

Approved: March 10, 2016

Town of Durham Conservation Commission Meeting
Thursday February 11, 2016
7:00 pm

Members Present: Chair Ann Welsh, Otho Wells, Barbara Dill (Planning Board Representative), Robert Sullivan, Sally Tobias, Mike Morneault, Kathy Bubar

Members Not Present: Coleen Fuerst, Dick Wollmar

- 1) Call Meeting to Order. Recognize Members Present.

Chair Welsh called the February 11, 2016 meeting of the Durham Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

- 2) Agenda Approval

Chair Welsh added items 10 c and d to the agenda.

Kathy Bubar MOVED to approve the amended agenda; this was SECONDED by Otho Wells and APPROVED unanimously.

- 3) Public Comments

There were no Public Comments made at this meeting.

- 4) Presentations

There were no presentations made at this meeting.

- 5) Minutes: Review/Approve – Draft January

Mike Morneault MOVED to approve the January 2016 Durham Conservation Commission meeting minutes; this was SECONDED by Sally Tobias and APPROVED by a vote of 8 in favor and 1 abstaining.

- 6) Old Business

Conservation Commission Calendar – Chair Welsh read a list of items (ongoing and repeating) that need to be done by the Chair and the Committee Members:

- Write and provide agenda to Jen Berry monthly
- Durham Day participation
- Monitoring of properties
- Oral Town report to the Town Council
- Written report to the Town Council
- Technical Review Group (TRG) meetings (as needed; twice a month)

She suggested setting specific months for the property monitoring. Chair Welsh said she participated in the monitoring of the Capstone easement. She suggested doing this property again at the end of May.

Chair Welsh said the Merritt easement property was walked by the Town Administrator recently. She said the Fogg and Oyster River Forest properties can be done in the fall.

7) New Business

There was no new business to discuss at this meeting.

8) Ongoing Business/Tasks/Working Groups

a) Land Protection – Thompson, Goss

Chair Welsh said that the Thompson property purchase is still ongoing. She said they are going forward with hiring Ellen Snyder to perform the management plan on the Thompson property.

Chair Welsh reported that the Goss property purchase (2.25 million) is also ongoing. She said there will be small discussions to discuss the project and to work on fundraising.

b) Land Stewardship –ORF, Easement monitoring, Gangwer #2 Addendum

Chair Welsh distributed minutes from the most recent Land Stewardship meeting (February 16, 2016). She noted that the Chair of the Land Stewardship subcommittee in the past has been a member of the Conservation Commission, but that is not necessary. Chair Welsh said the membership of the subcommittee needs to be decided and formalized. She suggested a group of nine including representatives from the Conservation Commission, the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Agriculture Committee; along with six public representatives.

Mr. Sullivan suggested adding a representative from the schools (such as a science teacher). He suggested writing a one-page direction regarding the structure of the subcommittee.

Chair Welsh said they are fundraising for trail projects on the Oyster River Forest. She said they would like to do the ADA trail to the Bogg and the bridge first. Chair Welsh said the bridge would cost approximately \$5000 and the trail around the Bogg would be \$18000 for a total of \$23000. She said currently they have \$10,000 of the \$23,000 needed for the project. Chair Welsh said fundraising will kick off March 5th with walks through the Oyster River Forest in the hope that the work can be done in late summer/early fall. She noted that NRC signs stating that the Oyster River Forest is Conservation Easement land have been removed. Chair Welsh suggested putting up more substantial signs to reduce them from being taken.

She reported there will be a training session for nature walks by Speaking for Wildlife on March 25th 1-4:30 in Concord. She encouraged anyone interested in attending to speak with Rachel Grakowski or herself.

Chair Welsh said there has been some difficulty finding an appropriate space for the Farmer's Market.

Chair Welsh said there will be a snow shoe on Sunday February 21st on the Sweet Trail.

Robert Sullivan MOVED that the Conservation Commission support spending donations from the public on the Oyster River Trails; this was SECONDED by Sally Tobias and APPROVED unanimously.

- c) Permits – There was an application or a Permit by Notification for the repair of an existing dock and pier. Mr. Sullivan said he reviewed the permit and did not see any issues with it. He said they are not replacing the pilings, but are replacing the cribbing's. Chair Welsh asked how the work would be done and where they are working from (shore or river). Mr. Sullivan asked if the upper supports will be replaced. Chair Welsh will discuss these issues with the property owner and determine if the permit should be signed or if comments should be forwarded to Dori Wiggins.

9) Board and Council Reports

- a) Town Council - Kathy Bubar said much was discussed at the Town Council meeting, but not Conservation related.
- b) Planning Board - Barbara Dill said that there were many residents speaking on the Mill Plaza redevelopment project. She said the Planning Board members also provided input to the applicant and the public. Ms. Dill noted that the settlement between the Town and the developer included ensuring that the wetland and shoreland setbacks are adhered to. She said that the developer will return to the Planning Board in March with a revised plan.
- c) ZBA – Sally Tobias reported that 22 Foss Farm Road applied (retroactively) for an accessory structure (shed) within the wetland setback. She said it is raised off the ground and the application was approved as they felt it met all the criteria. Ms. Tobias reported that 196 Piscataqua Road applied for a conversion of a deck to a three season porch and the addition of dormers. She said this was also approved. Ms. Tobias reported that Perley Lane, Joe Caldorolla explained the history of the development and their request. She said there was much discussion and the application was approved 3 in favor and 2 against. Ms. Tobias said the members were concerned about the Conservation Commission request that the grass area not be treated chemically. She said the Planning Board members worried about enforcing this restriction and one suggestion was signage stating that the area not be fertilized.

10) Administrative

- a) Commission Chair

Chair Welsh MOVED that Robert Sullivan be appointed the next Chair of the Conservation Commission; this was SECONDED by Kathy Bubar and APPROVED unanimously.

Kathy Bubar thanked Chair Welsh for her tenure as Chair.

- b) Land Stewardship representative – Chair Welsh asked if any members were interested in being representative from the Conservation Commission to the Land Stewardship Committee. Sally Tobias said she would be willing to attend a meeting to see if she is interested.
- c) Computer Training – Sally Tobias will take website training in order to keep the website updated.
- d) Committee Membership – this was not discussed.

11) Other Business/Announcements/Reminders

Next regular meeting – March 10, 2016

12) Adjournment

Kathy Bubar MOVED to adjourn the February 2016 meeting of the Durham Conservation Commission at 8:30 pm; this was SECONDED by Robert Sullivan and APPROVED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sue Lucius, Secretary to the Durham Conservation Commission