

Exeter Conservation Commission

Approved as Amended October 11, 2011

Nowak Room, Exeter Town Offices

April 5, 2011

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Robert Aldrich called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices. Members present were Margaret Matick, Peter Richardson, Virginia Raub, Carlos Guindon, Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner, and Robert Aldrich, Chairman.

Following the introduction of members, the Chairman asked for public comment. There were no comments at this time.

Action Items

1. Raynes Farm Eagle Project

Brice Maloney, Life Scout for Boy Scout Troupe 323 in Exeter presented his Eagle Project to the Board. The project consists of building a three panel informational kiosk at the Raynes Farm Property and would provide the following information on the property: acquisition, history, current land use, pedestrian activities, natural resources, points of interest, and a detailed map of the property. The kiosk would be constructed of wood, made with four support posts, and include a roof. After the presentation, the Board discussed the appropriate location for the kiosk, explaining that the kiosk should not hinder plowing or mowing and should consider road access. It was agreed to decide upon a location at a later date after approving the sign and its information. Kristen Murphy explained that the map used will be from the trail plan and will include the points of interest. The Board discussed the information in detail and made the following suggestions: include the sentence used in the Henderson kiosk concerning dogs and rearrange the order of the paragraphs.

Peter Richardson thanked Mr. Maloney for the thorough work he has completed thus far and explained that the new kiosk is a great opportunity for public education. The final wording of the information will be sent to Ms. Murphy prior to construction of the kiosk. Peter Richardson moved to approve the project, Virginia Raub seconded: Vote unanimous.

2. Timberland Trail Project

Kristen Murphy stated that she met with Bob Kelly and a representative from Timberlands on the Oaklands property to discuss the extent of the Timberland Trail Project. The project is a continuation of volunteer work completed last year and includes smoothing out a sharp jog in the trail, filling some wet areas with rock to allow

for better drainage, installing the trail posts with a concrete foundation to prevent theft, repairing some planking near the tunnel, minor raking out of low spots throughout the trail, and some trimming of brush. There will be no equipment rented this year to help with moving material. The event will occur at 9:00 a.m. on April 21 and they are expecting around 30 participants. Ms. Murphy requested volunteers from the ECC, explaining that she herself will be there. Peter Richardson volunteered to join.

3. Volunteer Fair April 16, 10 am - 12 pm

Robert Aldrich announced that the Volunteer Fair will be held on April 16, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Town Hall and asked for representatives from the ECC to be in charge of the ECC table. This event is being held to increase Exeter Town involvement for residents, specifically in each of the Town Commissions and Committees. Virginia Raub volunteered to be the representative for the ECC and to help pass out pamphlets explaining what the ECC is about, prepared by Kristen Murphy. Mr. Aldrich explained that they have already received two applications from interested residents to join the Board.

4. Proposed Expenses

Robert Aldrich suggested that the ECC submit a membership payment to the Lamprey Rivershed Association in order to become a paying member of the Association. The group supports advocacy of the watershed which the Town of Exeter is a part of and they also help to cover the cost of water samples testing. Peter Richardson moved to approve the Lamprey Rivershed Association membership, Margaret Matick seconded: Vote unanimous.

Follow-Up Items

1. Visioning Session Summary

Robert Aldrich stated that the Board will discuss a summary of the Visioning Session in more detail at the following ECC meeting. Mr. Aldrich is in the process of sending notes from the session to all Board members.

2. Town Forest - Forest Plan, Official Designation

Kristen Murphy began a discussion regarding the official designation of the Town Forest. After searching through all previous Town Warrant Articles, it was discovered that an article from 1991 established the Oaklands Town Forest. This article shows that only some parcels which are currently considered a part of the Town Forest are not officially designated as such. Ms. Murphy stated that the best way to approach designating the missing parcels would be to issue a warrant article next year. This would help to establish funds for parcel maintenance.

3. National Trails Day Event

Kristen Murphy submitted the application for the National Trails Day Event and the registration has gone through. The event will be held on June 4th at the Oaklands Town Forest and Raynes Farm.

4. Beech Hill Encroachment Resolution and Final Deed

Robert Aldrich stated that all issues regarding the Beech Hill Deed have been resolved except for the encroachments. The owner has acknowledged these encroachment issues and has agreed to clean it up once the weather permits. At the previous Board of Selectman meeting, the deed was approved pending several stipulations. The item is on the agenda for the following Board of Selectman meeting on Monday.

5. Linden Commons

A preconstruction meeting took place between the Town Departments, NHDES and the ECC regarding Linden Commons. Kristen Murphy explained that the easement was accepted, timber clearing has begun, and the ECC has already received the first building permit application for the first lot. Due to the various building restrictions on each lot, Chris Szostak in the Planning Department created a tracking system was to ensure compliance on each individual lot.

6. Natural Resource Inventory

Robert Aldrich stated that the Natural Resource Inventory Focus Group progressing and will meet on Saturday to review the draft co-occurrence maps.

Regular Business

1. Natural Resources Planner's Report

Kristen Murphy stated that the Planning Board has received an increase in Conditional Use Permit Applications and the process is going smoothly. The Little Pine Lane permit was approved with additional conditions and the Rollinsford & Associates permit is still pending. Plans are subject to change but they do include two professional buildings and a parking lot which abuts conservation land. A right-of-way trail was proposed to connect to that land.

