

Conservation Minutes for November,18 2015

Present: Jim Barker, Chairman, Rickey Poor, Dale Rook, Steven Wilkie, Bob Bulkeley, John Berry, Frank Parks, Jenny Schad, John Hammond

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 by Jim Barker, Chair

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dale Rook and seconded by Steve Wilkie .Jen Schad indicated that the minutes did not include that there was a discussion of possible new members to the Commission.

The minutes were approved as amended.

CREA - Jim B. reported that all the "No Hunting" signs are now in place on the CREA property. He indicated that there were some boundary markers found. John Hammond asked if there was beaver activity in that area. Jim indicated there was no activity.

On Saturday Nov. 20, 2015 there will be maintenance on the CREA trails. "Rickey's Trail" will be moved away from a steep section and cleaned of leaves and small brush will be cut. Meet behind the CREA Barn at 9:00.

Ascutney Chapter of the CRWC - Jim attended the meeting for Steve. The group discussed the proposed work on the Blow-Me-Down Mill dam at Saint Gaudens. Jim indicated three Conservation Commission members had reviewed this project with the engineer, contractor and Park Ranger and had signed off on the expedited wetland permit.

The draft of the Silvio O. Conte Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement from Aug. 2015 was discussed. The plan proposes purchasing land along the River. Jim suggested that conservation easements be considered as it helps keep land on the the tax rolls.

UVLT - The UVLT hosted a walk in southwest Cornish and adjacent lands in Claremont. Bill G and Jim B attended in addition to about 20 others. This land is owned by Bill Lipfert and the land has recently been put under easement. Bill L. gave an informal talk. Troy Simino worked on the trails. Bill L encourages the public to use them. Sections of this land abut the Cornish Town Forest.

Town Forest Logging - Some logging work is needed on about 20 acres of the Town Forest. Ryer Jaarsma will do the work with Leo Maslan marking the timber. The wood will be pulled through the Lipfert land to a landing on Rt 120. This is exempt from the Timber Tax. John H. will check the Town Forest Management Plan for any restrictions.

Education Committee - A "Fishing Day" has been suggested for this spring. Frank Parks indicated the brook could be stocked for the event. High On the Hill in Plainfield was suggested as a possible source. Other programs mentioned included the State Of New Hampshire Wildlife Management programs, Ben Kilham, Mary Holland, and the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum.

Easement Monitoring - the monitoring is completed for this year. It was noted the White Swan Farm is on the market. It would be beneficial to pull together materials to help new owners of land with Conservation easements to understand easements. It was also suggested that the conservation lands in Cornish be presented, one by one, at Commission meetings to help all members become familiar with the properties and their restrictions.

Blow-Me -Down Dam - Jim B, Dale R, and Bob B. met with engineers and contractors to review the proposal to repair the dam. The area under the building is being scoured and needs repair to keep the dam and building from being destroyed.

Jen mentioned an old sawmill dam near Clark Camp Rd and East Rd also has water going under the dam, not over it. It was also questioned which was better for wildlife, dams or no dams.

The Conservation Commission's Water subcommittee has proposed that 2-4 of the streams in Cornish be tested on a regular basis. They have been in touch with testing labs to learn about where and when to test as well as what to test for. Corey is working on finding low cost testing sources.

Scenic roads - The Commission will again explore having some selected road(s) designated "scenic" at Town Meeting. Gap Road was on the top of the list. It was suggested that Bill Ladd and the Deweys be contacted. Jenny will spearhead the efforts.

Change of Use Tax - Jim recommended that we not request a change in the percentage (60% Commission/40% general fund) of this tax at this time.

The 2016 Conservation Award was discussed.

A motion to adjourn the business meeting was made by Dale and seconded by Jen. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Secretary
Respectively submitted,

Herrika W Poor