

MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
May 9, 2007

A meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Present were: Paul Pinkham, David Weathers, Rob Adair, Carol Lyman, Chuck Broomhall. Also in attendance was Forester, Don Johnson.

1. Approval of Minutes (4/11/07): Motion by Mr. Adair, second by Mr. Weathers, that the Minutes of the April 11th meeting be approved as circulated. Carried by unanimous vote.

2. Request by White Mt. Milers: Paul Kirsch and Tim Livingston appeared on behalf of White Mt. Milers seeking approval for their Summer Race Series. It was reported it would be the same as last year except for a change in sponsorship. There will be no charge to enter the race. It will be the same one mile used last year. The series runs for nine weeks on Tuesday nights beginning at 5:30 p.m., June 12th to August 7th. Last year there were about 60 to 65 participants.

Mr. Kirsch stated they will encourage parking at John Fuller School to leave room in the Homesite parking lot. Mr. Weathers noted the Selectmen fielded a number of calls on the parking issue, and expressed that anything they can do to alleviate that situation would help. Mr. Kirsch stated they will post signs; generally the same people participate each week and usually announcements are made at the beginning of the race. Mr. Pinkham advised that the Commission would require a written request and will respond in writing addressing the parking.

3. Conway Scenic Railroad: Russ Seybold and Bob Parrish, Chair of the local Swift River Advisory Committee, joined the meeting to report that application has been made for a grant for final engineering and design study for reconstruction near the Conway Scenic Railroad bridge behind Kennett High School to correct an erosion problem. It was noted that a study was funded by Fish & Game and DES in 2004, this final design will implement the assessment and concept plan written in 2004. The application is for a grant with matching funds from the railroad and will go before the Council in early June. If approved they will move forward with the proposed design.

Mr. Seybold said their purpose for attending this meeting is that they are looking to share information with the Conservation Commission and answer any questions there might be. He stated there is no financial obligation on the part of the Commission, just acknowledgement that they have looked at it and have some knowledge of it and support the project. It was explained that they will be putting in a 66' culvert and bridge abutment on the south side, and two other culverts on the north side by Allard's field. There will be some rock weirs and a rock "cross vane" structure is proposed upstream of the bridge to control the grade of the river bed, reduce stress on the reconstructed river banks, and focus high-velocity flows in the center of the channel. It was noted there may

be some slight alignment problems to be addressed. Mr. Parrish said the potential downstream flows will be calculated and laid out and determined before they go forward.

Mr. Pinkham questioned the purpose of the weirs. Mr. Seybold said they will help to continue the flow of material. They would not approve removing the dam, have positioned boulders there for any work in the future, with permission from the landowner.

Mr. Parrish said once the grant is approved it is probable that the engineering work on the project will be coming to the Commission also.

Mr. Haynes questioned whether the purpose is to keep it so that the trestle will not wash away. Mr. Seybold stated a plan was approved in 2000 for riprap and that permit, with this, would be the last time they would be allowed to do anything like that until a plan was devised and a more permanent step done.

Mr. Weathers questioned who is obligated to come in and do repair work if the weirs do not work out, noting they are new and have not been tried before on a gradient this steep. Mr. Parrish stated we are not engineers, but will have them come and answer such questions. Mr. Haynes said when you displace water you will increase the volume, and expressed concern as to where the water goes, whether we are creating flooding down below.

Mr. Parrish said they hope to have this portion for the engineering study done by the end of the year and will include public hearings as well as after the design is completed. The estimated cost for final design, permitting and construction is \$834,000.

Mr. Parrish asked to have a representative from Conway on the Advisory Committee, noting he has spoken to the Selectmen in the past, but got no response.

4. Reports:

a. Don Johnson – Whitaker Management Plan Update - Mr. Johnson reported he has put together a work agreement for the upcoming year, has met with the Town Manager, the agreement has been signed and we are on track.

He has ordered the trees for planting in Shedd Woods – maple, oak and hemlock – will get the tree planting done by about the end of next week. He will then get Gradual Trail and Whitaker Lane seeded.

