

Cornish Conservation Commission

Wednesday, April 28, 2010, Unapproved

Present: Michael Meeks, Linda Fuerst, Bill Gallagher, Jon Woodhull, John Hammond, Mariet Jaarsma, Betty Miller, Rickey Poor, and Jenny Schad

Guests: Rachel Ruppel and Martin Bean

The meeting began at 7:00 PM.

Minutes: Bill moved to accept the minutes of March 24. Mariet seconded and the vote was in the affirmative.

Membership & Nominations: Michael said that he couldn't serve as chairman, because he is an alternate member of the CCC board. Betty moved that she be made an alternate and Michael take her place as a full member. Jon seconded and the motion was passed unanimously. Bill moved to have Frank Parks serve as vice chairman. John seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Maps & Materials: It was decided that all of the CCC materials and maps should not be taken home, but should be stored upstairs at the town offices. We have a cupboard for storing the maps. There is a file cabinet and a box full of materials that will need to be sorted through and organized. We will need to find a barrister's bookshelf (a shelf with a glass front that locks) for storing the easement notebooks, as well as perhaps another set of shelves or file cabinet. Mike said that he would look into Dartmouth's sale. It was also suggested that we use Sclafanis & connectcornish. The following subcommittee was set up to work on this: Rickey, Mariet, Betty, Mike, Linda & Jenny. It was decided that the group would meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 4:00-6:00 PM until the work is completed.

Correspondences & Upcoming Events:

Michael said that we received a second notice for payment from the NH Timberlands Assoc. Betty said that it has been submitted for payment.

New CCC members were encouraged to attend one of three the NHACC regional workshops held April 17th, May 15th and May 22nd.

Finances: Linda and Michael need reimbursement for the Saving Special Places conference for \$60 apiece totaling \$120. Linda needs reimbursement of \$50 for the two maps used for the CCC display at town meeting. Mariet made a motion to take the money out of the General Fund. Bill seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Committees & Reports:

Town Forest: Mike reported that they had conducted a work session to remove the many trees that came down across trails during the big windstorm. They are coming up to the 10yr. mark when they will need to conduct a review of the Town Forest Management Plan. He also said that he had talked with Ginny Prince about the CCC working more closely with them. He asked that we include Ginny on our email list.

Connecticut River Joint Commissions – Mt Ascutney Regional Sub-Committee: Thursday, May 6th there will be an event, hosted by the Wethersfield CC concerning assessment of the Black River.

CREA: Many of the water issues in the hay fields have been solved with the new ditches and beaver baffles. More work will be done this spring to dig out the swales next to both the baseball and soccer fields. A work session will be called in May to finish removing trees that fell across trails. John reported that Doug McGrath, a new member of the CREA Committee, would be in charge of making a plan for maintenance of the playing fields. He also reported that the Fair Association would continue to have the mowing contract for the CREA fields and is also donating some bleachers.

Saving Special Places Conference Report: Linda and Michael shared some of what they learned. Of particular interest was the publication by the NHCC of a new conservation fund guide. These can be purchased for \$10. They can also be viewed on line, as well as downloaded and printed. Linda reported that they made an error in the book, showing Cornish receiving 0% of LUCT funds. They have corrected it to 60% in their online version.

Natural Resources Inventory: Rachel Ruppel from UVLSRPC went over their contract proposal. She covered the different steps that would be undertaken and how the CC and other members of the Cornish community could be involved in gathering many of the details to be included. Martin Bean, a graduate student at Antioch, was in attendance. He expressed an interest in helping us with some of the fieldwork as part of his graduate study. He is available for the summer and fall. We told Rachael that we would discuss the proposal and get back to her.

Updates on Lipfert/Hammond, Putnam & Farnsworth: John reported that they are still waiting to hear important details about the Hammond/Lipfert project. Betty reviewed the history of the proposals that have been discussed concerning the Farnsworth property that abuts the Town Forest. Jon Woodhull offered to call the real estate firm to get more information about the Putnam property.

New Business: Troy Simino, selectman, has written a Cornish Road policy, which will be presented at a public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, May 5, 2010 – 7:00PM.

Jon said that at our next meeting, he and Jim would set up a new subcommittee to work on a communication plan. It would educate though connectcornish. It would inform citizens of topics to be discussed at our monthly meetings and encourage the public to attend. It would look into having a link on the town website where we could post our minutes. It would continue to find ways to improve communications with the selectmen.

Jon said that he would talk to Loel Callahan about heading up a new Forums & Events sub committee.

