

Draft minutes

Raynes Farm Stewardship Committee
April 12, 2017

Vice Chairman of Exeter Conservation Commission, Bill Campbell commenced the meeting at 5:35 pm in the Wheelwright Room of the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were Kathy Norton, Don Briselden and Ginny Raub. Also in attendance: Dave O'Hearn.

Mr. Campbell outlined the membership paragraph as stated in the By Laws; the committee shall consist of at least 5 members including representatives from the Commission, a member of the Exeter Heritage Commission (Mr. Peter Smith who was unable to attend), a member of the Public Works Department (Kevin Smart) and private citizens Don Briselden, Kathy Norton and Ben Anderson who was also unable to attend.

Mr. Campbell noted there recently has been an increase in the physical activity at the Raynes property but has not interfered with the agricultural functions. He expressed his feeling that it helped to boost support for the property. And he hoped that would continue to create a more positive view as we head toward extensive (barn) renovations.

He reported Ben Anderson had received approval at the March Conservation Commission meeting for a small musical concert on May 7 using the barn as a backdrop for the band and the concert goers would be seated on hill/lawn facing the barn. There was some discussion on several items regarding liability and parking to be checked further and was unsure where the program was today. Ms. Norton noted it was being advertised on line and admission was being charged. Discussion ensued if this was a commercial event and was such a venue is compatible with the original LCHIP agreement signed at the acquisition of property. Mr. O'Hearn referencing the 2011 Long Range Development Plan outlined some of the uses permitted and went further to research and discussed passive recreation activities compatible with the agreement.

Mr. Campbell re-iterated if it did not interfere with the agricultural component of the property it was a good thing. Ms. Raub noted when Mr. Anderson appeared to initially ask for approval for the concert, it was noted the LRMP does allow the Commission to evaluate each proposal and by approving a proposal, pending certain conditions, it did not necessarily set a precedent for others making a request.

Mr. Briselden in thinking ahead, it was the goal of the Commission if the activities can be accommodated to hold events to build a support base for when funds are to be requested for future renovation projects.

Mr. Campbell added there have been recent discussions with Darren Davis who was interested in taking on the lease for haying. Mr. Campbell had hoped he would be at this meeting to answer any questions. But in talking with Mr. Davis even with anticipating two cuts, the first would not occur until mid-July. (Mr. Campbell was pleased with that as it allows for the grassland birds to complete their nesting activities). So in this particular instance, a musical event would not be interfering with haying.

When Mr. Campbell asked for comments on the proposed signage as designed by Mr. Anderson Ms. Norton felt any signage should be over the door as was the custom for “when the cattle returned home”. Although no formal motion was made and no vote taken, Mr. O’Hearn asked it be on record he was opposed to any signage and Ms. Norton opposed to present designs. Mr. Campbell and Ms. Raub expressed their support and Mr. Briselden abstained.

Also, Mr. O’Hearn and Ms. Norton also expressed their opinions that any future events of such a nature that is not in simpatico with the LCHIP agreement not be held.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Ginny Raub
Clerk Exeter Conservation Commission