

TOWN OF DURHAM
Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 14, 2016
7:00 at the Durham Public Library

Members present: Carl Dahlman (7:15), Rick Huntley, Bill LaFlamme, Lucy Meigs, Josh Miller and Bill Ward

Excused: Jon Herzig, Bob Melvin and Bob Thody

Call to Order/Roll Call: Rick Huntley called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

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

Approval of May 2016 regular meeting minutes: Bill LaFlamme, seconded by Josh Miller to approve the May 2016 regular meeting minutes as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed with one abstention by Bill Ward.

Payment of Bills: Bill Ward, seconded by Bill LaFlamme to approve payment of \$20 to Pam Huntley for secretarial services, made a motion. Motion passed with one abstention by Rick Huntley.

Public Session: none

Use of White Farm – Parking for 4 H Fair – August 5, 6 & 7: Bill LaFlamme, seconded by Bill Ward to approve the use of White's Farm for overflow parking for the 4H Fair provided appropriate insurance is submitted and weather permitting, made a motion. A representative from the group will contact Bob Thody prior to the event to ensure the field is dry enough to use for parking. Motion passed with one abstention by Carl Dahlman.

Property Steward Reports/Parcel Status Updates

- Whites Farm – Bill LaFlamme: Bill LaFlamme reported that the area has been mowed and the split rail fence has been fixed. People are driving around the posts to park closer to the brook. Rick Huntley read a letter to the group to request that Public Works remove the existing 6 x 6 posts as appropriate and to install 8 x 8 post and rails at sites to be determined by a subcommittee (Bill LaFlamme, Rick Huntley). Bill LaFlamme, seconded by Bill Ward to approve Rick Huntley's letter to Public Works with the addition of having the haul road raked and seeded to make the area field again, made a motion. Discussion ensued. Bill Ward suggested signage in the area to keep vehicles off the grass. Motion passed unanimously. There was discussion about the grassland habitat for birds. The Commission previously passed a motion to allow mowing after July 15th. There was a suggestion to leave the area around the pump house alone until after August 15th. There was consensus to have Rick Huntley ask Joe Greenbacker to leave a 25-50 feet buffer around the pump house. Rick Huntley stated that Saturday, June 12 was supposed to be the demonstration of the speaker system from the CATO rocket club. Rick didn't hear back from the club as to a time for the demonstration, so members of the commission or the adjacent property owners were not at the launch. There was consensus from the group for Rick to email the CATO rocket club to let them know that they cannot use a speaker system until the commission attends a demonstration.
- Pent Road/Parmelee Hill Road/David Road – Melynda Naples: Rick Huntley has talked briefly with Laura Francis reminding that they need to talk about either a new lease or renewal of the current lease. Rick found information about other public farms operating on town properties across the state. Melynda told Rick that she has been contacted by the organization Two Coyotes which is an outdoor education organization. They are interested in possibly teaming with her for additional educational opportunities on the property. Rick has had thoughts about forming a subcommittee with representatives from the Conservation Commission, Agriculture Commission and any other interested persons to determine what the town really wants the land used for as a farm. Josh Miller asked if there was anything in the current lease about performance with regard to maintenance of the land. He suggested that type of criteria be included in the next lease. There is a straight pipe discharge running out of the barn. Rick read a draft email regarding a toilet facility in the barn and the waste water issue. He is recommending spending up to \$1,000 for Brian Curtis to facilitate getting the waste water issue resolved. Rick Huntley, seconded by Bill Ward to send the email to Laura Francis and to authorize up to \$1,000 for Brian Curtis to facilitate resolving the waste water issue, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Howd Road – Josh Miller: Josh Miller reported there are no issues. The area has not been mowed yet. The berms and Japanese knotweed need mowing. Rick Huntley has an electronic draft of the Howd Road lease that will be circulated

for comment. The commission may wish to add additional criteria such as mowing the berms. Any legitimate criteria about land management and policy needs to be made clear.

- Pisgah Mountain and Chalker Brook Valley – Lucy Meigs & Rick Huntley: Lucy Meigs reported that there is a need to enlarge the parking area at Cream Pot Road. Rick Huntley has asked Public Works to move the current gate on Cream Pot Road to just south of the parking lot. Rick also ask Public Works to install the gate stored at Public Works on the woods road that goes up from Pisgah Road and move the boulders and stumps to the existing ATV and dirt bike track that is on Pisgah Road. Rick read a letter to the adjacent property owners about limiting access to the property by locking gates. Lucy Meigs commented that the Ericksens should be asked to move the boulders to block the road continuing through their property because people are going around and onto other roads. Rick is still in the process of blazing trails. It has been determined that the Mattabesett Trail crossing Cream Pot Road to the Selectmen's Stones will be blazed yellow. The trail from the parking lot to the junction of the Mattabesett Trail will be $\frac{2}{3}$ blue over $\frac{1}{3}$ yellow. Rick attended the Inland Wetland Commission meeting to present the proposal for a parking area at the end of Dead Hill Road. An application needs to be submitted because it is in the wetland review area. Rick is asking Brian Curtis to look at area for additional parking other than what is currently proposed.
- Curtis Woodlands – Charles Ingold & Sheehan Michael: no issues to report.
- Wimler Property – Dick Porter: no report.
- Sawmill Road – Ray Koba: no report.

Old and New Business

Status of proposed open-space regulations revisions: no update.

Status of Review of Plan of C&D: The plan will be submitted later than June 30, 2016.

Index of all open areas as mandated by the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 7-131a (b): Carl Dahlman stated that the information as presented in the Plan of Conservation and Development may satisfy this mandate.

Status of Curtis Woodlands Comprehensive Management Plan: no update.

Website Content for Conservation Commission: no update.

Report of Co-Chairmen: Rick Huntley reported that the parking area for Otte Meadows at the corner of David Road and Parmelee Hill Road is completed. Rick reviewed the status of expenditures to date. There was consensus to allow several expenditures. Josh Miller will get quotes for clearing of the west edge of the field at Curtis Woodlands not to exceed \$2,000. The hunting lottery cards need to have Howd Road added. Bill LaFlamme will look into getting new cards printed. Lucy Meigs will get tree sign hangers not to exceed \$100.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Huntley
Recording Secretary