After researching active vernal pool sites and combining that information with local UNH Professor research, Ms. Murphy has compiled a town-wide vernal pool location map. Each location has confirmed breeding status over the past two years. With the help of the Natural Resource Survey, Ms. Murphy hopes to add to the listed locations and to use it as a database to track changes over the years. Ms. Murphy

extended an invitation to the Board to visit one of these active sites. Carlos Guindon stated that due to the extended cold winter, activity within the vernal pools has been delayed. The most opportune nights to see activity require rainy weather. Mr. Guindon agreed to notify the Board of potential dates for the best activity.

Ms. Murphy stated that she attended a woodcock watch carried out by the Strafford Rivers Conservancy in Rollinsford, NH and was interested in providing a similar event for the Board Members or the Town of Exeter. The best conditions for this event would require a clear and windy night. Virginia Raub suggested speaking with someone from the Audubon Society for additional ideas. Carlos Guindon stated that there are at least three active males and they are sometimes more active during full moons. Ms. Murphy agreed to continue to collect more information.

Peter Richardson and Kristen Murphy have signed up with Phillips Exeter Academy to complete two projects on April 20 with a group of volunteers. Mr. Richardson will be removing honeysuckle on Powdermill Road with his group and Ms. Murphy will take a group to the Morrisette property to complete a invasive plant inventory.

Kristen Murphy has been in touch with Ms. Kimball, an Exeter High School science teacher and plans to take a group of students on a site visit to present active vernal pools on April 20. Prior to that presentation, Ms. Murphy will complete a Vernal Pool class to help prepare for the presentation. Ms. Kimball has shown interest in maintaining a connection between the ECC and the high school in order to allow for continual involvement between the students and the community.

Ms. Murphy began a conversation regarding the Eagle Scout project to construct a kiosk at the Oaklands property and remark the existing red trail. After checking the preliminary marks, Ms. Murphy stated that the trail looks good except for several questionable areas which she will discuss with the Eagle Scout.

Drug Take-Back Day will be held on April 30 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., sponsored by the Exeter Police Department. This event is to help educate the public on how to properly dispose of old medications.

2. Treasurer's Report

Due to the recent changes in the budget passed by the Town, the Treasurer's Report has yet to reflect those numbers. Approved expenditures include organization dues, trail signs, and the Spring Tree program. Virginia Raub continues to look into consolidation of the Board's two bank accounts. The updated Treasurer's Report will be presented for the next month's meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes: January 11, 2011, February 8 and 19, 2011

The Board began a discussion to review the January 11, February 8, and February 19, 2011 draft minutes. Kristen Murphy pointed out that in January 11 and February 8 minutes, the minutes show Jay Sullivan to be present at the meeting. That name should be replaced with Kevin Keaveney. Carlos Guindon moved to accept the three sets of minutes as amended, Virginia Raub seconded: Vote unanimous.

4. Other Business

Robert Aldrich stated that Carlos Guindon and Jay Sullivan's terms will be coming to an end this year. If either Mr. Guindon or Mr. Sullivan is interested in remaining on the Conservation Commission, they should contact the Board of Selectman in order to be added to the upcoming agenda. Mr. Guindon explained that he plans to reapply for the position. The Board has received interest from two additional people to join the ECC.

Kristen Murphy and Robert Aldrich recently spoke with Charlie Moreno involving the completion of the Forestry Management Plan. Mr. Moreno has committed to the project and will begin work in the near future. The Board has been very impressed by the work Mr. Marino has completed in Strafford and looks forward to the completion of the Forestry Management Plan.

The Board thanked Jay Sullivan for installing the mountain biking trail signs.

Several members of the Board will be participating in the Spring Tree Program in May. The dates will be confirmed by Kristen Murphy.

Virginia Raub presented an update to the community gardens project, stating that the Connor Farm is not available to be used as a site. Ms. Raub will be joined by the Exeter Area Garden Club to continue looking for an appropriate site.

As a representative to the River Study Committee, Ms. Raub presented an update for the ECC regarding the responses to the RFP. A draft contract is currently being reviewed. The RSC also did a presentation regarding the 1981 proposal on hydro-electric power. The city had considered using the Great Dam and the Pickpocket Dam for potential power but the application did not move forward. A comparison was made between energy costs, past and present and it was determined that the project would not be a viable option today.

Ms. Raub attended Landscaping at Waters Edge, a two day workshop in Kittery, Maine, sponsored by the Spruce Creek Estuary Group. The workshop was geared to both New Hampshire and Maine landscaping and discussed many topics from soil to lawn care. Ms. Raub suggested the Town consider a series of public access shows on Channel 98 to help inform the public on landscaping in Exeter.

5. Next Meeting: Date and Agenda Items

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on May 10, 2011.

Regular Business

1. Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (d)

At 8:05 p.m. Virginia moved to proceed into a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3, II (d); Margaret Matick seconded: Vote unanimous.

Carlos Guindon made a motion to come out of nonpublic session at 8:20 p.m., Margaret Matick seconded: Vote unanimous.

Virginia Raub moved to adjourn the meeting, Carlos Guindon seconded.

Chairman Robert Aldrich adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gillian Baresich
Recording Secretary