Mr. Johnson noted the Management Plan is not on the work agreement. Mr. Pinkham stated he can draft a separate memorandum of agreement for that. Mr. Johnson said the recommendation, etc. for the Management Plan is good for about ten years.

Mr. Pinkham made reference to the Shedd Woods design with granite posts and fencing, noting that we did not intend to abandon the concept of some sort of fence, just not one

quite so grand, less costly – possibly pressure treated fencing or cedar posts. Mr. Weathers suggested looking at that after the planting is done.

Mr. Johnson explained the fence would be set in from the road where the service road goes in; as regards a gate, the intent was to have room for a person to walk through there, and if there is a need to drive in, they can remove a post.

Tree Farm Field Day - Mr. Pinkham noted we had talked at the last meeting about putting together a video with Channel 3 and wished to know where we are with that. Mr. Johnson said we need to talk to their representative. Mr. Pinkham said also we are looking for some sort of outline. Mr. Johnson suggested a brief video tour of Shedd Woods and Whitaker Woods and a description of what a tree farm is and how it benefits life here. Mr. Pinkham felt it needs to be more public friendly and not just “tree people” friendly and suggested a press release of what it is we have done that makes us so qualified, and advising of the award.

b. Jeff Lougee - TNC Report – Work Agreement - Mr. Pinkham stated Jeff Lougee could not be present; however, he called him regarding land adjacent to Artist Falls on which we had a pitch from Bergeron’s office. He questioned whether we know of any activity going on there (former Franchi development). Mr. Adair said they are logging up there again. Mr. Pinkham will contact Doug Burnell.

c. Treasurer’s Report - There was question of why we ended up with \$6,000 at the end of the year and whether we ever paid the \$20,000 to Schiavi. It was noted information from the Town Office does not address those questions. The money was taken came from our account (\$20,000 for November). There was a memo from the Commission to cut a check for \$20,000. Messrs. Pinkham and Weathers will meet with the Finance Director upon her return from vacation.

d. Selectmen’s Report - None.

5. Other Business:

CDRC Report - Mr. Weathers stated presently it looks like the southern end of the bypass will go out for bid after completion of the traffic study. If no great change in traffic count by beginning of 2008, the southern end will go out to bid. It will begin at Coleman’s and end at Rt. 113 in Center Conway and includes five bridges. It will be broken up into \$25 million segments. He stated Don Lyford of NHDOT does not think they have to have a traffic study on the middle section after they do the lower end. Funding is questionable at this point.

Mr. Weathers noted the Scenic Vista visitor center is scheduled to open late summer or early fall; in town paving and the vista are to be done by June 18th. There was question as to whether there is a proposed plan to put the turning lane back in – no third lane between River Road and Mechanic Street. It was noted there will not be another CDRC meeting until September.

a. Re-election of Board Members - It was announced that Dan Lucy and Paul Pinkham were both reappointed to the Conservation Commission. The next order of business is to elect officers.

Motion was made by Mr. Broomhall, seconded by Mr. Weathers, that the slate of officers remain the same with the exception of the position of Vice Chair since Mr. Lucy currently does not have the time to fulfill that obligation. Carried by unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Mr. Weathers, seconded by Mr. Haynes, that Rob Adair be appointed Vice Chair. Carried by unanimous vote.

b. USVLT update – Ongoing.

c. Whitaker Trail Plan – 2007 – Mr. Adair said they hope by next meeting to have things narrowed down a little.

d. Whitaker Signs – Mr. Broomhall is scheduled to get prices on Thursday.

e. Wetland Applications – None.

f. Design Review Committee Report – See above.

g. Acquisition Criteria – Draft has been sent to Board of Selectmen.

It was agreed that a message should be sent to the Town Office that it is the consensus of the Commission that trees to be planted at the Scenic Vista should be grouped rather than planted in a row across the vista as, when they are grown, they will impair the view.

Next Meeting Date: The next regular meeting will be held on June 13th at 6:30 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Broomhall, seconded by Mr. Adair and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary