

Approved - March 13, 2008

DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes of Thursday February 14, 2008
Durham Town Office – Council Chambers
7:00 PM

Regular Members Present: Julian Smith, George Thomas, Beryl Harper, Stephen Roberts,
Duane Hyde, Jim Hellen

Alternate Members Present: Peter Smith

Regular Members Excused: Cynthia Belowski

Alternate Members Excused: Robin Vranicar, Dwight Baldwin

Public Attendees: Robin Mower, David Howland

1) Call the meeting to order and acknowledge absentees and those with voting authority.

Duane Hyde, acting as Chair in Cynthia Belowski's absence, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2) New Business/Presentation

a) Dawn Genes, Lamprey River Watershed Association – Streamwalk Project – Dawn was unable to attend this meeting, no presentation was given.

b) David Howland, Mill Plaza Study Committee – Phase I proposal – David Howland introduced himself to the Commission and distributed a copy of the Committee's report. David also noted that this report is available on their website. He invited the Commission members to attend their next meeting on Wednesday February 20th in the multi-purpose room of the Oyster River Middle School at 6:30 pm. David explained that the third iteration of the concept drawings would be presented and they would be taking public feedback to move into the final design. The Commission discussed with David the report, the drawings, and the hope to include a new home for the public library on the site. They also discussed the issue of snow removal from the plaza and a possible buffer zone being developed on the property. The Commission thanked David for his update and the Committee's work.

3) Acceptance of January Minutes –

a) January 10, 2008 – Beryl Harper noted a change to page 4, line 18....”delete the remainder of the sentence after the words, March 3rd.”

Julilan Smith moved to accept the minutes as amended. This was seconded by Jim Hellen and approved unanimously.

b) January 24, 2008 – Duane Hyde noted the correction of the spelling of the name “Gangwer” on page 2, line 31.

Jim Hellen moved to accept the minutes as amended. This was seconded by Julian Smith and approved unanimously.

4) Ongoing Business

a) Wetlands Applications – George Thomas reported that there were no new wetlands applications.

b) Land Protection Working Group – Duane Hyde reported that the Roselawn Farm project is still in process and hoping to close in March.

c) Town Owned Land/Conservation Easements – Cynthia Belowski

No report at this meeting.

d) Mill Pond – Dwight Baldwin

No report at this meeting.

e) Jackson’s Landing – Dwight Baldwin

No report at this meeting.

5) Board and Committee Reports

a) Town Council – Julian Smith reported that the Council had decided against going forward with an Agricultural Committee. Julian will research forming a subcommittee or working group to deal with Agricultural issues.

The Town Council has agreed that it would be prudent to meet with the Commission after the new Town Council has been seated.

b) Planning Board – Stephen Roberts reported that the Caldarola project has been working with the UNH Storm Water Center on a drainage system. They are planning to move away from using retention chambers to designing a system that uses rain gardens for storm water absorption. As soon as the Planning Board receives a plan Stephen will bring it to the Commission for their review.

Stephen also reported that the Shoreland Protection overlay district will need to be revised to meet the new State standards as of April 1st. The Commission discussed the difficulties of

understanding and implementing the new State ordinance and asked Stephen the best way to comment to the Planning Board on the ordinance. He encouraged the Commission to put into writing comments from the Commission and to forward them to Jim Campbell as soon as possible. The Commission decided that each of the members would review the ordinance and it would be discussed at the February 28th meeting. Those members not able to attend the February 28th meeting may email their comments to Duane.

c) Mill Plaza Planning Committee -- Julian Smith

No further report at this meeting.

d) Lamprey River Advisory Committee – Cynthia Belowski

No report at this meeting.

6) Other Business

a) Zoning changes to allow for trail upgrade/creation – Stephen Roberts

Stephen Roberts reported that after much research it is his belief that the best way to encourage trail development and upgrade without unnecessary Planning Board review would be to empower the Conservation Commission to have authority to review and comment on all such projects unless there is a substantial change of use to the property. He noted that if there was a substantial change of use to the property the project would then need to go before the Planning Board. The Commission discussed this suggestion and how it related to the current zoning code in the Town of Durham. Stephen noted that there are many towns in the state that take this approach (such as Concord and Hanover).

b) Further discussions to prepare for the meeting with the Town Council – Duane Hyde

Duane Hyde reported that the Council and the Town Administrator had both suggested moving the meeting to sometime in April, either the 7th or 21st. The Commission discussed these dates and agreed that April 21st would work for the Commission. Duane will request a meeting with the Town Council for April 21st.

Duane noted that Cynthia Belowski had written an outline of items to be discussed with the Town Council. Duane will review the outline and work with Cynthia if any changes are needed. Cynthia will meet with the Town Administrator to structure an agenda for the meeting.

c) Stonemark Proposal for 99 Madbury Road – Julian Smith

Julian reported that the owner of this property had met with Todd Selig to suggest a landswap which would involve 16 acres from this property being put into a conservation easement in exchange for other Town owned land. Duane asked if the other piece of property being

considered had any conservation interest. Julian replied that it did not and that he felt the Town and the owner of the property at 99 Madbury Road were at a standoff.

7) Administrative

- a) Correspondence -- none to report at this meeting.
- b) Next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday March 13, 2008 at 7 pm
- c) A special meeting will be held on February 28, 2008 at 7 pm to discuss the Shoreland Protection Act.

Note: Duane will email the list of Town owned and easement properties to the Commission members to assist in organizing a monitoring schedule. Members are to review the list and volunteer for properties to monitor and reply to Duane.

8) Adjournment –

Julian Smith moved to adjourn at 8:55 pm. This was seconded by Jim Hellen and approved unanimously.

The February 14th, 2008 meeting of the Durham Conservation Commission adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sue Lucius
Durham Conservation Commission Recording Secretary