

PEMBROKE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (CC)
Draft Minutes of June 8, 2009 Meeting

Present: Lea Anne Atwell; Carol Bertsimas, Vice-Chair; Ammy Heiser, Chair; Stetson Heiser; and Brian Mrazik, Secretary.

Not Present: Mike Payeur; David Sheldon, Board of Selectman (BOS) Representative; Jeff White, Planning Board (PB) Representative; and Ayn Whytemare

Others Present: Harold Thompson, Sewer Commission

1. **Call to Order** – Ammy called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.
2. **Review and Adopt May 11 Minutes** – Carol made a motion to accept the minutes with a spelling correction to Sharon Wason’s name. Stetson seconded. All voted in favor.
3. **Acquisition Update**
 - a. **Hillman Parcel, Buck St.** – Ammy reported that David Jodoin has prepared a draft letter to Jodi Walker of USDA-NRCS stating the BOS’s support for the concept of purchase of this property and for proceeding with the application for Federal matching funds under the NH Farm and Ranch Program. Finalization of the letter is awaiting BOS approval. The application is due on Friday June 12 at the NRCS office in Durham. The application includes 6 parts: Landowner eligibility documentation; Information on the easement parcel; Soils information; Easement value, funding request, and appraisal; Supporting documentation; and Certification statement. The cost of the appraisal will be funded by the CC which will also provide the local-share funding if NRCS approves the application. After purchase, the Town has the option of selling the land for agricultural use and holding the easement on it. Ammy and Stetson are also pursuing the possibility of the Five Rivers Conservation Land Trust serving as the easement holder to assure that the terms of the easement are met in perpetuity. It is critical that the process not be unduly delayed, as the CC’s option to purchase expires in November. Members of the CC thanked Ammy and Stetson for their hard work in pursuit of this acquisition.
 - b. **Pine Grove Parcel, N. Pembroke Rd.** – Ammy talked to the landowner, Steve Fowler, who stated that he is still interested in proceeding with a conservation easement on the property. At the June 1 BOS meeting, reference was made to a preexisting agreement between the landowner and the Town not to develop this land. Such an agreement would negate the need for an easement. Stetson researched this and found that no documentation exists for such an agreement. Therefore the CC will proceed with the appraisal process which was previously

approved. **ACTION ITEM:** Stetson will contact Tim Daniels with direction to proceed with the appraisal.

4. CTAP Open Space Planning Program – Ammy received two draft documents from Vanessa Bittermann, Regional Planner at the Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC), including a ‘Draft Scope of Work’ for preparation of an Open Space Plan and the ‘Open Space Planning Protocol Summary’, which were forwarded to CC members by email. Ammy requested comments on the draft. Brian expressed concern that most of the work will be done by an ‘Open Space Committee’ to be appointed by the Town. This Committee will be responsible for ranking the relative importance of natural resources, outlining ‘Green Infrastructure’ areas in the Town, developing protection strategies, and developing funding scenarios, funding requirements and timelines. Although this is a comprehensive approach, it seems like a major effort to coordinate and conduct. From the proposal, it is unclear who will lead and facilitate this effort. Ammy also expressed concern about the availability of volunteers to participate in the effort, particularly in the summertime. Vanessa will attend the July 13 meeting of the CC to explain the process and address some of these concerns. **ACTION ITEM:** Ammy requested that CC members continue to review and mark-up the draft documents in advance of the July meeting.

