Stahl; Pent Road (Deerfield Farm) – Melynda Naples; Howd Road – Matt Reed; Pisgah Mountain - Andy Golschneider with BSA Troop 27; Creampot Valley – George & Irene Roberts; Curtis Woodlands – Rob Williams; Portion of Wimler Property with Public Access – Dick Porter; and Sawmill Road – Ray Koba: Ray Koba reported that everything was good on the Sawmill Road property.

Chair's Report – Meeting with BOF, Open Space Calendar, Correspondence, Memorial Plantings Marker for Existing Memorial Plantings for Edwin Eick - Tupelo, Jack Donadio – American Dogwood, Austin Ackerman – 3 American Hollies, Carl Otte - ?, Frank Behrens - ? & Mr. White - ?; New Memorial Plantings for Roger Newton (white oak) & Charlie Wimler (TBD). Plan to replace 2 maples with water tolerant trees in the Spring of '08: Brian Ameche reported that the meeting with the Board of Finance was very positive. In 2007-8 there was \$5,000 added to the Open Space Reserve Account for the Open Space calendar project. Photos could be taken this spring. There was discussion about the photos and some suggestions of views include Mt. Pisgah, Howd Road, Deerfield Farm, back through Durham Meadows, Sawmill Road, Cuginchaug River, a picnic scene. The pictures could be captioned describing the scene with statistics (acreage, cost) and uses of the property.

Ralph Chase will meet with Allan Poole to get a quote on pruning the memorial trees and removal of the 2 dead trees.

As suggested by the Board of Finance, a survey of Whites Farm should be completed this fiscal year.

Other Business: Bill LaFlamme reported that there was damage on the Howd Road property by a 4 wheel drive vehicle. Brian will report the incident to DEP Conservation Officer Ruggiero.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Huntley
Recording Secretary