

Draft MINUTES
TCC Conservation Lands Review Committee
February 1, 2013
Tamworth Town Offices

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

Present: Chele Miller, Ned Beecher, Katy Thompson, John Mersfelder (arrived half way through) as well as Chris Conrod, David White, Susan Bryant-Kimball

Called to order at 9:10

Chris Conrod provided excellent evaluations of the conservation values of Gilman West and the Cook properties in advance of this meeting. In addition, he provided an updated map of conservation lands in Tamworth, estimating that 38% of the town is in conservation (the total land area used in the calculation does not include the area of lakes and ponds).

Reich Conservation Easement purchase with Forest Society

--Ned reported that Thorne Surveys have said they are done with most of the field work on the survey that the TCC is funding and will have a draft map ready in the next couple of weeks.
--Ned will check with Nelson on grant application to help cover costs

Gilman West

--Committee would like more detail on the \$45,000 ancillary costs of Forest Society
--TCC has monitoring costs & responsibilities whenever it takes on a new easement; with Forest Society as owners, these costs are likely lower overall. However, there was some concern expressed that we are proposing to pay into the project plus take on these costs/responsibilities. There was discussion about how to view this project and our role: we are either just putting in a somewhat arbitrary amount as part of working with the Forest Society in good faith or we are trying to parse out some particular costs, minus our stewardship costs, to come up with particular level of contribution. In the end, there seemed to be agreement that the actual amount we put in is somewhat arbitrary, but it is a way to have the Town's involvement and to get the land conserved for far less than would be required if we were to have to do this on our own. The benefit of partnering with the Forest Society are considerable.
--Discussion followed regarding the value of this easement compared to others, including the ones we are working on. In the end, all agreed that the Cook property is the most critical current option. But Gilman West is seen as completing prior work and at a reasonable price
--Horse fields owned by Diana are on Marlow, but it is rocky.
--Discussion of value of conservation: what are the targets for % of land conserved? Forest Society set target of 25% of state many years ago; at that time Tamworth was already beyond that, mostly because of Hemenway, White Lake, and the Chocorua basin conservation lands.
--Key questions for each acquisition:
--is this project going to complement current conservation?
--does it fit the goals set by the TCC (shoreland protection, White-to-Ossipees connectivity)?
--does it keep things on the tax roles (Forest Society pays conservation rate taxes)?

Vote: Katy moved to recommend to the Commission that it commit \$15,000 to the Forest Society effort for Gilman West; John seconded, all approved.

Cook – Former mill and dam property, South Tamworth

- unique gorge, swimming hole, old ford
- wildlife crossing on road and river
- exemplary historical site: old mills, dam, etc.
- property includes island in river and two areas on the north side of the river
- NH Div. of Historical Resources has interest and documentation from the time the dam was taken out
- Fish & Game looked into buying it two years ago and still has interest
- value for recreation
- this is a prime, unique opportunity of very high value and is a great cooperative grant possibility – which is how we will pursue this

Action: Bob Seston will talk to Harold about our interest and whether we can have some time (3 months) to work with Fish & Game and other organizations to create a cooperative effort and grant application (Katy will provide contact information).

Floyd South (two lots of Bearcamp Valley Farm south of Route 25)

Ned will talk to Bob, try to find what he needs for money, can he give us 3 – 5 years, with payments spread out over time. Maybe he needs to talk about other options for getting money out of his land.

Adjourned: Bob moved, Chele seconded, all approved at 11:45.
