

MINUTES

Conservation Lands Review Committee of the Tamworth Conservation Commission Friday, May 18, 2012

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

Committee members present: Ned Beecher, David Little, Bob Seston, Kate Thompson
Also attending: Susan Bryant Kimball

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 am.

Conservation of Bearcamp Valley Farm - Eastern Field

- Ned reported that he had left a message for Van Hertel that morning regarding possibility of obtaining a donation from him of the ~6 acres of western field in Sandwich, to be used as a leverage to help fundraising for the current land conservation project.
- Ned reported that he had briefed the Selectmen about the possibility of pursuing conservation of this eastern field lot, to see if they had any objections or concerns, since they would have to accept and sign any conservation easement on it for the Town. All three had no objection and agreed that the Commission proceed in working on it.
- Kate has received an opinion of value for Bob Floyd's field lot of about 17 acres north of Route 25 and adjacent to and east of the Western Field.
- The group discussed the possibilities for working toward protection of this property, including discussion of:
 - Whether or not it makes sense to tackle this one lot at a time or try to work on all three remaining Bearcamp Valley Farm lots at once. Ned stressed that keeping the transaction simple was probably better for Mr. Floyd and for our committee.... one step at a time.
 - Initial discussions with Mr. Floyd suggest that we are in reasonable price range for a conservation easement in comparison to the opinion of value.
 - Any conservation easement placed on the property should encourage agriculture to the extent possible. Susan noted that she thinks the Western Field easement was too restrictive. There was discussion about the priorities of the conservation efforts on this farm, with the highest priority for the Commission being the maintenance of habitat and open space along Route 25 to ensure, to the extent possible, wildlife connectivity between the Whites and Ossipees. Agriculture is an important second priority.
 - It would be ideal to have the farm continue operations into the future, which would help the fields remain open. It was agreed that an easement cannot require anyone to mow the fields, but it makes sense to allow both the landowner and/or the easement holder (the Town in this case) to mow the fields.
 - David brought out the floodplain map, to review again the possibility of a building site on the eastern field lot; it was agreed there likely is one.
 - It was noted that in dealing with this lot, for the first time we are out ahead of the parcel being put on the market, which is a good place to be. Thus, there should be no mark up by a developer (as in the Western Field) and no realtor fees (as in Beaver Brook).

- Kate made a motion and David seconded that the Committee and Commission approach Mr. Floyd with an agreed upon price for purchasing a conservation easement on the “Eastern Field” property north of Route 25. All approved. Ned will talk to Mr. Floyd.

Adjournment: Ned moved and Kate seconded and all agreed