

Draft Minutes

Exeter Conservation Commission

October 9, 2012

Call to Order

Acting Chairman Carlos Guindon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Nowak Room in the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were: Jay Gregoire, Russell Kaphan, Kevin Keaveney, Peter Richardson, Margaret Matick, Ginny Raub, Mike Field, and Kristen Murphy, Town Natural Resource Planner. Selectman Don Clement was also present.

There was no public comment.

Action Items

1. Forest Harvest Walk and Next Steps

Kristen Murphy provided minutes on the walk and proposed next steps. Upon reviewing the minutes, the members discussed 1) appropriate next steps for working with Charlie Moreno and 2) importance of outreach to the public on timber harvest plan.

Charlie would assist the Commission with identifying a list of logging companies with whom to contract for the harvest and he would also assist with administering the contract. There was some discussion on the Commission preference for a winter or summer harvest but more information from Charlie will be needed to make a final determination. Selectman Clement stated that Charlie Moreno is an excellent choice for this job because he knows loggers who will meet the specifications of the Commission.

Public outreach is important so residents understand what the timber harvest is, the need for it and goals of the project. Ginny Raub suggested that informational notices be posted at each of the access points of the forest. Selectman Clement added that maps be included in that information so people can see the areas impacted. Key to this educational information is ensuring the public knows the plan is for harvesting and not clear-cutting.

Carlos recommended moving forward with the next steps noted in the walk site minutes but also noted other work (clearing access areas, invasive species removal) that can be done to keep momentum going with the project while the contract issues are being finalized. Concerning budget issues, Selectman Clement noted it is hopeful that the harvest proceeds will pay the logging company work. Kristen explained that the logging company harvests and sells the timber with the proceeds split three ways: the logging company, Charlie Moreno and the Town.

Peter Richardson moved that the Commission hire Charlie Moreno to create a plan for the timber harvest, identify an appropriate logging company with whom to contract to carry out the harvest and a timeline for the harvest work. This information will then be presented to the Commission for review. Selectman Clement seconded, motion carried.

2. National Trails Day Event at Raynes Farm and Fall Festival

Ginny Raub reported that the Commission will host an open house on October 20th at the Raynes Barn. There will also be a raffle held for hiking gear. Commission members will be available at the Fall Festival at Swasey Parkway as well.

3. Future Raynes Events

Kristen and Ginny met with Kathy Thompson of the Arts Committee at the Raynes Barn to discuss opening the barn up for artists. The Arts Committee is interested in this idea.

A full moon snow shoe event is also planned at the Raynes Farm. The upcoming dates for a full moon in 2012 are November 28 and December 28; in 2013, January 26 and February 25.

4. Raynes Drainage Improvement Update

The Town has a long-term lease agreement with Nate Merrill of Stewart Farm. This long term lease made Nate eligible for NRCS grant to assist with cleaning out and improving the drainage on the property. Nate and Kristen are meeting with the Natural Resources Conversation Services on October 10 to get the NRCS design plans. The lease allows for planting and Kristen wanted mentioned this to be sure the Commission was aware that Nate plans to plant corn after the drainage improvements have been completed.

5. Seacoast School of Technology Water Monitoring Field Day

Kristen will meet with the SST class again on October 12 at the Squamscott Community trailer to demonstrate water quality monitoring equipment.

6. Property Management Plans Development – Linden Commons outline

Peter Richardson provided the Commission with a proposed outline of steps for developing a management plan for properties, beginning with the newly acquired Linden Commons easement. Carlos said that this outline is a great start to guide management of all the properties over time. An outline plan could be drafted after spending some time on the property and noting any unique features. Ginny agreed and thought the outline could be the template for each property to be monitored.

An ad hoc group was formed to refine the outline to make a general template. Members of the group are Peter Richardson, Kristen Murphy, Carlos Guindon and Russell Kaphan.

7. Spending Plan for remaining 2012 Funds

Kristen provided a handout showing the budget, receipts and expenditures ending 12/31/2012. There was some discussion on the need to locate the pins on the Smith-Page and Morrissette properties and that it is the legal responsibility of the Conservation Commission to monitor conservation properties and prevent encroachments by locating those pins. The estimated survey cost for each property is \$350-650 for Smith-Page and \$1,950 for Morrissette. Currently the Conservation Commission had approved a total of \$1,500 dollars. Russell Kaphan moved to approve the additional \$1,100 needed for the surveys. Jay Gregoire seconded, motion carried.

Under Education and Training, there are funds available to attend the NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) event on November 3rd.

There is \$1,377.99 available and Kristen recommended using it for the treatment of invasive species in connection with the proposed harvesting plan from Charlie Moreno. Funding for the treatment will be discussed at the next meeting once plan details are received from Charlie.

8. Boundary Survey for Smith-Page and Morrissette – see item above

9. Beech Hill Boundary Monitoring Date

Kristen has planned on getting the Conservation Commission together every third Saturday of a month. The Beech Hill boundary monitoring is moved to November 17th because we had planned to attend the Fall Festival in October. Kristen, Carlos, Peter and Jay will do the monitoring on the 17th. Carlos suggested that Steve Walker, Stewardship Specialist, lead the group if he is available.

Regular Business

1. Treasurer's Report

Reported by Ginny Raub: provided the August and September expenditures from the Finance Director; total expenditures submitted are \$7,573.91. It was noted that the Raynes account at Citizens Bank should be a separate account.

Peter Richardson moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, Maggie Matick seconded, motion carried.

2. Approval of Minutes

- September 11, 2012 meeting – the minutes will be amended as follows: delete the sentence "Ginny Raub volunteered to get information on surveyors' costs for other properties" from page 2. Jay Gregoire moved to approve minutes as amended, Peter Richardson seconded, motion carried.
- September 15, 2012 site walk – the minutes will be amended as follows: delete "Russell Kaphan" from list of attendees. Ginny Raub moved to approve minutes as amended, Maggie Matick seconded, motion carried.

3. Natural Resources Planner's Reports and Correspondence

- The Brentwood Conservation Commission will host a basic trail maintenance workshop on November 1st, 7-9 p.m.
- Kristen keeps a list of regional workshops and events that is available to Commission members. Kristen will email the link to the site again.
- Kristen attended the presentation on the Stewardship Network provided by the UNH Cooperative Extension. The Network is for volunteers to find meetings and to form groups of volunteers for specific needs. The Cooperative Extension requested communities to write letters of support and Kristen read her draft letter. The members accepted the letter and Kristen will sign on behalf of the Conservation Commission.

4. Other Business - none

5. **Next meeting date:** Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at 7 pm with new Acting Chair Russell Kaphan presiding. It was agreed to move tonight's scheduled work session to November 13th so members can email their input on the budget to Kristen Murphy in preparation for presentation at the Budget Committee meeting. The date of the Budget Committee meeting presentation to be confirmed.

Acting Chair Carlos Guindon moved to adjourn, Jay Gregoire seconded. Roll call vote: unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris deZarn-O'Hare
Recording Secretary