

DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes to Meeting

May 10, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

Present: Dwight Baldwin, Cynthia Belowski, Robin Vranicar (arrived late), Beryl Harper, Jim Hellen, Duane Hyde, George Thomas, Julian Smith and Peter Smith

Unexcused absence: Richard Ozenich

1. New Business/Presentations

- a. Mr. Kimball formally asked the DCC if there were any additional questions that the Commission might have regarding his plans to build an office park/rental units on Strafford Ave. He also presented his engineering drawings for those who could not attend the earlier site visit.
- b. David Cedarholm, Town Engineer, presented information concerning the City's plans to address water conservation issues and withdrawal requirements from the Lamprey River. Durham now has a 401 Certificate from the NHDES to withdraw up to 700 gals/min using a variable speed pump. This Certificate allows a maximum drawdown of the reservoir of 6 inches. The Town would like to increase this to 12 inches.

Durham has an established water emergency plan which incorporates three levels of stress to the system: (1) **Drought Watch** in which people are advised about the water shortage and the need to conserve; (2) **Drought Warning** in which specific prohibitions on water use are specified; and (3) **Water Emergency** where the water level is 6 inches below the lip of the Wiswall Dam and 1 foot below the flash boards at the water intake on the Oyster River. Interestingly, however, there are no additional steps that the citizenry must take at the emergency level.

The town and University plan to embark this year on a concentrated effort to implement water conservation efforts and to monitor the integrity of the water distribution system. It is hoped that this will result in reduced water consumption and thus a decreased need to pump water from the Lamprey and Oyster Rivers. Plans are also progressing to install a production well at Spruce Hole to augment the Town's existing surface and ground water sources. The DCC strongly endorsed these steps.

Limited discussion followed on how the DCC might help the Department of Public Works in the area of making the town citizenry more aware of the need to save water. The development of a brochure to be sent out with water bills was suggested. It would highlight the sources of our water and the need to conserve and protect our water resources.

2. The **draft minutes** of the April 12, 2007 were accepted with only minor corrections.

3. Ongoing Business

- a. There were no new wetland applications to consider. But George Thomas did bring the Committee up to date on actions taken by the NHDES on previous wetland applications that we had considered.
- b. There was nothing new to report on the dredging of Mill Pond.
- c. Duane Hyde reported on several new items. (1) The Fogg property has not yet closed due to delays at several levels beyond the Town's control; (2) The Goss family is considering the placement of conservation easements on their property. (3) Plans are underway for development of the Roselawn Farm property that straddles the Durham/Madbury town line.
- d. Marking of the boundary line/trails and plans for construction of a new kiosk are well under way for the Longmarsh Preserve and will be completed this summer.
- e. Cynthia Belowski reported that she would like the DCC to move forward on formulating stewardship guidelines for Doe Farm. She will send out an e-mail to determine the best time for a site visit by the DCC to begin this process.
- f. The Mill Pond Advisory Committee had its first meeting with the American Institute of Architects. At each of the meetings there is discussion of the need to improve the condition of College Brook. Julian would like to set up a site visit to the Mill Plaza and agreed to find a date that would be best for all.

4. Board and Committee Reports

- a. Julian Smith reported that the first goal of the Town Council is the preservation of open land.
- b. There was no report from the Planning Board
- c. See 1a. above for details concerning the Lamprey River discussion.

5. Other Business

- a. See 3.e above
- b. See 1 above
- c. Dwight Baldwin displayed a map of Jackson's Landing showing the likely position of the new trail system to be constructed using a \$40,000 50/50 matching grant received from the NH Division of Parks and Recreation. The Town will have to provide the \$20,000 match with in kind service and cash. If the in kind service does not total \$20,000, there would be a need for cash and Baldwin suggested that that might come from the Land Use Change Tax account administered by the DCC. After some discussion as

to whether this account could be used to help pay for trail construction, it was generally agreed that it could be used.

- d. Considerable discussion followed on the DCC's position on the Kimball project on Strafford Ave. As there was still uncertainty with regard to the effectiveness of the proposed subsurface water retention basins and whether we should OK construction in the wetland setback area, it was decided that we meet on Tuesday evening, May 15th, 2007 to further discuss this issue.
- e. A work session will be held on Sunday afternoon, June 3rd at 1:00 on the Merrick property. The details concerning the placement of a brass plaque was delay until Dwight Baldwin learned what exactly Tom Merrick would like. Also planned at that time would be an informal picnic.

6. Administrative

- a. Next meeting will be June 14, 2007

7. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m..

Submitted:

Dwight Baldwin