

APPROVED

Town of Grantham Grantham Conservation Commission

MEETING MINUTES August 20, 2012

Chairman Richard L. Hocker called the Grantham Conservation Commission to order on Monday, August 20, 2012, at 7:05 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Room at Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, NH.

Present: Chairman Richard (Dick) Hocker; Merle Schotanus; Kristina Burgard; Joe Watts (*Alternate*); and David Wood (*Alternate*).

Absent: Lindsey Lefebvre; and Jeremy Turner

Members of Public: None

ADMINISTRATIVE

Approval of Minutes for 16 July 2012 Meeting

Chair Hocker asked the Commission members if there were any additions, corrections, or modifications to the draft minutes for the July 16, 2012 meeting.

There being no corrections, Watts moved to approve and accept the July 16, 2012 Minutes as written; second by Wood. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.

Unanimously Approved & Accepted

NEW BUSINESS

Review of Secretary Applications

Chair Hocker advised that three (3) people submitted inquiries regarding the Conservation Commission secretarial position. The Commission reviewed and discussed the experience and qualifications information provided by each person, and unanimously agreed that one person appeared to be the best fit for the position. Chair Hocker will follow up with that person and advise the Commission of the outcome.

Annual Walk of Flewelling Easements Property

Chair Hocker stated that under the conditions associated with the Flewelling easements, a walk of the Sherwood Forest property is conducted once a year. Recently, he and Town Administrator White discussed the Flewelling easements and when the topic of the upcoming annual walk arose, Administrator White indicated that this year all three members of the Select Board would like to attend if their schedules permit. Chair Hocker would like to begin scheduling the walk with various potential participants, including the current landowners, Steve Walker of NHOEP, the Select Board, and Conservation Commission members, and asked that the Commission members

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review their schedules for weekends in September and October and advise him of their availability. He will then select several dates, and propose those dates to the various parties.

Wood suggested that it would be very helpful to have GPS coordinates of the property and a map to assist with the annual walk, particularly around the borders. Chair Hocker stated that he has some files with GPS coordinates relating to Sherwood Forest that former Commissioner Andy Eastman compiled several years ago. He will look at what he has and try to provide GPS coordinates and a map prior to the walk.

OTHER BUSINESS

Land Issues

Cote & Reney Properties

Schotanus reported that a representative from New Hampshire Fish & Game (“NH F&G”) contacted him and indicated that NH F&G is ready to proceed with getting the surveys completed on the two landing parcels so they have that information for the deeds, and requested the contact information for the surveyor. Schotanus indicated that it appeared that things were proceeding forward, and more information on further progress could likely be available in the next 30-60 days.

Hastings Lot Memorial

Chair Hocker asked Watts for an update regarding the memorial plaque for Will Hastings that will be erected on the Leavitt Hill Wetlands property owned by Upper Valley Land Trust (“UVLT”). Watts reported that the plaque has shipped and should be delivered within the next week some time. After receiving the plaque and pole, he may need to take it to a welder or blacksmith to have the plaque securely affixed to the pole. He suggested taking it to Gardner Stetson in Newport, and it was agreed he should take it to Stetson if welding is needed. Watts said hopes to be able to set the plaque in place by no later than the end of next week.

Burgard stated that UVLT needs to be contacted prior to placing the plaque in order to get their agreement regarding the location for the plaque on the property. Burgard will contact Pete Helm at UVLT by email regarding this issue and copy Watts so that the two can work out the placement issue.

Burgard indicated that based on feedback after the last meeting, it appeared that Saturday, October 6th is the best date for scheduling the memorial dedication ceremony. The Commission discussed the date and further plans for the ceremony, and it was agreed that the ceremony will be on October 6th and that Burgard should coordinate with Mrs. Hastings, UVLT, and Willie Newhall of the Blue Mountain Snowdusters regarding the ceremony and related details.

