

Durham Conservation Commission

Minutes to Meeting – Draft

12 January 2006

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

Members present: Lee Alexander, Dwight Baldwin, Cynthia Belowski, Duane Hyde, Richard Ozenich, Peter Smith, George Thomas, Robin Vranicar

Land Protection Working Group Attendee (LPWG): Dea Brickner-Wood

1. New Business/Presentations

a. Blaine Cox, Business Administrator, for the Oyster River Cooperative School District attended to discuss two parcels of land, totaling 22 acres, on Orchard Drive in Durham that the school district wishes to sell. The land abuts UNH's East Foss Farm parcel and has frontage on the Oyster River. Mr. Cox wanted to know if the town was interested in purchasing the lots for conservation purposes, or if the DCC had recommendations relative to the disposition of the property. Lee Alexander motioned that the DCC ask the LPWG to review the property relative to option #2 in a letter from Mr. Paul Gasowski, dated December 3, 2005, which made recommendations regarding the disposition of this property, or to make any other recommendations as they deemed appropriate. Motion passed. Duane Hyde will arrange a site visit.

2. Minutes to December 8, 2005 meeting

a. Approved with minor changes.

3. Ongoing Business

a. Wetlands applications – none

b. Mill Pond – no new developments

c. Land Protection Working Group –

Duane Hyde and Dea Brickner-Wood discussed a Memorandum, dated January 10, 2006, from Mr. Hyde to the DCC. The memorandum recommended that the Town expend conservation/bond funds to purchase a conservation easement on the Fogg property located at the corner of Mill Rd. and Packers Falls Rd. The memorandum also recommended that the Town apply for a NHDES Water Supply Land Grant to assist in the purchase of the easement. The LPWG was seeking DCC endorsement of the recommendation before presenting to the Durham Town Council January 23, 2006. A summation of the details is as follows:

- The conservation easement is proposed for 86 acres and will ensure that public pedestrian access will be provided to the area south of the NET&T easement. Peter Smith suggested that the LPWG ask the family for consideration of as much public access as possible.
- The conservation easement was appraised at \$910,000 in 2004. Additional transaction costs will result in a total budget of \$927,500 for the project. The Town can apply to the NHDES Water Supply Land Grant program to cover up to 25% of the project cost (\$235,000). The remainder, \$692,500, would be contributed by the Town.
- A formal application for the NHDES Water Supply Land Grant is due February 3rd and requires that both the buyer (Town) and Seller (the Fogg brothers) sign the proposal indicating their commitment to the completion of the project.

A motion was made that the DCC endorse the proposal of the LPWG to proceed with the land conservation project on the Fogg property, and recommend to the Town Council that it:

1) Authorizes the Town Administrator to submit a NHDES Water Supply Land Grant application in the amount of \$235,000.

2) If awarded, that the Town Council authorizes the payment of funds from appropriate sources in the amount of \$692,500 to complete the purchase.

The motion passed. There will be a site walk with NHDES on January 19th at 10 am.

d. Town Land-Use/Trails Subcommittee – the grant proposal to support construction of 500 feet of bog bridges in the Longmarsh Preserve is ready. The Town Council expressed its approval in a recent meeting. A letter drafted by Dwight Baldwin expressing the DCC support for the project was approved.

e. Wetlands issues – none

4. Board and Committee Reports

a. Town Council – Peter Smith reported that:

- An alternate member to the Durham Conservation Commission was approved – welcome Robin Vranicar.
- As of January 1st the Town's GIS person is located in the Town Office in order to be more available to all departments.
- Three of the Town Councilors terms are expiring, and at least two will not be running again. He encouraged all to consider running.

b. Planning Board – Richard Ozenich reported that:

- There has been no activity with regards to building applications. UNH will have 3 next month.
- The board is pushing to get the zoning changes through before the elections.

Richard asked the DCC's opinion regarding a wording change to the wetland overlay district ordinance which limits activity in the district to non-motorized activities "**except when snow covered**". The DCC members felt this change was acceptable.

c. ORWA and LRAC – Cynthia Belowski reported that:

- David Cedarholm, the Town's engineer attended a LRAC meeting to ask for recommendations on how to minimize the impact to flora and fauna during 2-3 de-watering events of the Lamprey River that will be necessary to repair the Wiswall Dam.
- He also discussed his concerns with the Army Corp fish passage project.

5. Other Business

a. Jackson's Landing Update – Dwight Baldwin reported that the project is moving ahead. Subcommittees need to be established. The next meeting will involve planning for a public forum.

6. Administrative

a. Correspondence – none

b. Next meeting is February 9, 2006

7. Adjournment: 9:32 pm.