5. Conservation Land Monitoring Update – The Butterfield, Gamelin, Girard and AG tracts still need to be monitored. Carol agreed to do the Butterfield tract and Lea Anne previously agreed to do the Gamelin tract. A citizen complaint was received concerning vegetation plantings on the Beck tract. Carol will call back to get further details and then advise the abutters that plantings on conservation lands are not permitted. Brian presented results of GPS surveys conducted on the Beck and Whittemore tracts as part of the monitoring activities. GPS files (including waypoints and tracks) will be put on CDs and placed in the tract folders. The CC agreed that GPS surveys are needed on all other conservation properties to permit their mapping and analysis in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

6. Town Planner Position – The CC is concerned with the lack of planning expertise and administrative support available to the CC, particularly since the Town has reduced the Town Planner position to part-time. At the same time, the workload on the CC has increased, such as with the new requirement that the CC review special-use permit applications for the Planning Board. The CC chairman is now spending about 30 hours per month on administrative matters alone. In addition, land acquisition and grant-application activities have been extremely time-consuming due to the lack of planning and administrative support. **ACTION ITEM:** Lea Anne agreed to draft, and circulate to CC members for review, a letter to the BOS requesting that the Planner position be restored to full time and that professional assistance by the Town Planner be provided to the CC. Examples include assistance with public hearing procedures, archiving of CC data and materials, GIS, grant applications, permit reviews and correspondence, violations on conservation lands, and various statutes and regulations.

7. Application Reviews for Planning Board

- a. **Silver Hills (09-06)** – The Planning Board requested another application review for this property, relative to the subdivision of commercial lot 12 into 2 lots and commercial lot 12-1 into 3 lots, and the upgrade of a road from class 6 to class 5. These actions would involve aquifer, wetland, shoreland protection, and floodplain areas. The CC did not identify any new encroachments into wetland, shoreland or floodplains associated with this action. However, we continue to caution that much of this area is part of the aquifer system that supplies the Town wells downstream of the site. The permitting of future commercial development on these lots must consider appropriate restrictions for the avoidance of groundwater contamination. **ACTION ITEM:** Ammy will draft a response to the Planning Board reflecting this position.

- b. **LTC Properties** – The Planning Board requested the CC to review LTC’s response to our previous comments on the proposed development. These comments focused on minimizing the amount of driveway encroachment on wetlands, maintaining driveway permeability, and the restoration of previously filled wetland areas. The CC’s review concluded that our concerns have been adequately addressed in the revised plan. **ACTION ITEM:** Ammy will send an email to Stephanie Alexander to this effect.

8. Correspondence and Website

- a. **Website** – The CC agreed that any further work on our page for the new Town website should be suspended pending further information, such as requirements and constraints, from the BOS.

- b. **Ames Brook Property** – The CC holds a conservation easement on property along the brook that was set aside as part of the original development. A citizen complaint was received by NHDES regarding apparent wetland encroachments in two areas of the easement. NHDES conducted site inspections and found that there were no violations in areas under State jurisdiction. **ACTION ITEM:** Ammy will contact Kevin Krebbs regarding his findings during monitoring of the easement.

- c. **Bow Lane** – A property owner is seeking an expedited wetland permit from NHDES to add riprap along the brook to stabilize the bank adjacent to his garage. DES has issued a ‘Notice of Incomplete Application’ for this action because information has not been received from the NH Natural Heritage Bureau.

9. Miscellaneous

- a. **CC Computer** – Jeff White is continuing to investigate getting a computer for the CC. Lea Anne reported that a single license for ArcGIS, an interactive mapping and GIS analysis software, would cost about \$2,500. Sharing a

license with the Planning Office and other Town departments might be a viable option. GIS expertise in the Town Planning Office is highly desirable.

- b. Bow Lane Parking** – Harold Thompson from the Sewer Commission reported a problem with vehicles parking in front of the gate to the pump station while utilizing the Bow Lane conservation area. The creation of a dedicated parking area for the site was precluded by shoreland protection regulations. Mr. Thompson requested that the CC place new ‘No Parking’ signs in the vicinity of the gate. **ACTION ITEM:** The CC agreed to work with the Police Department to obtain and post these signs.

10. Adjournment: Carol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 pm. Lea Anne seconded. All in favor, the motion carried.

Submitted by Brian Mrazik, Secretary.

Next Meeting – July 13, 2009