

Exeter Conservation Commission

May 08, 2012

Call to Order

Acting Chairman Ginny Raub called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm in the Wheelwright Room in the Exeter Town Office Building. Members present were Carlos Guindon, Don Briselden, Maggie Matick, Russell Kaphan, Mike Field, Cynthia Field, Peter Richardson and Kevin Keaveney. Newly appointed to the Commission, Jason Gregoire introduced himself to the group and was welcomed as a member.

There was no public comment at this time.

Action Items

1. Ri Fahnestock was present to seek permission and give an outline for a scheduled Trail Race in the Henderson-Swasey Town Forest on June 10, 2012. His co-race director, Sarah Silverberg was unable to attend but Ri noted the course description and event agreement was complete and submitted to Kristen Murphy, the Natural Resource Planner who was also unable to attend this evening's meeting. He reported the Race is just the same as last year's race: one course being 4.5 miles and the second course 10 miles. The course goes through Henderson Swasey and into the Oakland Town Forest as well. Again this year, The Northeast Lantern Company at 6 Commerce Way agreed to allow the pre and post-race events to be staged in their parking lot. The race is to start at 10am and the runners will be out of the woods by 12 pm.

Mr. Guindon agreed to be the contact person should there be a concern if the trail conditions appear to be unsuitable for the event. Although not definite, June 27, 2012 was set for the rain date. This year, they hoped to have more community involvement with their Race and are extending invitations to any organization wishing to have a table at the event with info on their services; asked Commission if they wished to have any material for the runners-possibly up to 100 runners- to better acquaint them with resources available in Exeter. (No action taken)

Dr. Kaphan asked if there were any provision to address possible injuries to the runners. Mr. Fahnestock acknowledged there were two aid stations along the course as well as a number of people/observers along the course; cited the runner's credo of stopping to help an injured runner. At the end of the race, there is a sweeper who determines everyone is off the course as well as removing any litter. There are also a number of individuals along the course, although not paramedics but have training in wilderness aid.

Dr. Kaphan responded it appeared the possibility was addressed and the provisions were thorough but felt he should ask.

Mr. Briselden made the motion to accept the Trail Race application; seconded by Mr. Richardson. Motion carried.

2. CIP request.
It was determined the CIP request from the ECC as prepared by Ms. Murphy was electronically mailed to the members prior to the meeting. The repairs to the Raynes barn were detailed for the Selectmen's review. At this time, Mr. Briselden spoke of the Raynes Stewardship meeting held earlier in the month.

It was agreed the first priority is the roof replacement of the Raynes barn. Although there were some temporary roof repairs last year, there are still leaks necessitating a roof replacement. An awareness of the problem and an eventual outcome (for not doing the repairs) needs to be stressed in any presentation before the Budget Committee. It will be accompanied with offers of a tour, photographs from photographers groups, further detailed discussion on its heritage and history and its value to the Town; a

constituency needs to be developed within the Town so when Raynes-related articles come forth there is the support for such projects. In keeping with the Raynes Development Plan, first priority is the roof, next the replacement of deteriorated sills and then the siding. Also on the plan, but of low priority at this time, is the removal of the connector between the barn and the silo.

Ms. Raub added this past spring the intent was to apply for the Moose Plate grant funding of \$10,000 but because that amount would not complete the project and there were not the funds available to add to the grant amount, we were advised not to submit an application. The Budget Committee will be asked to be mindful with the availability of the requested funds, we will be eligible to apply for grant funding that require matching funds: the requested amount then could possibly be reduced.

In keeping on with the discussion of Raynes and community awareness, the Chair talked of the plans for the National Trails Day event on June 2, 2012 and the plans for this year to highlight the Raynes site: the two new trails and to open the Barn for visual inspection with information on the site's history and heritage.

Staying with the discussion of the Trails Day event, attention was called to the agenda item under Action to vote on the expenditure of \$74.95 for an event pack assembled by the American Hiking Society with some of the products from the sponsors of the National Trails Day events. In previous years the visitors signed in/registered and at the end of the day the winner of the event pack was drawn from the registered attendees. Because it is so generous, it was suggested it be divided into several offerings. Also, because it is a proposed expense from the Commission's operating budget, Ms. Matick motioned to approve the expenditure; seconded by Mr. Briselden. Motion carried.

A discussion on signage publicizing the Trails Day event was initiated and the need for an approval of any expenditure for signage. Ms. Raub described the type of signage she envisioned and supplied an estimate from a local printer for such. Mr. Richardson suggested the amount of \$150 be allowed for signage; members felt it was a reasonable/appropriate amount with the suggestion to explore other options for publicizing the event. Mr. Richardson then motioned for the expenditure of \$150.00 for proposed signage; seconded by Ms. Matick. Motion carried.