Mariet asked John if the selectmen could provide blue bags for Green Up Day. There was a discussion of eventually having blue and green bags, so that there could be recycling.

John said that the selectmen would be submitting the paperwork necessary to get 400 bulbs to place around town. It is part of the Green Up Day Program.

Mike said that a request has been made for funds to help Matthew Thayer with his Eagle Scout proposal, which is part of the Liberty Tree Memorial Program, to place 10 disease resistant elms around town. Matt needs \$1,150, in addition to the \$850 that he has already raised in order to upgrade to larger trees that wouldn't be as prone to damage. Jon made a motion to give him ½ of the \$1,150, which is \$575. Jenny seconded and the motion passed unanimously. We left the Source of the funding depending upon whether Matt agrees to plant trees on CREA land. If he chooses to do so, part would come from the Palmer Fund that was set up for environmental education on CREA. The remainder would come from the Conservation Fund.

We adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Fuerst

**Conservation Commission
Wednesday, May 26, 2010, Unapproved**

Present: Michael Meeks, Linda Fuerst, Bill Gallagher, Jon Woodhull, John Hammond, Mariet Jaarsma, Rickey Poor, Betty Miller, Jenny Schad, and Frank Parks

Guest: Rick Kendall, Bill Lipfert, Jim Fitch

The meeting began at 7:00 PM.

Saint Gaudens Cultural Landscape Plan

At the start of the meeting, Rick Kendall, the Superintendent of the Saint Gaudens National Historic Site, gave a presentation of their Cultural Landscape Plan. He gave a brief history of how and why Saint Gaudens picked this particular site for his home and studio. He demonstrated some of the ways that Saint Gaudens continually enhanced the area's natural beauty, such as putting in formal gardens, hedges and a birch alley. As part of their plan, they have already begun to replace hedges that had grown too large. Removing of some trees that obstruct the view of the mountain, and replacing the stressed birches in the alley are also part of their plan. Given that there has been some controversy among townspeople over the cutting down of trees along the road leading to the site from Route 12-A, there is a hold on removing them.

Minutes: Since no one saw any corrections or additions to be made to the minutes of May 26th, Michael Meeks approved them as written.

Barker Fund: Rickey Poore gave the history of how Bunny Barker wanted to set up a fund in order to have money available for such things as buying food for people working on the bat house to helping to pay for the Conservation Award. Jim Barker, when he recently married asked to have donations made to the fund in lieu of gifts and thereby added to its amount. There was discussion of whether this fund should be held by the town treasurer and written in the Town Report with the Conservation Fund, the CREA Fund and the Palmer Fund. It was decided to continue the discussion next month, when hopefully Jim Barker will be able to attend.

Announcements: Tom Wessel, the author of "Reading the Forested Landscape", will be at the school on Saturday, June 5th at 12:00 to do a slide show followed by a walk through the Town Forest.

Putnam Farm: During our tour of the Putnam Farm the realtor said that she would continue to make every effort look for individuals who plan to use the property for farming and/or livestock.

Farnsworth Property

Mike Meeks said that he had received a correspondence from the Farnsworths, asking if the Conservation Commission was interested in using their funds to purchase their property in order to add to the Town Forest. There was discussion of what the value of the property was as a wood lot and given that it is off a discontinued road and cannot be developed. It was decided that we needed to do more research, and then make a counter offer. Michael said that he would contact them to see if they would be willing to entertain a counter offer. A motion was made by Frank and seconded by Jon Woodhull to have Mike write a letter of intention and to continue to make, the resolution of the Farnsworth property, and a top priority for the Conservation Commission. The motion passed. Betty Miller abstained.

Lipfert/Hammond project: Bill Lipfert said it might be quite a while before their appraisal is completed by the state helping them to know the cost of setting up their easement along the Connecticut River.

Town Forest: Leo Maslan and Fred Weld will be working together to clean up the remaining trees and limbs that fell in the last windstorm.

Matt Thayer's Liberty Elm Eagle Scout Project: Mike Meeks said that Matt plans to put one or more elm trees on CREA property. He was not sure how many or where they would go. The money that we pledged will come out of the Palmer Fund.

CREA Bridge: Frank Parks reported for the Natural Wildlife Committee, that the waterlogged bridge on the trail that leads to the soccer field couldn't be lifted. It is partially submerged due to increased beaver activity. Either a new bridge will need to be built or a baffling system will need to be placed under it. It was decided to table the discussion for now.

At 9:25 PM, John Hammond made a motion to adjourn. Frank Parks seconded it.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Fuerst.

