

DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes to Meeting
9 March 2006

Meeting called to order at 7:05pm

Members Present: Dwight Baldwin, Cynthia Belowski, Beryl Harper, Jim Hellen and Robin Vranicar
Excused Absence: Duane Hyde, Wendy Fogg, Richard Ozenich, Peter Smith and George Thomas
Public Attendees:

1. New Business/Presentations

a. Mill Pond – Mike Lynch (Durham Public Works) provided an update on the status of Mill Pond. The agreement was reviewed by staff of the Army Reserve 368th Engineer Combat Battalion and found to be administratively complete. A confirmation letter will be sent to the Town passing the agreement onto the local Army Reserve Unit in Somersworth. Tentatively, the project could be conducted in 2008 since no projects are planned for 2006 and training exercises are already scheduled for 2007. Since the usual dates for training exercises are during the summer months, there may have to be some adjustments in regard to the 1 Sep – 31 Oct dredging dates on the Wetlands Permit with NH DES. The Wetlands Permit expires on 24 March 2010. Arrangements have been made to use the Laroche Farm as the disposal site for the 11,030 cubic yards of dredging spoils.

b. Spruce Woods Development – Jack Farrell gave a brief presentation on the status of Spruce Woods. The new Town Engineer is not in favor of a sewer line on Mast Road. If it has to be a septic system, the site plan will have to be changed and will likely involve a larger “footprint” of site development. However, no final site plan has been developed. Following some discussion by DCC members, it was pointed out that the current site plan (with sewer connection) reflects the outcome of a two-year consultative process. It accommodated the recommendations of DCC, the Planning Board, and Town Council as to the layout of the housing units and access roads. Chair will contact the Town Administrator to express concern about this precedent, and the potential for a wrong signal to be sent to developers regarding the benefits of a consultative process.

c. Oyster River School District (ORSC) Playing Fields in Lee – Magie Bogle gave a brief presentation on concerns about the use of chemicals/pesticides and the possible leaching into the Durham Town Well in Lee. She urged that “organic” soil treatments be used. Chair will send a Memo to ORSC and recommend that an oversight group be formed. Potentially, this could become a “model green field.”

2. Minutes of 9 February 2006 - Approved with minor corrections.

3. Ongoing Business

a. Wetlands applications – No new applications were filed. Lee Alexander mentioned that he met with Robin Vranicar to turn-over responsibly for wetland application oversight.

b. Mill Pond – (see report by Mike Lynch)

c. Land Protection Working Group – Duane Hyde was not present, but had provided a brief e-mail report to the Chair. Fogg Property was selected for the DES Grant. Draft easement for Emery Farm is nearly complete. The Easement Baseline Report for the Merrick Property has been drafted and is being reviewed by Mr. Merrick.

d. Town Land Use/Trails Subcommittee – Jim Hellen reported that his group had met with Dorrie Wigen (NH DES Wetlands) regarding some concern about an osprey nest in the vicinity of the proposed Long Marsh Road catwalk. But, the nest is 200yds and away and should not be a problem. There is some interest in implementing an “Adopt a Trail” in the Lamprey River – Doe Farm – Packers Falls, but there are some issues that will need to be addressed.

Board and Committee Reports

a. Town Council – Peter Smith was not present, but a copy of an e-mail from him was distributed where he mentioned that Town Council approved UNH’s continued use of the Boathouse at Jackson’s Landing.

b. Planning Board – no report

5. Other Business

a. Jackson’s Landing update – Thirty persons attended a public meeting on 28 Feb 06. Five main issues were discussed and five Working Groups will prepare recommendations. Chair will send further information.

b. Focus: Tamworth – Chair brought up a matter that is occurring in Tamworth regarding the siting of a racetrack. Apparently, Tamworth has established wetlands/zoning regulations that are more restrictive than the NH State DES. NH Supreme Court is considering this matter. It was moved and agreed (unanimous) that a letter be sent by Chair expressing support for local town wetlands/zoning regulations.

c. HB 1495 – This NH Bill would establish a setback of 1320’ (1/4th mile) from wetland watercourses for new landfill sites. . It was moved and agreed (unanimous) that Chair will send a letter in support.

6. Administrative

a. Correspondence –

b. Next meeting – 13 April 2006

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

Prepared by Lee Alexander