

Call to Order

The Exeter Conservation Commission met in the Wheelwright room of the Exeter Town Offices building on November 12,2013. The meeting convened at 6:59 PM. Members present were Pete Richardson, Maggie Matick, Treasurer Ginny Raub, Carlos Guindon, Chair Russ Kaphan, Board of Selectman Rep Don Clement, Jay Gregoire, and Natural Resource Planner Kristin Murphy.

Regular Business**1. Committee Reports**

The Boundary and Property Monitoring committee reported on several properties. The Walleryzak/Anderson Conservation property is owned by Audra and Dana Anderson. Dana had expressed concerns about debris left on property such as brush, large logs, and soil relocating. Ms. Murphy had visited the site a number of times to view the property and had pictures on display about the large piles of debris. In the Reserved Rights of the easement the owners are allowed storage of brush and firewood but Kristen was looking for clarification from the Commission on details of this reserved right as the amount stored there was concerns expressed over the amount stored onsite. Concerns were expressed about the potential fire hazard of storing that much brush, potential contamination of the river from machinery needed to cut and process logs of that size, the exposed soil and wood being stored that close to the main stem of the river. It was noted that wood storage was not the intent of the easement. After further discussion of the problems and hazards of the debris the protection of the floodplain was currently not in compliance with the terms of the easement. Ms. Murphy and Mr. Gregoire will work to prepare a written response clarifying the language of the easement and on November 18, Ms. Murphy will meet with Audra to discuss concerns.

The McDonnell Conservation Area located along the Exeter River is owned by Diane Arnheim and is used mainly for recreation. Ms. Arnheim is concerned about dumping of landscaping debris on the property. She suggested gating the parking area after sunset. Mr. Clement added that dumping is much less than what it used to be and gating the parking lot may send a negative message to the public. It could also be an inconvenience for people fishing in the early morning or late evening. Concerns over who would be responsible for opening and closing a gate were also expressed. It was recommended to continue to report the dumping or other uses to the police and we would continue to make an effort to use town resources if possible to help clean up any small amounts of dumped landscaping debris.

The Field and Dolloff property which abuts the Little River Conservation area was monitored by Bill Campbell. Neal Jones is the new property owner. Bill expressed interested in making a trail loop.

Ms. Murphy has been working with Southeast Land Trust to speak to the new landowner of the Callahan property about concerns with site work he was conducting. SELT(South East Land Trust) holds the easement and the ECC has Executory Interest. The owner has stabilized the site and will be working with a wetland scientist to ensure his work does not impact prime wetlands onsite. Further questions may be forwarded to Ms. Murphy or SELT.

The Raynes property received a grant from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to improve drainage for the farmland and Ms. Murphy and Don Briselden met with the farmer and a contractor to discuss the project. They also discussed fencing the parking lot because there was some concern about people driving into the field with vehicles . It was felt it may interfere with aesthetics. Mr. Briselden suggested a gate just along the access road and Mr. Richardson suggested using a DPW portable fence across the access road just during the wet seasons.

The Fields completed the inspection of the Tomlinson-Kenick property.

Mr. Kaphan asked if the committee thought that they were meeting their obligations for property monitoring. Mr. Richardson thought that each property should be monitored once per year. The committee discussed if they had standards for monitoring properties and that some properties are required to be monitored every year. Ms Murphy reported that based on the prioritization the ECC had come up with, the ECC is making progress on the list of properties they currently have and that she will update the list of properties that need be monitored at the next meeting.

Trails Committee

Mr. Gregoire reported that bridgework needs to be completed on the red trail off of Watson road. An early December meeting is in the works for trails committee. He will talk with Bob and Jim Clark about using materials to fix the gaps in the bridge. Mr. Guindon brought up concerns about leaf blowing and new trail construction without town or ECC approval. Mr. Gregoire said he will bring this issue to the next trails meeting. Mr. Kaphan asked how the ECC would handle proposals from citizen groups such as mountain bikers that want more trails. Mr. Guindon noted that proposals would be reviewed against the natural resource inventory, the trail plan, and determine if the location is appropriate. Mr. Gregoire suggested this be discussed further at the trail meeting and though the attendees there are typically the responsible ones that would not be creating unauthorized trails, they can help to get the work out to the rest of the users.