Planning for Conservation

Continued Planning for Wetlands Inventory project – Next steps

Schotanus asked Burgard for an update on the Wetlands Inventory. Burgard advised that as of that afternoon, all fifty four (54) wetland evaluation units (WEU) were evaluated, the forms for each completed, and the data from each form entered into an NH Method EXCEL workbook, and that this document was sent to Dr. Rick Van de Poll, his intern, and the entire Commission. While Dr. Van de Poll now has all the data, Burgard still has a number of evaluation forms to scan and send to Dr. Van de Poll and his intern, and she hopes to have those scanned in the near future.

Burgard noted that the next step is for Dr. Van de Poll to QA/QC the evaluations and then use the resulting data to identify potential candidates for prime designation. Then the Commission will hold a public forum in order to present these data and suggestions to the public. Schotanus indicated that he had contacted Dr. Van de Poll regarding a date for both the public forum and presentation of the wetlands ordinance at a Planning Board public meeting, and that Dr. Van de Poll selected two dates. Burgard stated that those days were during the week of September 24th and one of the two days was Tuesday, September 25th and she believes the other was that Monday. Burgard volunteered to check the availability of the Town Hall lower level meeting room on both dates that Dr. Van de Poll is available, and coordinate with the Commission members to select and schedule the best of those dates for the public forum.

Watts inquired how the public forum would be advertised and if there would be any mailings to landowners. Burgard stated that in addition to posting notices and posters at various locations, she felt the Commission should send all landowners previously contacted a follow-up letter regarding the Wetlands Inventory status and invite them to the results public forum. The Commission discussed whether only landowners adjacent to potential prime wetland candidates should get the letter or all previously contacted landowners. Burgard stated that she felt that it should be everyone previously contacted as there may be some who are wondering about the status, and she believes that the Commission should personally contact those people to provide that information. It was agreed that all previously contacted landowners would be sent a letter, and Burgard was tasked with drafting and sending such a letter by the end of the month.

Schotanus stated that between now and the date of the public forum, Dr. Van de Poll will perform QA/QC of the evaluations, review the evaluation data, and prepare a suggested list of WEUs for prime designation based on these data. He noted that Dr. Van de Poll suggested that he attend the Commission's September meeting to present his draft results that would form the basis of the public forum presentation. Wood stated that while that would be a good time to review the draft presentation, perhaps an earlier date should be set for Dr. Van de Poll to advise the Commission the results of his initial analysis. The Commission discussed this issue and tentatively set a deadline of September 10th for receipt of the initial results. Schotanus will coordinate with Dr. Van de Poll regarding this deadline.

Burgard stated that given the relatively short time line, some one needs to coordinate with both the Zoning and Planning Boards in the near future regarding review and finalizing the ordinance warrant article, and the timing for a Planning Board public meeting. She noted that in order to

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meet the deadlines for warrant articles presented at the 2013 Town Meeting, the latest timing for the first ordinance public meeting is the Planning Board's November meeting, though it could be earlier if the Planning Board wants to hold the public meeting separate from a regular meeting. Chair Hocker stated that he will coordinate with the Planning Board and Burgard will coordinate with the Zoning Board.

Perambulation Status

Hocker asked Wood for an update on the perambulation. Wood reported that there was nothing new from last month's meeting. He advised that dates are set for walking the remaining sections of the Croydon border, and he is working with the representatives from the remaining towns to set mutually acceptable dates to complete those sections of the Town's borders.

OTHER BUSINESS- Additional Items

Chair Hocker reported that a number of timber cutting related incidents occurred in Grantham over the past month. He noted that in some cases, it appeared that landowner naivety played a role in the situation. The Commission discussed ways in which information on timber laws and forestry best practices could be made available to people, including a possible class led by professionals from an organization like NH Division of Forests and Lands or the NH Timberland Owners Association. The Commission agreed that for now, information could be posted on the Commission's webpage and its availability advertised through various mechanisms, and if there is sufficient interest, a class could be considered in the future. Burgard was charged with compiling the information and posting it on the website.

HAND OUTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hocker asked if there was any further business. There being none, Burgard moved to adjourn, and Schotanus seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:44 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. on September 17, 2012, in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristina Burgard

Kristina Burgard
Grantham Conservation Commission