

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
CREA MANAGEMENT PLAN PUBLIC HEARING
July 21, 2014 at 7:00 PM

PRESENT: John Hammond, Scott Baker and Dale Lawrence

CREA Members: Linda Fuerst Community Member, Sharon St. Martin for School Board, Sylvia Sivret for Cornish School and Jim Barker for Cornish Conservation Commission.

Community Members – See attached

INTRODUCTION

John Hammond opened the meeting with a letter written by Linda Fuerst, (see attached) and a financial report of the CREA Funds submitted by Town Treasurer Heidi Jaarsma, (see attached).

Jim Strout asked what the proposed use for the property was to begin with. Rikki Poor gave an explanation along with Linda Fuerst of a Recreational/Educational area to be used by the Cornish School staff and students along with members of the community.

DESCRIPTION AND USES OF CREA

John then explained the current uses of the CREA property:

Farming by Bob and Linda Rice, property used by the Boy Scouts, Cornish Fair for parking, Cornish School for athletics, use by members of the community and educational purposes.

Important points by community members:

- Keep lines of communication open
- Link on town website

CONTRACTS AND MAINTENANCE PLANS

Rikki Poor brought up that the Maintenance Plan should include something about permits if required for a particular project. Who will fill out the application, etc... It was then brought up that the Boy Scouts, under the direction of Leo Maslan always take the initiative to fill out applications for any required permits. Leo takes the time to teach the boy scouts about the permitting process as part of their project.

Rikki Poor stated that the fields should be mowed late in the season to accommodate birds that nest in the grass. Robert Rice spoke saying that he and his wife mow before the fair allowing the grass to “green up” so it can be mowed a second time in the fall.

Bob Bladen, who mows for the Cornish Fair was thanked for his “above and beyond” about mowing a path around the field. Bob also asked that the soccer nets be taken down and the goals moved when soccer is not in session.

A letter was read that was written by George Edson regarding the CREA barn and its stewardship and possible uses. (see attached)

The discussion then centered around the beavers in the pond located next to the Fire/Police Station on Town House Road which abuts the CREA property. The consensus was that the beavers needed to be relocated as there was much damage to the trees surrounding the pond and the situation would only become worse toward winter. Frank Parks suggested that we wait until fall when the beavers become more valuable to trappers and perhaps it can be done for free.

John spoke of the Road Agent working to clean up around the pond.

Fred Sullivan also spoke about the dangers of keeping beavers as they attract bugs, mosquitos which carry disease when the water becomes stagnant.

Others who spoke about the possible relocation/trapping of beavers as they were causing damage were:

Rikki Poor, Jim Strout, Linda Fuerst Joe Saginor

MAINTENANCE PLAN

Jim Strout said that there should be a portable toilet at the property at all times

Sylvia Sivret, Principal noted that there probably would not be a soccer team this year but perhaps if the school collaborated with Plainfield, the field may be used. She also stated she would be willing to advertise additional uses by outside groups when asked by Linda Fuerst.

Judith Kaufman also noted that other groups might be interested in using our fields as they do in Plainfield.

In lieu of monetary payment, perhaps in-kind donations of maintenance would be considered.

HUNTING DISCUSSION

Ruth Rollins – I was against, but because of the land in current use and the fact that people post their property, it would seem reasonable to have limited hunting as tax payers support and paid for the CREA property.

Jane Brodeur spoke about leaving the beavers and all animals alone.

Beth Lum said although she is not against hunting, this is not the property

Larry Dingee said that hunting has gone on at that property and that perhaps we should look at a “middle of the road approach” ie: limited time, days, #'s, etc...

Robert Rice said that at one point he hunted the property as there were no signs saying otherwise. Robert also asked if the initial application for the grant specified “no hunting allowed”? He was told by Linda Fuerst that it did not say anything at all about hunting.

Jim Strout spoke and said that at any given time his “kids can get a gun in any corner of his house”, I am for hunting but not on this piece of property due to its proximity to the school and the fact that children use this property.

Fred Sullivan spoke in favor of hunting but not on this piece of property.

Frank Parks spoke of ways to limit hunting to reduce fear of danger to the children ie: limited times, days. Frank also stated he would be willing to help create equitable guidelines for hunters to use the property too.

Several other members of the audience spoke against hunting.

Jim Barker then said that an opinion poll was taken at Town Meeting so “why are we discussing it again”? It was then suggested that another opinion poll be taken for those in attendance at this meeting in addition to the one taken at Town Meeting. 30 in favor of no hunting and 4 in favor of some type of limited/controlled hunting.

Selectboard Chairman Hammond asked if there was any further comment, but the crowd had already begun leaving. The Public Hearing was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Dale H. Lawrence

NOTE: Several people came in late and did not sign the attendance sheet.