

Exeter Conservation Commission

October 8, 2013

Call to Order

Chairman Russ Kaphan called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building. Members present included Don Briselden, Board of Selectman's Representative Don Clement, Town Natural Resource Planner Kristen Murphy, Maggie Matick, and Treasurer Ginny Raub.

Public Comment Period

No public comments

PUBLIC HEARING

Russ Kaphan provided a summary of the proposal to use Conservation Funds and the 2003 Conservation Bond funds to purchase the property for conservation purposes. Don Clement moved to open the public hearing pursuant to NH RSA 36-A, to use conservation funds as authorized under RSA 36-A:4., Ms. Raub seconded, Mr. Briselden abstained. Motion passed.

Kristen Murphy presented on the Elliott Property, tax parcel map #26-15, to be purchased by the Conservation Commission using funds from the conservation fund, remaining 2003 warrant article bond funds and outside grants. She explained the important resources on the property such as headwaters to Bloody Brook, adjacency to other conservation lands, major trail connections, prime wetlands, vernal pools, habitat for state protected species and ID as key parcel for protection in the Natural Resources Inventory.

Ms Murphy further explained the development risk for the property and explained required due diligence prior to acquisition. A Phase One Environmental Assessment has been completed, and the result was there were no environmental hazards present.

Acquisition of the property is going to cost about \$149,400. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wetland Reserve Program grant awarded \$54,000 to \$60,000. The final amount is dependant on a deed settlement still in review as Dwayne Hyde explained from the South East Land Trust. The grant will also help pay for a full property survey, and cleanup. The Land Conservation Heritage Investment Program grant is still in review.

She said it was proposed to apply existing conservation funds for this purchase of \$25,000 and remaining funds from the \$3 million bond of \$33,510. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) request has also been submitted \$26,490 if necessary.

Chairman Kaphan invited members of the audience to speak on the purchase of property. The following community members spoke in support of the project; Sean McDermitt, Tom Bergeron, Sean Richards, John Barrington, and Chris Donovan. They also asked questions about the property including the bond money, lands surrounding the property still not protected and plans for the current trails. Mr. Clement moved to close public hearing and Ms. Raub seconded. Motion passed.

Ms. Raub moved to expend up to \$25,000 from conservation funds. Ms. Matick seconded Mr. Briselden abstained. Motion passed.

Mr. Clement wished to clarify that even though the amount of grant money to be awarded is not certain, the remainder of the bond money will be used first and any remaining costs up to \$25,000 would come from the Conservation Fund Ms. Raub moved to spend remaining funds of \$33,510, Ms Matick seconded Mr. Briselden abstained. Motion passed.

Regular Business

1. Committee Reports

- a. Outreach: Ms. Murphy spoke on the Comcast Cares Day where based on the number of volunteers and Comcast users Comcast donated \$525.
- b. October 20 there will be a rain garden installation at 2 properties at the Marshall Farms Community. Goal is to educate the community on reducing storm water pollution. There will be an announcement on the town website.
- c. Exeter River Local Advisory Committee (ERLAC) and the Conservation Commission will be sponsoring a kayak trip interpretive paddle on the Squamscott about birds and wildlife 9AM-12 on October 19. Group leaves from boat launch. Flyer is posted on website.
- d. At the McDonald area, a troop of girl scouts reblazed trails.

2. Approval of minutes

- a. Mr Briselden moved to approve, Ms. Matick seconded, Ms. Raub abstained. Motion passed.

3. Natural Resources Planner Reports

- a. The NH Association of Conservation Commissions meeting is on Saturday November 2.
 - b. October 17 Salt marsh ecology workshop contact Ms. Murphy for more details.
 - c. NH chapter of Stewardship program brought to NH by Cooperative extension has a kickoff meeting in Lee October 22 9:30-12.
4. Ms. Raub reported on her participation in the all boards meeting which was hosted by Mr. Clement. She commented that it was an interesting meeting and hopes that more Conservation Commission members can attend the next meeting. Minutes from this specific meeting will be posted on the select board's webpage. Mr. Clement reported a great turnout.
 5. The next meeting planned for November 12 in the Nowak Room at the Exeter Town offices.
 6. Don Briselden moved to adjourn meeting Ms Raub seconded, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Meeting moves to a Public Work Session at 7:54

Public Work Session

Mr. Briselden and Mr. Kaphan spoke on the subject of the reactivation of the Open Space Committee. The Open Space Committee was originally designed as a working group for the expenditure of the \$3 million conservation bond. The committee dissolved after most of the funds were put to use. The conservation commission can decide on whether to make the group formal, with permission from the select board to reactivate, or to be an informal subcommittee of the commission which does not require permission. There was discussion about a number of community members who have expressed interest in helping the commission with projects but there is no particular committee to appoint them to. The open space committee could be a way to bring in more resources. No definitive decision made to reactivate committee at this session.

Moved out of Public Work Session at 8:21PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah McGraw