

Approved: 11 November 2009

**Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2009**

In attendance: Ed Chamberlain (vice-chair), Vicki Smith (staff), Ray Hogue, Doug McIlroy, Anne Morris, Athos Rassias (Selectman representative), Sandy White (recorder), Vaughn and Tammy Steiner (mother and son observing for Civitas Class)

Chamberlain opened the meeting at 5:12pm.

1. **Easement monitoring.** Vicki monitored to 7 of 14 easements and all passed without violations. Some data has been collected, although the town's GPS software caused some problems. It needs to be upgraded.
2. Potluck planned for the **November 11** meeting when **Rick Van de Poll** will be making another presentation following the commission meeting.
3. The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission asked for support in **nominating the Mascoma River for designation into the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program**. It was unanimously voted to "support the nomination of the Mascoma River for designation into the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program" with a cc to the Hanover Selectboard. Chamberlain made the motion and Morris seconded.
4. **Trails Connect** proposed a "trail" as a primary project to connect Norwich, Hanover, Lebanon and Hartford, mainly along roads. Doug McIlroy has been encouraging the Trails Alliance to connect this four-town trail with other side trails and this has led to some wider vision ideas. McIlroy will draft a letter supporting the general Trails Connect project and distribute it to the Commission next month.
5. **Revision of Vegetation Management Policy.** There is dissatisfaction with the new policy. Morris and Reeve could go back to the drawing board and rework the policy. Keeping existing trails open would not require permission. All agreed to have Morris and Reeve rework the policy and bring it back to the Commission.
6. **Pine Park Reclamation project** identified ten hot spots on the project location map. The project location map will be conveyed to Mickey Marcus after the college approves. The town may apply for funding as some areas will be challenging and expensive to fix. Dartmouth has already spent hundreds of thousands of dollars fixing three problems: the high bridge area, area below the pump station on hole 16 and 17, and the area by the old maintenance building.
7. **Connecticut River Joint Commission.** Reeve discovered that our representatives to the CRJC have stopped reporting back to the Conservation Commission.

Chamberlain will find out their wishes to continue in this role before we take action.

8. **Lend a Hand Day.** Ledyard Bank wanted to clear brush on the Hovey Lane/Currier Place property, but some property owners abutting this property have communicated that they may want to continue to clean up this area themselves. Vicki will get in touch with them to clarify their wishes before we proceed with Ledyard Bank.
9. **Balch Hill Invasive Removal** is scheduled to occur next Tuesday. There will be a herbicide applicator on site. Could the Commission support the project by authorizing not more than \$100 for the application of the herbicide? McIlroy made the motion, Morris seconded and it passed unanimously.
10. **Baseline Documentation form** was reworked to create new and expanded baseline information. Morris felt it would be good to integrate this form with the Open Space Priorities Plan criteria to provide a clear history of documentation. She would like to reformulate the form in the Commission's package this month to include information from the Open Space Plan and bring a new draft back to next month's meeting. Commissioners are encouraged to send comments to Ann Morris' email.
11. **Election of new Vice Chair to the Commission.** Chamberlain volunteered. Morris moved to nominate him as Vice Chair, Hogue seconded the motion, there was unanimous agreement.
12. **Recorder of minutes for upcoming meetings:** McIlroy for November, Morris for December.
13. **Open Space Committee Report:** Morris submitted a report of the site visit to Tax Map 8 Lot 2, the Steele property. The noise from route 10 is very prominent. There is more topography than one might assume: a ridge to one side steeply falling to Ferguson Field, the other side to a ravine that is over 80' deep. From the guardrail of the road, the ravine goes straight down to the brook. The land abuts the Rinker Tract and Storrs Pond. The soil is highly erodable, and the trees are holding the soil well. The appraisal is in progress. There is potentially room for two houses. All site visitors thought the property should be conserved. The cost will determine enthusiasm for purchasing it. Morris thought the property served as a good bound for the end of town. The Commission should not count on getting much financial support from others. The land use tax is only trickling into the Conservation Commission budget and therefore expenditures need to be very carefully considered. It matters what the appraisal and contributions will be. The Commission will continue the discussion when the appraisal is available and the sale price. Of the commissioners at the meeting four were very interested and one was lukewarm at this point.

14. **Trails Committee Report:** Last spring there was a heavy invasive plant removal on Trail 38 that left some open spaces. The Committee planted new shrubs from the holding beds in these open spaces. A very enthusiastic Youth in Action trails crew worked on the ridge trail north of the Moose Mountain Lodge and north of the tv tower. There has been another Eagle Scout inquiry wanting to do a project involving clean-up of the trail from the Ledyard Canoe Club to Pine Park. A pile of brush has been placed in the middle of the path leading from Mink Brook to private property on School Street. The Committee is getting close to a printing of a new trails map. The last map was printed in 2003. McIlroy will send Commissioners the URL for the new draft. Please let him know if there are problems.
15. Corrections on draft minutes of September 9, 2009 meeting. Minutes amended and unanimously approved as amended.
16. Other business: Report on sediment quality in Connecticut River. Pleasant Street bank cutting account has \$132. Vicki will put \$700 of Commission operating funds into the account toward next year's cutting, after a motion by McIlroy, seconded by Morris. Four in favor, 1 abstention. Rick van de Poll is coming at 7pm after next month's meeting and again in January. The Robes brothers proposal is back on the negotiation table.

Chamberlain adjourned the meeting at 7pm, seconded by McIlroy, and approved unanimously.