Outreach Committee

Kristen announced the Southeast Land Trust would like to have an Elliot property winter walk sometime in January. The 11, 18, and 25 were the dates suggested. The SELT will lead the walk and the walk will be used to generate public interest. Ms. Murphy reported on suggested outreach events suggested by the Raynes Farm Stewardship Committee. It was suggested there be a winter snowshoe walk in January or February. Mr. Gregoire said he would be interested in leading the walk. Peter Smith a member of the historical society was interested in storing antique items in the barn and that would be great to show the public during events at the barn. There was talk of having another painting day with the arts committee and reaching out to a farm to see if they would conduct a horse drawn sleigh rides.

2. Dam Removal Feasibility Study

Ms Raub reported that the River Study Committee submitted their final report for the study. It is now online, at the library and town offices for viewing. She suggested watching the town hall stream of the October 31 meeting to get a better understanding of the study report. Decision for the dam is now given to the Board of Selectmen but further decisions are on hold until the Phillips Exeter Academy and Mills complex intakes are resolved on their right to draw water. Mr. Clement reported that the town is getting closer to resolving those issues. Mr. Clement also mentioned that the River Study Committee has made no recommendation whether the dam should be removed or not. Mr. Richardson thought that the dam should be removed and that cost, public right to vote, the Hurricane Sandy reconstruction grant, timing and where the select board stands are all issues facing the dam removal.

Mr. Clement said his opinion is that the dam should be removed based on his review of the study and his work with the River Study Committee. He said the report was most thorough in

considering all of the options. Ms Raub was also in favor of removal. Further discussion of the study was moved to other business at the end of the meeting.

3. Treasurer Report

Ms. Raub reported on the reports she had available. Fifteen hundred dollars are remaining the 2013 budget. This includes all the money that has been approved but not yet expended. Ms. Murphy proposed paying for the deed research invoice due to the SELT for the Elliot property partially with that money. Mr. Guindon asked about invasive species treatment before tree harvest. Ms. Murphy stated she could not get the contract for treatment in time and that she has not heard back from Charlie Marino the consulting forester. The invoice for the deed research is \$2,500 and is due one month from when invoice was sent. Mr. Guindon made a motion to use remaining \$1500 in unallocated funds to pay for the deed research with the rest of it coming from the Conservation Fund fees Mr. Gregoire seconded. Mr. Clement made question of the accounting and that the Conservation Commission already made a commitment to pay for the outstanding invoice with the Conservation Fund. He expressed concerns about changing votes. Mr. Kaphan suggested possibly rescinding vote to reallocate funds. Mr. Clement suggested consulting the town treasurer. Mr. Guindon withdrew his motion Mr. Gregoire seconded. Mr. Richardson made a motion to allocate \$1500 to pay for a portion of the research into the boundary (deed research invoice) after a consultation with the town treasurer. Mr. Guindon seconded. There were 4 votes for, 2 against, and Mr. Clement abstained. The motion was passed.

4. Approval of October 31 meeting

A motion was made to pass minutes Mr. Richardson moved to approve Ms Raub seconded and minutes were approved.

5. Natural Resource Planner's Report and Correspondence

None

6. Other Business

Discussion of Dam removal moved to next meeting.

Mr. Guinden spoke about the Marsh Ecology workshop he attended and learned about carbon release of Carbon dioxide as the sea levels increase. He will be collecting wildlife cameras next Sunday at 1 pm. He also attended the NH Association of Conservation Commissions Meeting with Ms Murphy where they discussed logging and invasive species. He also mentioned that the wildlife camera is being used as part of a regional study on bobcat distribution. He will be going out on Sunday at 1:00 to retrieve the data.

Ms. Murphy added two items to be approved for expenditure, \$45.00 to reimburse Carlos from the education and training fund for fees for the NH Association of Conservation Commissions Meeting and to reimburse her for purchase of battery and shipping fees for returning the camera security box (\$29.00). Mr. Gregoire moved to pass the items, Mr. Richardson seconded, motion passed.

7. Next Meeting and Agenda items

The next meeting will be December 10, 2013 in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices.

Ginny Moved to adjourn meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 9:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Sarah McGraw