3. Member positions

Neither Mr. Richardson nor other members had comments at this time

4. Upcoming Expenses

- National Trails Day event pack (\$74.95)
Approved in prior discussion
- Trail Brochure Printing (\$164.29)
Tabled as members had questions on where/who retains proceeds from sale of brochures
- NHACC 2012 membership dues (\$510.00)
Tabled
- Signage for National Trails Day
Approved for up to \$150.00 in prior discussion

Regular Business

5. Treasurer's Report for month of April

No report

6. Approval of minutes of April 10, 2012 meeting

Mr. Guindon noted the use of the word *National* when *Natural* was the correct word in referring to the Natural Resource Inventory. Mr. Richardson moved to approve the minutes with corrections noted; seconded by Mr. Keaveney. Motion carried.

7. Other Business

- a. Mr. Richardson and Ms. Raub reported on the activities with the Academy students on their Community Action Day on April 25, 2102. An instructor and a team of eight girls tackled the Linden Commons Trail from the Linden Street trail head up to the top (exiting into the development) and back to Linden Street removing large sized debris, digging trenches/ditches for drainage for some of the wet areas in the trail and general clearing of the trail. With a trail savvy Academy leader/instructor as part of the team a great deal was accomplished. A thank-you for their participation was sent to the leader of the team.
- b. The ThinkBlue Exeter Picnic designed to educate the visitors on stormwater pollution was hosted by a Cadet Girl Scout troop on April 29, 2012 at Swasey Park. Although deemed a success there was the agreement it was unfortunate not more people attended to experience the event when such a great amount of planning and execution was done by the girls on the project.

Work Session

1. Focus Area Reports

- a. Ms. Matick reported she is part of a team headed by Dr. Steve Jones from UNH sampling/monitoring 10 stormwater outfalls eventually going into the Squamscott River. The sampling is done at high tide, rain or shine, and 5-6 outfalls are done each week. The program will be going into mid-June and the results of the sampling will be reported back to DPW and the Conservation Commission.
- b. The VRAP (Volunteer River Assessment Program) is scheduled to start shortly. Ms. Murphy heads a group of volunteers to sample 6 sites along the Exeter River testing for a series of water related criteria i.e. pH, turbidity, dissolved O₂, temperature. The results are collected at the State level for inclusion in a State report.
- c. Returning to the conversation on possible emergencies on the trails, Mr. Briselden suggested meeting with Assistant Fire Chief Ken Berkenbush and discuss access points to the different Trails/areas and determine what they know and where we can fill in the gaps if needed to facilitate emergency services if needed; suggested it be a future agenda item.
(Selectman Clement joined the group at this time)
- d. Ms. Matick had left the meeting at this time, but Mr. Richardson wished to report on Ms. Matick's determination to verify the boundaries of the Town owned land around the Exeter Reservoir and the private land behind the McLane Manor condominiums on Portsmouth Ave. She and Mr. Richardson spent a good amount of time out there but did uncover the elusive marker pin. It is apparent there has been encroachment over time by private parties; will be a conversation with Water and Sewer Department. Mr. Richardson elaborated further on his quest to locate boundary markers from the water treatment plant around past all the hospital buildings; progress has been made but still more to be done.
- e. Mr. Clement offered the Selectmen have just started setting their goals for the 2012-2013 year. Last year a large commitment was made toward infrastructure improvements/upgrades; would be hesitant to incur any additional financial commitments. They will be looking more to long range planning for the years 2014-2016.
- f. Mr. Richardson wished to add the need for some way for the ECC to set aside money for the future purchase of land if and when such a parcel becomes available. Mr. Briselden suggested rethinking the Open Space Committee. Mr. Clement did add until the Town finishes off paying the original three million dollar bond for the Open Space program (in 2014?) the BOS would most likely not look favorably on entering into another such financial obligation.

Minutes approved with corrections at June 12, 2012 meeting

The BOS did accept at their meeting on May 7, 2012 the easement on the 7 +- acre parcel at the Mobil on the Run Station on the Epping Road that the Commission had diligently worked to get the language and markings in place before submitting to the Board for acceptance.

- g. Dr. Kaphan stated he was doing an informal survey in the Town forests of the structures built to protect the soft areas. Many are deteriorating and in need of replacement or repair. As many were built and installed by the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) he is contacting them to advise of their conditions. He felt the structures should be marked on the trail maps and their condition noted; will continue to pursue with NEMBA and be in conversation with Ms. Murphy. Also mentioned was the number of non-residents using the Town forests and finding some way for receiving contributions from those users for trail maintenance. Mr. Guidon concurred as volunteers can only do so much but as the demands increase, such as dealing with the invasives, additional funds could be beneficial. All agreed it was a topic for a future agenda.

Next meeting date will be June 12, 2012

With no further business Dr. Kaphan motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Guidon.
Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub
Acting Recording Secretary