

Cornish Conservation Commission Minutes
June 28, 2017

Present: Jim Barker, Bill Gallagher, Dale Rook, Steven Wilkie, Bob Taylor, Stuart Wilkie, Corey Fitch, Deanna Fitch, Reyer Jaarsma, John Hammond

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

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

Topical Reports:

Monitoring: (Jim spoke on behalf of Rickey) – Jim and Rickey walked the eastern boundary of the Lenz's and back through Jim's property. So four of the seven properties are now completed. Rickey will set up the Meyettes' monitoring next.

Water: (Jim) – Jim met with Jeff Katchen at the Cornish Store a couple of weeks ago. The state had sent Jeff only one bottle for the e coli test so he took one sample (right on the Plainfield line) but will get more bottles from the state. John said that Jeff came into a recent Selectmen's meeting and let them know that the results came back in and that the e coli levels are still high. John then had a chat with Steve Taylor who suggested we contact DES who is responsible for surface water in the state as they probably have the best information regarding e coli and best management practices. Jeff had talked with someone from the agency that tested the water, and they weren't horrified by the e coli levels, however the levels are still high and should be addressed.

CREA/Beavers (Steve/Jim): Jim reported that a group of CREA committee members met (Ginny Wood, Jim Fitch, Jim, Steve, Wayne Gray, John Hammond, Scott Baker) and current thoughts are to install two beaver baffles on the property. Steve reported that on Sunday June 25th one beaver baffle was installed as a replacement for the one that was there before but had been removed. They didn't use a wooden cage but it's just metal for now. Probably the second baffle needs to go further out into the main dam and would need access through canoes or kayaks. Perhaps an education board that explains the beaver baffles and how they work along with an education board that explains the importance and the impact of wetlands.

Conservation Plan: The top three focuses for our work going forward in the immediate future will be:

- 1) Quarterly Educational Seminars for the general public
- 2) Develop a plan for the management and protection of the town watersheds and for handling pollution
- 3) Identify types of land or specific parcels of land that should be targeted for conservation and work with landowners to obtain easements.

Next month we will continue to identify possible seminar topics and also start with the watershed and pollution management plan and continue the discussion of how to increase the amount of conserved land.

At least quarterly we will update the info boxes and also submit a related article to Connect Cornish.

Wildlife Corridor: Linda Furst has often talked about her desire to create a Wildlife Corridor of conserved land just outside the park fence up off East Road. Tim Schad organized a gathering and a number of landowners turned out. Tim has talked to a number of landowners about land easements and many of them are quite interested. Some are ready this year and a few others will be within the next two or three years. Jim shared with the Commission a map of the properties under consideration.

Planning Board Questions for town-wide questionnaire: Jim went to the Planning Board and told them the questions they had on the questionnaire look good to us.

GPS Training – Corey: On Saturday June 17th, we held a test GPS class to pinpoint exactly what we want as part of the GPS class that we will offer to the general public, hopefully this fall. We started at the Town Offices with a 30 minute overview and presentation with a short discussion after, and then we went to CREA to do a little hands-on practice with the GPS units. What should be included in the training session for the general public? We need a better way to have more people be able to experience the hands-on practice. Perhaps we should have people download a specific app before they come so they can use their own device for hands-on practice. If the training class is held at the school then the seminar could start in the school, hands-on outside the school, and then go back into the school to learn how to upload data. Class should be advertised on Connect Cornish. When people sign up, ask a couple of questions about what they hope to get out of the class. Perhaps the first Saturday after Labor Day or shortly thereafter. Corey will ask Andrew for his availability.

White Swan Farm – Jim wrote to the owner of record but hasn't received a response. Rickey and Jim talked about this issue. Jim will write another letter and drop the letter off at the house to whoever is there.

Ex Officio Members – Jim: There really is no reason from a legal perspective why John (or whoever is the selectman representative to the Commission) can't vote as a member of the Cornish Conservation Commission. There was a brief discussion among the members and it was unanimous that John should have voting privileges. Jim will review the by-laws and rewrite if necessary for approval by the entire Commission.

Local Control – An article in the winter edition of the Timberland Owners Newsletter shows that they continue to be focused on the issue of Local Control regarding logging practices. Hampton, N.H. had an ordinance that was approved by the voters regarding the town claiming more local control in the logging practices in the town – the Timberland Owners sued the town, which resulted in a judge ruling against the town and the town decided not to fight the decision. Now Durham has drafted an ordinance that gives more control to the local jurisdiction but the N.H. Timberland Owners Association will be fighting the forest management component of the ordinance. Bill made a motion, Steve seconded, that the meeting minutes reflect that the Cornish Conservation Commission is aware of potential local control issues that may arise in the future. Jim will scan the article from Bill, which will now become part of the minutes and will be distributed to all members of the Commission. The Commission passed the motion – the focus of which is to alert local planning and conservation commission members about the debate over logging.

Education Boards: Corey would like to include some additional information in the boxes that would stay permanently including: larger signs for the three boxes (Town Offices, Cornish General Store, 12% Solution), general meeting information – open to public, general information about the boxes – meant to be informative and educational. Mission statement. CREA. Protection of water. Total conserved acreage. Should we consider adding or moving one to the school?

Dale moved and Corey seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. by unanimous vote.

Respectively submitted,
Stuart Wilkie
Secretary