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, June 23, 2010, unapproved

Present: Frank Parks (acting as Chairman), Jim Barker, Betty Caterino, Bill Gallagher, Betty Miller, Rickey Poor, Linda Fuerst, Lowell Callahan

The meeting began at 7:00 P.M.

The minutes were accepted as written.

Cornish Town Forest Management Committee

Bill Gallagher reported that Tom Wessel's guided tour in the Town Forest was excellent.

Connecticut River Joint Commission

Adair Mulligan has taken another position.

Wetlands Wildlife Committee

Frank Parks reported that the bridge on Mike's Trail appears to be about the same, where there has been increased beaver activity. It is still in the water. They will continue to monitor.

C.R.E.A. Committee

Linda Fuerst reported that Matt Thayer has planted three elm trees on CREA. She said that she was not able to be there when the work was done. There has been some discussion about the location of the trees after the fact, at a CREA meeting with the selectmen, when there were only a few members of the CREA Committee present. It was mentioned that two of the trees might cause some inconvenience during fair parking and haying. There was also concern expressed that the third tree might be too close to the soccer field, causing the leaves to drop on the field. Linda said that Linda Rice, the farmer who hays the fields, told her recently that it would not be a big problem for her. She said that she could just mow around the two that are in the hay fields. Linda Fuerst suggested that there should be more time for thought before considering moving any of them, given the amount of effort that went into planting them.

Rickey Poor mentioned that the original plan for the soccer field took into account the potential of having a track around the soccer field, which would be where one of the trees is planted. Several felt that having trees in the field would be beautiful and would provide shade at fair time.

Farnsworth Property

Frank Parks reported that Mike Meeks had met with the Farnsworths to discuss their proposal. Their offer of \$100,00 is firm. We are waiting for John Hammond and the selectmen to clarify the road issue. We decided that we would think about it some more and let them know that we are still interested.

Barker Fund

Jim Barker did not want the Barker Fund to be listed in the Town Report. He said that Bill Caterino said that the donations to the fund are not tax deductible and that they are not coming directly to the town. Jim made a

motion, which was seconded by Lowell Callahan, to have the fund moved from the Chittenden Bank in Windsor to the Claremont Savings Bank. Rickey Poor said that she would move it. On May 3, 2010, there was a balance of \$2,587.80 (\$.22 in interest). There is \$90 or \$91 outstanding for the Conservation Award.

There was a discussion about having quarterly disclosure of all funds in our minutes.

Bill nominated Jim Barker to be Treasurer. Lowell Callahan seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Forums and Events

Lowell Callahan said that he would come up with a list of activities to enhance the mission of the CCC. This would be done by the following meeting or the one after.

Linda Fuerst said that there might be a celebration on CREA in the fall to mark the completion of the barn renovations, the new trails, and the work on the ball fields. Perhaps the CCC could prepare an interactive tour on the property's varied habitats.

Easements & Restricted Properties

Linda Fuerst said that she had gone over all of the easement materials that we had sorted into individual properties at our last subcommittee work session. She made a list of all of the properties and sorted them under the names of their easement holders. She noted the date of the most recent hard copy of a monitoring form for each property. In addition she noted what materials/records we have for each property. Betty Miller said that she knows that some of the properties have been monitored more recently, even though there are no forms to indicate that. Linda said that she would contact the Upper Valley Land Trust to get copies of the most recent forms, and begin to set up a schedule for monitoring this summer and fall.

Linda said that she would also contact the other easement holders to ask them to send their most recent completed monitoring forms.

Linda said that she would like to create a notebook for each property. Included in the notebook will eventually be a monitoring plan or schedule, a copy of the deed, maps, pictures, other baseline documentation and monitoring forms. Jim Barker said that he has spare notebooks to give Linda.

It was suggested that, when Linda talks to the UVLT, that she ask them for suggestions for how to set up the notebooks.

Natural Resource Inventory (N.R.I.)

There was no time to discuss the proposal before us from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. We discussed setting aside more time at our meetings when we only work on the NRI. We decided to cancel the easement work session scheduled for July 14th, and instead meet as a whole commission to review the UVLSRPC proposal, so that we are ready to invite Rachael Ruppel & Martin Bean to our next regular CCC meeting. Linda Fuerst will post notices for the additional CCC meeting at the town office, library, post office, 12% Solution, Cornish General Store, bank and the town hall. The meeting will be Wednesday, July 14th at 7:00 P.M. at the Town Offices.

At 8:53, Jim Barker made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Lowell Callahan. The motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted

Linda Fuerst.