

Minutes from Conservation Commission Meeting, August 11, 2015

Attending: Kathy Schillemat, Chair, Judith Putzel, David Patek, Tom Newcombe, and Susan Hansel, alternate, and select men's representative

The meeting began with a site visit to the bridge on Old Stoddard Road. Mike Tarr and Anne Ames also were in attendance for the visit. Mike explained the scope of the project and Anne spoke to the capacity of the culvert to handle water during a high water event. She noted that since her house was built in 1933, it has never been flooded. The water is adequately able to disperse both above and below the bridge. Both Anne and Mike believe that the proposed plans will be sufficient to control the water flow in the area.

The Commission members returned to the library and approved the letter to the Department of Environmental Services supporting the current plan. Anne Ames will also be sending a letter, as will Susan Hansel, as a member of the Select Board. Kathy signed the letter and will mail it right away.

Kathy updated the Commission on progress with the Q2C Grant. tools have been purchased for trail work. Kathy asked David Birchenough for receipts so that she can submit them to the town to reimburse Moving In Step for the tools purchased with MiS funds. This reimbursement will cover, at least in part, the town's commitment to pay 25% of the amount of the project budget.

The Commission discussed current developments with the land acquisition project. Members have each received a copy of the latest document drafted by Stephen Froling relative to the cell tower issue. The Commission members discussed the meeting with Jeremy Wilson. Tom reminded the members of our "homework" in preparation for writing the Conservation Easement to come up with three lists: 1. The things we must do because of the grant; 2. The things we will not allow; 3. Things that can happen subject to the stewardship plan (i.e., forestry, agriculture, trails, plans for recreation.) It was noted that a stewardship plan is a vehicle for "doing things" on the property, as opposed to a conservation easement without a stewardship plan which would have everything spelled out from the start with little ability to change. We will discuss this further at the September meeting.

There was much discussion on how we replenish the funds expended to pay for the purchase of the fee interest and related costs. The grant will reimburse the Town. The Land Use Change Tax Fund, or Conservation Fund can be replenished to the amount expended from that Fund, but the Partridge fund cannot be replenished from the grant money. A private fund cannot receive public monies. So another vehicle will have to be created to ensure that the funds from the grant will be used for conservation and for costs related to fulfillment of our commitment to the LWCF. Edie Drinkwater has told Tom that she will set up a designated account for the money, but under that scenario, the Conservation Commission would have to make a request to the selectmen every time that they had to expend funds. The ideal situation would be to set up a trust fund, with the Conservation Commission as agents with authority to expend money from the Trust Fund. This option will require approval from Town Meeting to set up the Trust Fund. The Commission will discuss this further at the September meeting, to determine the

parameters of the Trust Fund and the language for a warrant article. RSA 31:19 is the statute related to trust funds created by towns.

Kathy mentioned upcoming events, including the Silver Lake Land Trust Annual Meeting on August 15, the Monadnock Conservancy Annual Meeting on August 22, and the NHACC meeting on November 7. It was noted that having the Silver Lake Land Trust meeting on the same day as Nelson Old Home Day makes it difficult for anyone from the Commission to attend. Kathy will send a letter to Rosamond Putnam requesting that they consider changing the day in the future to make it possible for Nelson folks to attend. Judith said that the meeting would be a valuable event for the Conservation commission to attend.

There was a brief discussion of ideas for a fall program or activity. Ideas included Ben Kilham, Sy Montgomery, or someone who could talk about the ins and outs of grants for towns (i.e., how the money gets used, commitments of the grantee to granting organizations, etc.). The plans for a fall event will be discussed at the next meeting, which will be Thursday, September 10, at 7:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Schillemat