

**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
**Conservation Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, September 9, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 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 August minutes:** Bill LaFlamme, seconded by Ralph Chase to approve the August 12, 2008 minutes as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed with 1 abstention by Casey Cordes.

**Amendments to Agenda / Approval of September Agenda:** Joe Dattilo, seconded by Ralph Chase to approve the agenda as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Payment of Bills:** \$37.50 to Pam Huntley for secretarial services. Casey Cordes, seconded by Ralph Chase to approve payment of the bill as presented, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Session:** Richard Parmelee was present to give favorable remarks about the Deerfield Farm operation. Melynda and Deerfield Farm are great assets to the Town of Durham. He also commented that he is personally not in favor of locked gates on open space properties, but understands why it is done. The Commission understands his point and is not restricting foot traffic, but is trying to curtail vehicle traffic, especially ATVs.

**2008-2009 Hunting Lottery:** The hunting permits were executed at the close of the meeting.

**Deerfield Farm – Melynda Naples:** Melynda Naples was present and updated the Commission on some cost estimates for improvements on the farm. She is still waiting for a couple of quotes for painting the barn. The cost for paint to paint the barn herself would cost \$1,400. In response to thinking about the value Deerfield Farm provides the Town, Melynda stated that a similar operation in Redding charges \$10 per child with a minimum of \$100 for field trips to their farm. Melynda is not interested in charging groups for field trips. She has had approximately 13 groups come to the farm over the past year. The hatch on the silo needs to be closed and Melynda believes she can get that done. She will schedule a farm tour in October or November. *Wired* magazine is doing an article on farming and used Deerfield Farm for a photo shoot. The Farmer's Market is doing well and they are looking to make a few changes for next year.

**Curtis Woodlands – Sheehan Michael:** Sheehan Michael presented his final proposal for his Eagle Scout project on the Curtis Woodlands property. The project includes clearing the gate entrance, mow the field, removal of Russian olive from the field and edges of the field, move the trail out of the swamp area and to build a kiosk for the entrance. Materials for the kiosk would cost \$400. The cost for herbicide of \$120 is being donated by John Deere. The herbicide will be applied by a licensed applicator and the area will be properly posted. The Russian olive will either be chipped or brought to the transfer station for disposal. The project will start this fall and be completed in spring 2009. Ralph Chase, seconded by Casey Cordes to approve Sheehan Michael's Eagle Scout project on Curtis Woodlands with a cost of up to \$500 for materials, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Status of Proposed Open Space Acquisitions & Update on the New Phase of Open Space Acquisition Program - Czaja Property, Kosienki Property, Fulton Forbes Property & Flynn Property:** Brian Ameche distributed assessor maps of the 4 parcels under discussion. A site walk of all the properties will be scheduled for some weekend after the Durham Fair.

**Open Space Issues Reports – Dead Hill Road & Creampot Road Locks & Gates, Signs, Security, Maintenance at Deerfield Farms, Other:** Bob Melvin ordered 3 trees from Nature Works. The trees will be planted in October.

It was suggested to order one more tree to replace another maple that is dying. The 3 suggested species are Birch, Virginia Magnolia, and Swamp White Oak. A tulip tree is also a possibility. The new pin has been misplaced and needs to be ordered again from Boudreau Welding by Rick Huntley. The third gate still needs to be installed and Ralph Chase will follow up with Public Works.

**Open forum with Property Stewards – Whites Farm – Jack Stahl; Pent Road (Deerfield Farm) – Melynda Naples; Howd Road – Matt Reed; Pisgah Mountain - Andy Golschneider with Venture Crew 169; Jim Smigal with BSA Troop 27 and Christina Costas; Creampot Valley – George & Irene Roberts; Curtis Woodlands – Rob Williams; Portion of Wimler Property with Public Access – Dick Porter; and Sawmill Road – Ray Koba:** Luke Backus, representing BSA Troop 27, requested clarification of the stewardship role and the location of the area. The commission gave him an overview of the role plus a handout from Ralph Chase and showed the area on a map. He will bring the information back to the Troop Committee for further discussion so they can decide as to whether or not Troop 27 can fulfill the role of steward for Pisgah Mountain. No reports from property stewards other than Rob Williams wondering when the field would get mowed.

**Chair's Report – New Business – None; Old Business -White's Farm Survey, Correspondence, Caturano Property, Open Space Calendar, Memorial Plantings Marker for Existing Memorial Plantings as follows: 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) planned for 2008. Replacement of 2 diseased maples cut down with water tolerant trees (TBD):** The monuments marking 500 feet from a structure have been placed on White's Farm. There was discussion about the placement of "no discharge of firearms" signs. Posts will be driven next to the monuments and the signs will be put on the posts. Ralph Chase believes he has the signs. There was confusion about the Caturano property – whether it was a piece of land being given to the Town or a conservation easement. Commission members believe it to be a conservation easement.

**Other Business:** none

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Huntley  
Recording Secretary