

Approved: 12 November 2008

HANOVER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES - OCTOBER 8, 2008

Members: Hogue, Mayor, McIlroy, Morris (recording), Reeve (chair), White; also Smith (staff), Baschnagel (Select Board rep)

Invited Guests: Ron Bailey, Rick van der Poll

Others: J. Joline, B. McGean, J. Asmus, H. Mellert, B. Quinn, N. Collier, P. Seale, R. Norman, C. and C. Faulkner, L. Litten, G. Dahlstrom, G. McPeck, S. Pena, T. Menees, M. Purcell

Recognition of and Farewell to Ron Bailey In recognition of all the trail work Ron Bailey has done for years on behalf of the town, Doug McIlroy read a testimonial of Ron's accomplishments. Judy Reeve presented him with a Hanover Tip of the Hat certificate.

Mink Brook Highlands Natural Resources Study Rick van der Poll is charged over the course of the next year with review of existing information; field investigation of the value of the area for wildlife; identifying unique natural resource attributes; and dividing the area into three categories: areas that should be off limits for development (not to be disturbed), areas appropriate for minimal disturbance, and areas on which heavy disturbance could be tolerated. He has just spent his second day on site.

Observations and questions:

1. How much are roads fragmenting wildlife habitat? If larger mammals can not successfully cross over them, the presence of prey and other connections are not so important.
2. What will be the effects of disturbance of steep slopes on downhill areas? Hardpan soils, such as are found in the area, can't be "out-engineered," and it is hard to predict the effects of future disturbance.
3. Areas of high water table, silty loam, earthworms, hardpan and calcium exist in some parts. Presence of European earthworms reduces the diversity of vegetation.
4. The Bottomless Pit is not bottomless. It is 11,000-12,000 years old, with almost virgin forest, and a blanket bog in the middle of it that is supplied with water only from the sky. The blanket bog is totally surrounded by a fen, in which peat accumulates in the wetland with water flowing both in and out.

Gile Tract Following the commission's site visit to the Gile Tract, a **Motion** stating that the Commission has no objection to this application, and that a memo be sent to the Zoning Board so stating, was made by Reeve, seconded by Mayor. Unanimous. Further, the commission requested that a letter be forwarded to Jonathan Edwards stating that the commission is dismayed that the project's administration has been less than scrupulous in its actions, as noted in the attached letter from McIlroy (omitting item #7). Vicki will write the letter, with copies to Julia Griffin and Ray Lobdel.

Dartmouth LID Parking Lot

Following a site visit, Reeve wrote a site and project description. A total hydrograph for a two-year storm was requested during the visit. With slight editing and the addition of the hydrograph request, a **Motion** was made to submit the Reeve report to the Zoning Board. Unanimous.

Cutting vegetation on town-owned land to create and sustain a view at 41 School Street (L. Litton)

Discussion revealed concern that allowing this cutting might be construed as a precedent for others. It was suggested that the commission write a policy statement covering the situation and post a sign to read "This area cleared and managed in cooperation with the Hanover Conservation Commission." **Motion:** The commission agrees to allow the specified area to be cleared down to a level of 10 feet from the ground, and that a sign will be posted to read as suggested. Motion by Morris, second by Mayor. Unanimous.

Hazard Tree Removal (Mueller) **Motion:** that the pine in question should be felled onto town land and left in place, with the brush stacked around it only up to knee height; and that the dead wood should be cut out of the oak, with the trunk left standing; and that the commission approves spending up to \$1,500 from the Conservation Fund to do this work. Motion by Mayor, seconded by Reeve. Unanimous. Vicki will get estimates.

Environmental Impact List The questions about toxic and hazardous substances have been expanded and made more explicit. An introductory reference booklet about the federal EPCRA program and the information available from it was assembled, and an introductory cover sheet written. The commission agreed that some of its members should meet with the local LEPC to explain the commission's objectives and to coordinate the two programs to the extent possible.

Stream Monitoring The state is offering a layman's training program, which might provide useful information about Girl Brook or Mink Brook. Vicki will call to find out if the training could be done here in Hanover. Hogue will contact the high school conservation group to determine if any of the students are interested in participating.

Indian Ridge Easements McIlroy met with the Lebanon Conservation Commission about Hanover's easements in Lebanon. **Motion:** that Hanover transfer those easements to Lebanon. Motion by McIlroy, seconded by Mayor. Unanimous. A condition of the transfer is that those easements can not be annulled or the areas transferred without Hanover's consent. This transfer will be voted on at the May 2009 Town Meeting.

Trails White arranged for a special feature in the Valley News about the work of two Eagle Scouts on access trails up Velvet Rocks to the AT.

Minutes **Motion:** to approve the commission's September meeting minutes. **Motion** by Mayor, seconded by Reeve. Unanimous.

Adjournment **Motion:** to adjourn at 9:05. Motion by Reeve, seconded by Mayor. Unanimous.