

DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of February 8, 2007 Meeting (DRAFT)

Members Present: Dwight Baldwin, Cynthia Belowski, Beryl Harper, Jim Hellen, Duane Hyde

Members with excused absence: Richard Ozenich, Peter Smith, George Thomas
Members Absent: Robin Vranicar

Public Attendees: Julian Smith, five UNH students

Chairman Dwight Baldwin called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm

1. New Business/Presentations: None
2. a. Acceptance of minutes of Dec. 14, 2006: The Dec. 14, 2006 Minutes were accepted with the following changes:
 1. Under #1 New Business/Presentations change "Great Bay Estuarine Research Center" to "Great Bay Discovery Center".
 2. Under item 3.c., change the first sentence to two sentences: "D. Hyde reported that NOAA approved funding for the purchase of the Beaudette Property and the conservation easement on the Langley Farm. Payment was received on Dec. 13, 2006". The next sentence should read, "It was also noted that the Goss family which owns property on SR 155-----"
 3. The 12/14/06 Minutes were submitted by Robin Vranicar and Dwight Baldwin.
 4. A motion to approve the Minutes was made by J. Hellen and seconded by D. Hyde.
- b. Acceptance of Minutes of Jan. 11, 2007.
 1. Under Public Attendees change "forester" to "resident".
 2. Under Timber harvesting on Town Owned Land: second paragraph after "Charlie Moreno" insert "as a Licensed Forester for preparing forest management plans for town owned property".
 3. Change "Acceptance of minutes of Dec. 9, 2006" to "Dec. 14, 2006".
 4. Under Planning Board.

Fourth paragraph: in the second sentence insert "it as two" after "considers". Change the third sentence to read "The number of units has decreased to 78 but the age limit has been reduced so 80% of the units are for people over 55 of age and 20% for people over 30 years of age".
 5. A motion to approve the 1/11/07 Minutes as corrected/amended was made by B. Harper and seconded by J. Hellen. Passed unanimously.
3. Ongoing Business.
 - a. Wetlands applications: None. Chairman D. Baldwin asked the DCC members to introduce themselves and invited the UNH students to do the

same. Also, Julian Smith. The UNH students are involved with conservation/environmental /natural resources studies. D. Baldwin explained the Wetland Application process to the students.

b. Mill Pond: Nothing new to report. D. Baldwin explained the project to the students.

c. Land Protection Working Group:

1. D. Hyde reported that The Nature Conservancy , on behalf of the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, closed on a conservation easement of approximately 17 acres on Royall's Cove and 3.1 acres on Little Bay located at the intersection of Back River Road and Route 4 in Durham. The land is owned by Jerry and Dotty Smith. Also, two conservation easements over land owned by the Smith's children, each easement about 10.25 acres, were acquired. These two easements include the uplands across route 4 and Back River Road from the Jerry and Dottie Smith easement.
2. Duane reported that Adam Fogg, one of the Fogg Brothers, has been working on the subdivision plan that will subdivide the lots excluded from the proposed 86 acre conservation easement on the Fogg property. The Fogg conservation easement is currently under contract and will close after subdivision approval from the town. When Adam prepared the subdivision plan, the lots excluded from the easement had to increase in size due to Durham's Zoning Ordinance requirements. The increase in lot size caused the shape of the easement area to change. Duane showed the subdivision plan with the reconfigured easement area and noted that the result has more wetlands protected and more Mill Road frontage conserved. The Fogs also plan to sell the old farm house at the corner of Mill Road and Packers Falls Road. The plan shown during the hearings for the conservation easement showed the farm house on a separate lot, but due to Durham's Zoning Ordinance requirements, the farm house lot size had to be increased. Therefore, Durham will have two easements instead of one. One easement will encompass the larger "Fogg Farm" tract and another approximately 2.5 acre easement on the farm house lot. The DCC agreed to proceed forward with the revised plans as shown by Duane.

d. Town Land-Use/ Trails Subcommittee:

