

TOWN OF DURHAM
Conservation Commission
Site Visit and Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 12, 2008

Site visit to Deerfield Farm at 6:45 PM – 7:15 PM to see the NRCS rotational grazing project.

Members Present: Brian Ameche, Joe Dattilo, Rick Huntley, Bob Melvin

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, Joe Dattilo, Rick Huntley, Bill LaFlamme, Bob Melvin
Rick Terrill (at 8 PM)

Approval of July minutes: Ralph Chase, seconded by Bill LaFlamme to approve the July 8, 2008 minutes as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed with 1 abstention by Joe Dattilo.

Amendments to Agenda / Approval of August Agenda: Rick Huntley, seconded by Bill LaFlamme to approve the agenda as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Payment of Bills: \$33.75 to Pam Huntley for secretarial services. The previously authorized payment to Bascom & Benjamin was processed for payment against the 2008 budget. Ralph Chase, seconded by Bob Melvin to approve payment of the bill as presented, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Session: Andy Golschneider was present to give his last report as the stewardship representative for BSA Troop 27. The Pisgah Mountain area continues to have issues with ATV use all the way to the top of the mountain. ATVs are getting around one gate and there is additional access from the Rockland Preserve (Town of Madison) adjacent property. The area is fairly clean of discarded bottles, cans and other trash. Troop 27 will continue in the roll as steward and Andy supplied new contact information for the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Chairman. Andy is now the advisor of Venture Crew 169, which is a group of co-ed scouts ages 14-20. This group is requesting the same access to the Pisgah Mountain campsite as Troop 27. Ralph Chase, seconded by Bill LaFlamme to approve use of the Pisgah Mountain campsite by Venture Crew 169 on a case by case basis and that appropriate proof of insurance is provided, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Site Walk – Deerfield Farm: Melynda Naples was present and described the USDA NRCS funded rotational grazing project on the farm that is nearly completed. Discussion ensued about lack of sufficient communication between Melynda and the Commission. Melynda submitted a list of improvements to the Deerfield Farm property that included items that have been done as well as proposed items. There were no costs associated with the items listed. The request to make future improvements on the property should include graphical documentation of the improvements along with estimated costs. Lease discussion ensued. There are some maintenance items that are expected to be covered under the lease agreement. Items not covered by the lease may be applied as a credit against the lease payment if approved by the Commission and the Town of Durham. Melynda expressed concerns over the possible planting of trees on the Pent Road open space if the Town receives the “America the Beautiful” grant. The planting of trees 40 feet into the field will reduce the amount of hay she can harvest. This concern will be revisited should the Town receive the grant. Rebecca Elwood from NRCS would like to schedule a Pasture Walk/Farm Tour at Deerfield Farm. Melynda will let the Commission know when a date has been set.

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Kim Garvis, Town Clerk	
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK, DURHAM, CONNECTICUT	

2008-2009 Hunting Lottery: The closing date for receiving applications is August 15, 2008. The picks will be made on August 26, 2008 and the permits will be executed at the regular September meeting.

Site Development Plan Review - Pond Maintenance - Johnson Lane - Stonebridge Crossing: No comment from the Conservation Commission.

Status of Proposed Open Space Acquisitions & Update on the New Phase of Open Space Acquisition Program: Rick Huntley followed up with Land Acquisition at DEP about the Czaja property. The letter submitted by John Corona is not sufficient for any further action to be taken. An application needs to be submitted to get the offer of the land to the State into the DEP Land Acquisition process. Land Acquisition is supposed to email the necessary form to John Corona's office to submit. There are 2 other parcels being offered: 4.62 acres on Guilford Road (Thomas Flynn) and in lieu of taxes, 14 acres on New Haven Road (Fulton Forbes, Inc.). Brian will get more information to Commission members before the September meeting on these two parcels.

Open Space Issues Reports – Dead Hill Road & Creampot Road Locks & Gates, Signs, Security, Maintenance at Deerfield Farms, Other: The new pin has been misplaced and needs to be ordered again from Boudreau Welding. Bob Melvin has placed the markers for the well on Whites Farm. Bob Melvin got a quote from Nature Works for 3 trees at a cost of \$1,050. The 3 suggested species are Heritage Birch, Sweet Bay Magnolia and Swamp White Oak. Bob Melvin, seconded by Joe Dattilo to purchase 3 memorial trees from Nature Works for \$1,050, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously. Joe Dattilo brought a sample plaque for trees in the memorial planting area. Discussion ensued. The Commission is interested in a single marker that has a map of the memorial trees, species, who the planting is for and date of dedication. The design would have to be such that the map could be removed and updated.

Open forum with Property Stewards – 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: No reports from the stewards. Rick Huntley went to Curtis Woodlands and noted that the Russian Olive/Autumn Olive is taking over the field. There was discussion as to whether the entire field should be cleared or not.

Chair's Report – New Business – None; Old Business – White's Farm Survey, Correspondence, Czaja Property, Giuseppe Caturano Greenhouses; Open Space Calendar, 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). Replace 2 maples with water tolerant trees in the spring of '08: Nothing additional that has not been discussed under previous agenda items.

Other Business: none

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Huntley
Recording Secretary