

## **DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

**April 8, 2004**

Present: Lee Alexander (Chair), Dwight Baldwin, Rich Hallett, Duane Hyde, Bill Skinner, Peter Smith and Kevin Webb

Absent: None

Members of the Public: Tony Federer

### **1. New Business/Presentations**

a. Tony Federer and Rich Hallett presented an overview of the power of GIS mapping for the Town of Durham using ARCVIEW. Overlays of the tax map, soil types, wetlands, transportation network, Town lands, etc. are possible and it is felt that this tool would be a wonderful addition to the work of the Commission. *To this end, the Commission urges that the Town purchase a digital projector so that all computerized information (GIS, pictures, etc) can be projected town meetings as needed. Lee Alexander will send a memo to Todd Selig urging such a purchase.*

### **2. Ongoing Business**

a. Wetland Applications – One wetland application was received for the replacement of a cresote retaining wall with a stonewall on Little Bay. Also requested was the rebuilding of a gazebo. The Commission believes there is no problem with this project and has so notified the NH DES.

b. Mill Pond – Bill Skinner, Julian Smith and Dwight Baldwin met with Mike Lynch to discuss the status of the project. The University is still trying to assess how much spoil they will take. To partly answer this question, Mike and NH Soils are trying to set up a meeting with Michael Sills of the NH DES to see what limitations might exist with regard to disposal of the spoil on land where the University is trying to develop a recreational field. A portion of the land, however, lies on a 100-year floodplain and it is unsure whether DES would approve use of the spoil at this site. Once we get the answer from DES, we can move ahead with finalization and the submission of the draft Wetland Permit Application.

c. Land Protection Working Group – (1) The “Policy for Acquiring Legal Interest in Conservation/Open Space” document was endorsed by Town Council with minor rewording and has gone to the Town Attorney. After receiving our attorney’s input, the document is expected to be approved by Council at its next meeting. (2) The DCC approved the expenditures of funds to pay for the appraisal of 5 tracts of land that have the potential of either being sold or having a conservation easement placed on them for the purpose of conserving these open spaces. A motion from Rich Hallett and seconded by Bill Skinner on this issue was: “The Durham Conservation Commission endorses the expenditure of no more that \$16,000 for land appraisal of 5 parcels of land recommended by the Land Protection Working Group using funds from the Current Use-Change Tax”. The motion passed unanimously. (3) The DCC then voted to enter into a non-public session on a motion from Duane Hyde and seconded by Peter Smith for the purpose of discussing the specifics of a large tract of land that the Town might be interested in

seeing preserved because of its scenic and natural characteristics. The vote to do so was unanimous. **(4)** After the discussion in closed session, the DCC voted unanimously to seal the minutes of the closed session.

d. Volunteer Stewards-Trail Maps - Tony Fedder distributed samples of the colored trail maps for all Town land that will soon be available on the web. The maps will be a real addition to those who enjoy walking these public lands!

e. Oyster River Study – Lee Alexander reported that Judith Spang met with the study group and that the third phase of the study dealing with the development of a digital model of sewage effluent dispersal in the River has been completed. A tentative date for a public informational meeting has been set for the second week of June.

### **3. Board and Committee Reports**

a. Town Council – **(1)** The Town has an unusually large and talented group of people who have volunteered to fill the three alternate vacancies on the Conservation Commission. Commissioners were urged to write letters of support for any of the five who have applied. **(2)** Town Council voted to release the stub of land at the end of Fairchild Drive from public servitude and to give it to the Fairchild Neighborhood Association..

b. Planning Board – No new applications dealing with issues relevant to the Conservation Commission. The biggest project now on the books is the Spruce Woods expansion.

c. Lamprey River and Oyster River Watershed Associations – There was nothing to report for the Oyster River Watershed Association. Land protection issues in the Lamprey Watershed were discussed in the closed session mentioned above.

### **4. Other Business**

a. Town Land's Use Policy – No new action was discussed.

b. Overlays Districts for Town Master Plan – Kevin Webb reported that there is on going effort by members of the Planning Board to update the overlays for wetland conservation, shoreland protection and aquifer protection.

c. Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) – Tony Fedder has volunteered to be Durham's point of contact with the SRPC.

d. "Prime Wetlands Designation" map – No action was taken on this issue.

### **5. Administrative Actions**

a. The minutes of the March 11, 2004 meeting were distributed.

b. There was no correspondence.

c. The next meeting of the DCC will be May 13, 2004. Dwight Baldwin has asked to be excused.

d. New officers for the 2004 –2005 year were unanimously approved. They are: Chair - Dwight Baldwin; Vice-chair – Duane Hyde; Secretary – Lee Alexander

e. Task leader assignments will be made at a following meeting

**Adjournment** – Approximately 10:00 p.m.