1. B. Harper reported the subcommittee and J. Smith walked the two trails going north from the west side of Longmarsh Road just before the first beaver dam. A way to connect the two trails on the northern boundary of Durham property was determined, based on wetland/potential erosion issues/and town boundaries. Blue survey tape was placed to mark the future trail that will connect the two trails. A crew of volunteers will clear the trail.
2. Julian Smith reported he and G. Thomas walked from the town Transfer Station to the northern end of the two trails noted in #1 above via Horsehide Creek. There is the potential of establishing a trail from the Transfer Station to Longmarsh Road.
3. D. Hyde cautioned that great care must be taken when determining

where to cut a trail. Issues such as wetlands, possible erosion, ecology, sensitive nesting sites, etc. must be considered.

4. Todd Selig, town manager, received an e-mail from a concerned birder expressing his concern that snowmobiles are on Colby Marsh close to a nesting Great-Horned Owl. The young can hatch as early as late February or March. The DCC felt that the Great-Horned Owl has nested there for years and has not been driven away by snowmobiles. Any attempt to establish, monitor, and enforce a "Safe Zone" to protect the nest would be impossible. A discussion was held whether snowmobiles are allowed on town land. D. Baldwin will send a letter to Todd Selig asking him to clarify whether ATVs and snowmobiles are allowed on town land. Also, D. Hyde pointed out that beaver and human-made dams create a "Great Pond" which, by NH State law, are open to the public. One privately owned parcel of land borders Colby Marsh.
5. Chairman D. Baldwin thanked D. Hyde for presenting to the Town Council DCC's position re: Zoning Ordinance Provisions with Regard to Forestry in Durham.

e. Oversight of Town-owned land and conservation.

C. Belowski will continue to research deeds of Town-owned land to determine what activities are allowed and/or restricted

4. Board and Committee Reports.

a. Town Council. No report.

b. Planning Board. No report.

c. Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC) C Belowski announced that on March 1 there will be a joint meeting of the DCC and the Durham Parks and Recreation Committee at the Durham Police Station. Members of the LRAC will make a presentation re: their work and the opportunities for cooperation with towns that border the Lamprey River. Also, Joanne Gloade, TNC, will present a plan to connect various conservation land with a trail from the Longmarsh Road to Great Bay. The Town Land-Use/Trails Subcommittee will walk with Joanne Gloade Feb. 21 from Longmarsh Road to Great Bay looking to see how the trails can be improved and connected.

5. Other Business.

a. Microbial Source Tracking. C. Belowski reported that the Town Clerk is giving dog owners the "Scoop the Poop" letter as they register their dogs. She will ask the Town Clerk for any feedback re: the letter.

b. Timber Harvest on Town-owned Land.

1. C. Belowski stated that Doe Farm has a Management Plan that includes timber harvesting. She emphasized that timber harvesting is only a part of an overall plan.

2. D. Baldwin would like to set a goal for this year of implementing two

Management Plans: Doe Farm and Longmarsh. He would like to follow-up on this after he steps down as chair of the DCC this spring.

3. An extensive discussion was held of forest management practices in Durham.
 - c. Oyster River Carbon Challenge (ORCC). D. Baldwin reported that an organizational meeting of about 25 people on the Steering Committee was held. A lot of enthusiasm and energy. The ORCC includes Durham Madbury, and Lee. Julia Dundorf and Denise Blaha are pushing for a state-wide carbon challenge. They want to raise over \$100,000 this year for salaries and expenses. D. Baldwin is on the Steering Committee. The ORCC is targeting homeowners, municipalities, and businesses. The Durham Town Council voted to place the NH Climate Change Resolution on the March ballot. The Resolution urges the President, Congress, NH, and Durham to support effective actions to address the issue of climate change. It was suggested the Durham Weekly Update could include a "Tip of the week" on environmental issues.
6. Administration.
- a. A work session was scheduled for March 17 at 9:00 am at the Town Office to go over old DCC files and determine what can be thrown away, better organized, etc.. Volunteers are D, Baldwin, Beryl Harper, and D. Hyde.
 - b. Next meeting is March 8, 2007.
 - c. Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Hellen