

Cornish Conservation Commission Minutes
May 24, 2017

Present: Jim Barker, Bill Gallagher, Dale Rook, Steven Wilkie, Bob Taylor, Rickey Poor, Jenn Schad, Stuart Wilkie

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Jim Barker, Chair.

Dale Rook moved to approve the April meeting minutes as amended, Bill seconded, approved unanimously.

Discussion of meeting minutes format. It was resolved that the meeting minutes would be edited by Jim then sent to the entire Commission as soon after each meeting as possible and then amendments and changes will be made before being finalized and approved at the following month's meeting. Once approved by the Commission, Jim will submit them for publication.

Jim has reached out to Bob Bulkely but he has not responded to e-mails or U.S. Mail. Bob was granted a Leave of Absence from the Commission at the October 2016 meeting after missing a number of prior meetings and hasn't returned to any meetings since. Ricky made a motion, and Dale seconded, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that Bob be removed from the Commission however he is welcome to re-join at any time in the future should he want.

Topical Reports:

Monitoring:

Rickey met with Deanna and Reyer to discuss monitoring. Rickey met with Steve Walker to go over the aerial photos currently available. Rickey called Gillian at Neideckers' who said we could come anytime, with a notice, to monitor the property. Perhaps that property could be done on the same day as Charlie Shurcliff's property. Rickey wrote to Brian and told him that we wanted to monitor both his and his mother's property and hope to have it completed by mid-June. His mother's property would be done on the weekend but his could be done during the week in the late afternoon. Ideally it would be great to have Reyer for the monitoring of Brian's property. Rickey would really like to have Brian accompany us when we monitor his property.

Kristine Suits from Lexington, Ohio purchased the White Swan Farm in the fall. It's not clear if it will be a primary residence or not. Rickey thinks her daughter is living in the house currently. At some point we will need to communicate with Kristine. Rickey doesn't have a phone number but has thought about stopping in and knocking on the door. We don't know if they have a copy of the easement but it should be part of the deed. Jim asked who the Realtor was. We should probably introduce ourselves and make an initial contact. This is the first time that someone from the "outside" is taking over conserved property in Cornish, and we should be sensitive to how we go about approaching them. It was decided that Jim would send a letter to her address of record in Ohio to explain who we are and what we would like to do. If we take them information, what should be in that packet – Rickey and Jim will discuss.

Rickey, Jim, and possibly Dale will monitor the Neideckers' and Shurcliff's Monday May 29th at 4:00 p.m.

Perhaps the weekend of June 10th, we could do Brian's property.

Education: No new report as Corey was not present.

Water: Jim met with the Board of Selectmen. They had read the water report, and they all had a discussion. Subsequent to that discussion they called Stephen Taylor, the State, and Jeff Ketchum, the town health officer. Their recommendation is that the town run additional tests at the end of May. Jeff is going to have the State process the tests, and Jim has volunteered to help collect samples

CREA:

When Jim was at the Board of Selectmen meeting, they did discuss the beavers. The town is willing to help install the beaver baffle. Jim received a call from a community member who was walking on the CREA property and there is a full dam now on the property. Jim hasn't been back yet to check to see what has been done at the property as of yet. The town needs to coordinate the installation of the baffle. Jim asked if anyone would be willing to be the new CREA rep to take his place. Recently there has only been two meetings a year to attend and the annual clean-up to coordinate. Steve Wilkie volunteered to be the new CREA rep from the Conservation Commission. Linda and Michael Fuerst have done some cleanup and it looks like someone has been digging up broken bottles and cans and has left a pile to be cleaned up (near the fire station entrance). Some trail cleanup, pruning, etc., is necessary – Wednesday May 31st at 4:00 p.m. meet at CREA Barn; Rain Date June 1st.

Bill Gallagher reported that the Board of Selectmen met to discuss the four-acre town-owned parcel off of Levitt Hill Road. There was someone interested in purchasing the property but there is no way to get a safe driveway to that property so he's probably not going to buy it. Bill said there is a spring near that property that we should consider investigating, testing, and see if it could be a viable water source in particularly dry years.

The Planning Board will be sending out a questionnaire. On a previous questionnaire, the question was asked, "How important is it to retain the rural character of the town of Cornish?" Over 80% of respondents said it was very important. Probably a similar question should be included again in the new questionnaire. It would be nice to also include some questions about solar energy. Jim will e-mail Heidi of the Planning Board to ask for the draft copy of the questionnaire, and he will forward it to the Commission who is asked to respond quickly if there is anything else we would like added.

Conservation Plan:

Discussion was postponed on this until next month when more people are present.

A short discussion ensued regarding which fund to use to reimburse the expenses from last month's meeting. Rickey made a motion, and Dale seconded, that we use the Barker Fund to reimburse Steve Wilkie (\$12.00) and to pay the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Planning Commission for the map work (\$134.25) rather than the Conservation Fund. Motion passed unanimously.

Corey still needs to confirm which date, and the time, for the Global Positioning System Introduction but we believe it's on June 17th.

Dale moved and Rickey seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m. by unanimous vote.

Respectively submitted,
Stuart Wilkie
Secretary

Natural Resources Inventory
Conservation Plan

The following list of ideas for the next steps in developing a Conservation Plan was developed at the August 28th (2015?) meeting of the Conservation Commission. Several ideas added in March/April 2017.

- ✓ Develop best management practices for the removal of gravel for town roads.
- ✓ *Study the impact current zoning regulations have on land conservation
- ✓ *Develop a plan for the management and protection of the town watersheds and for handling pollution.
- ✓ Identify roads that meet the standards of “scenic roads” and get them certified as such.
- ✓ Educate landowners on the use of herbicides on their land and on utility right-of-ways.
- ✓ Conduct three or four seminars a year on topics such as invasive species, water quality, herbicides, wildlife management, etc. – iNaturalist software program
- ✓ Educate landowners on best practices for wildlife habitat.
- ✓ * Help the Selectboard develop a road plan.
- ✓ Identify types of land or specific parcels of land that should be targeted for conservation and work with landowners to obtain easements.
- ✓ *Work with Planning Board on new zoning district
- ✓ * ID location of endangered species in town
- ✓ Adopt-a-Highway
- ✓ Fishing Derby
- ✓ Perambulation of Town Borders
- ✓ Monthly news on ConnectCornish
- ✓ Rotating info box updates (at least quarterly)
- ✓ ID wildlife corridors in Town
- ✓ Do planting/landscape in town
- ✓ Add public/private trails to Trail Finder.

*: Planning Board