

MINUTES

Conservation Lands Review Committee

November 22, 2013

Draft minutes to be reviewed and approved at a subsequent meeting.

Present:

Committee members: Ned Beecher, John Mersfelder, Bob Seston, Katy Thompson

Also: Nelson O'Bryan, Martha Twombly (first hour of meeting only),

For second hour of meeting: Randy Frye, Susan Bryant Kimball, David White, and Theresa Swanick

10:10 am Meeting was started.

1. Reich/Gilman

- The Committee:
 - Reviewed a draft fundraising letter to neighbors/townspeople
 - A flyer about the proposed easements and project
 - A map of how these proposed easement properties fit into the overall conservation of the area

All of these documents had been prepared by Martha and the Forest Society. She took notes on suggested edits and will provide updated drafts for Committee review.
- Nelson and others will try to find a better panoramic photo of the properties
- There is a new closing date – March 3rd.... a bit tougher; may want to seek a delay later on, after we see how the fundraising goes.
- The plan is for the letter to neighbors and a news release will go out first week of December to taxpayers in Tamworth and Forest Society members in Sandwich
- TCC will write thank you letters for donations coming to the Conservation Fund
- Forest Society will process credit card donations (TCC will forward any we received) and will provide thanks for money coming to them.
- Funding: \$10,000 committed by the Commission to kick off the project; this is on top of the payment of the Reich survey, which was \$3920. These are the only contributions by the TCC. Additional funds entering the Conservation Fund for this project will be turned over to the Forest Society for completing this project. What happens if sufficient funds are not raised? Forest Society has a commitment to return funds, if needed. Forest Society only enters a project if they are feeling fairly confident. TCC / CLRC is only committed to complete a best effort to get this project done.
- Fundraising strategies and assignments will be made at a special CLRC meeting next Monday evening, Nov. 28, 6:30 pm.

Bearcamp Valley Farm, Southern Lots Conservation Easement

Ned had asked Theresa Swanick to develop a draft Purchase & Sale Agreement for this transaction; she and Ned have updated it recently and provided it to the Committee in advance of this meeting. The Committee reviewed the details of the P & S.

- Logging. Discussion with Randy Frye, logging operator for Bob Floyd, who has started a selective cut on the southern lots that he and Bob expect will continue all winter. Operation is not high-grading; timber stand is being improved. Bob and Randy have talked with a licensed forester who will complete a written forest management plan. The

goal for all is for the operation to be done in accordance with such a plan, using best management practices, so as to be in accordance with the Conservation Easement, once that is signed (likely in January), so that Randy will not have to stop logging when the Easement is signed.

Motion: John moved and Katy seconded that the Committee understands and agrees with the arrangements being made regarding this logging operation and how it fits with the upcoming Conservation Easement. Motion carried

- Survey. Ned has arranged for Jim Hambrook of Sandwich to conduct a survey of the southern lots (Map 420, Lots 7 & 9) for this project, including delineating the areas that contain buildings that will not be covered by the Conservation Easement. Jim was chosen because he has done recent work in the area, including figuring out the western property line.

Motion: Katy moved and Chele seconded that the Committee proceed with signing the agreement with Jim Hambrook on behalf of the Commission. 3 in favor, 1 abstention. Ned will do so and arrange for a check from the Town for ½ of the estimated survey price as a downpayment.

- Signing the Purchase & Sale Agreement. There was discussion concerning the details of the Conservation Easement and to what extent they will be the same as those pertaining to the Eastern Field, which is cited in the draft P & S. It was agreed that Ned would make clear in the P & S that, while the Easement on the Southern Lots will be “substantially” the same, there are specific details that will be figured out with the landowner and that will likely be less restrictive than on Eastern Field (e.g. the size of agricultural buildings allowed on the easement area).

Motion to proceed with the P & S – Bob moved, Chele seconded; unanimous approval. Ned will arrange for a time in the next week or two for Bob Floyd and Nelson to sign the document. Bob Seston began the process of requisitioning a check from the Town for this; he and Ned will work to expedite this check, so that it is ready ASAP.

- Establishing Easement Boundaries
 - Site walk of Committee/Commission planned – Dec 3, 11 am – Ned will notice & post & invite Commission. The Committee will mark and flag the proposed limits of the carve-out area around the buildings and get Bob Floyd’s agreement on it; then it will be surveyed by Jim Hambrook for the Easement map and description.
 - Important to be cognizant of possible need for boundary line adjustment between Lots 7 & 9 in the future. Bob Floyd’s intention is that these two lots – and the whole Farm – stay together always. But future landowners may wish to have the two lots separated, and the Conservation Easement should not preclude that. Plus, the current barn may straddle the line between the two lots, which may require a future boundary line adjustment so that it ends up on just one of the lots. This stipulation will need to be worked into the Easement.
 - Consider need for future farming to have additional agricultural structures (e.g. behind the current barn); this should probably be allowed for in the Easement.

- Consider allowing septic system replacement to be all or partially in the easement area.

The Committee will discuss and decide on details of the Conservation Easement at a meeting on Thursday, December 12, at 10 am.

Donation of Easement by Chris Alt

- Ned just received a map and general details of the proposed Conservation Easement that Chris Alt wishes to give to the Town, at no expense to the Town. This easement will fill in an area in the middle of the current Alt conservation easements, completing protection of almost all of the Alt lands along Bunker Hill Road. The particular area for this easement is about 27 acres and includes most of the field area around Chris Alt's house, including excellent edge habitat, some forestlands, a small pond, and some mixed wetlands. Chris Alt will carve out two areas that will not be covered by the Easement: 2 acres around his house and 2 acres in the southwest corner for a potential future house site.
- Chris is working with attorney Doug Hill of Meredith to formalize the Easement. He hopes to complete the donation by the end of the year.
- Ned told Chris and Doug that we will need all details ASAP, to ensure the Commission and the Selectmen have time to review them.
- Schedule:
 - Committee review today
 - December 5: Chris Alt/Doug Hill present concept to the Selectmen, to ensure they will accept the Easement. Ned and/or Nelson attend this meeting in support of the project.
 - December 9: Full Conservation Commission will review the details of the project and vote to support it or not. Chris Alt will provide the draft Conservation Easement in advance of this meeting.
 - December 19: Selectmen will be asked to sign the Conservation Easement. Chris Alt and the TCC will provide the draft easement to the Selectmen at least a week in advance, so the Town Attorney can review it.

Motion that the Committee support the concept, as presented here, of the Conservation Easement to be donated by Chris Alt, pending further details; John moved, Katy seconded. Motion carried.

Adjournment: John moved, Katy seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.