

**MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
January 8, 2014**

The January meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Members present were: Rob Adair, Linda Kearney, Larry Huemmler, and Dan Lucy. Karla Allen and Carol Lyman joined the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes 11/13/13: Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Mr. Lucy, that the Minutes of the Nov. 13th meeting be accepted as circulated. Motion carried with 3 votes in the affirmative and 1 abstention (Huemmler).

2. Approval of 2014 Meeting Schedule: It was agreed the meeting schedule would continue as previously on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, with the exception of July and December when, historically, no meeting has been held.

3. Public Comment: None.

4. Reports: Mr. Adair advised Mr. Johnson had reported to him that since November they have completed work in Whitaker Woods – a problem with a wet area on the northern side of the power lines has been remedied by the placement of about 100’ of fabric, a culvert and 12” of fill, as well as about 6” of fill on 80’ of a low spot on Whitaker Lane Trail.

Mr. Weathers was not present for a Selectmen’s Report; however, Mr. Adair said there have been two wetlands applications: one related to Conway Village water/sewer project which was sent back for more information.

5. Other Business:

a. Nomination/election of Officers – It was decided to table this until the February meeting with the hope that all members could be present.

b. Conservation Lands Review – Mr. Adair noted there was discussion at the November meeting regarding the NHDOT mitigation lands and establishment of a trail head at the end of Hemlock Lane [between Chick’s and the bike shop]. He said there is a cul de sac and the DOT right of way is quite wide there. Mr. Adair said the parking at Pudding Pond is miniscule and this would access the southern end of the mitigation lands and would provide access to the quarry area. It was Mr. Adair’s opinion that the CCC would want to do some improvements to the trails there, noting it would be nice to put up a kiosk, maybe with the help of volunteers or some grant money. He will discuss this with Earl Sires and Paul DegliAngeli. Ms. Kearney questioned if Walmart expands would that be one way? Mr. Adair stated no there will be another round-about.

Mr. Adair said in an area from East Conway Road to Pudding Pond, trapper, Dennis Hill, would like to set traps for beaver. Ms. Kearney said she had questioned Paul Pinkham as to why he is so against this and he had mentioned they have done something before, possibly

relocating them. Mr. Adair had received a call from Fish & Game who said the issue with relocating is that no one wants them. He stated he has not heard back from Mr. Hill, but we do owe him a response. Mr. Adair said he understands Mr. Pinkham's point of view is the beaver traps seem to be inhumane. Ms. Kearney stated if they are on your property, and are disruptive, you can shoot them. Ms. Allen said when you start moving dams you can alter water flow.

Mr. Lucy said he is not sure whether Mr. Pinkham was opposed to it or afraid that the CCC should not condone it. Mr. Huemmler said he agrees with Mr. Pinkham, suggesting we need to look at what the other alternatives are. Mr. Adair commented to relocate them is problematic; you have to find some place to put them, or put in beaver boxes which is a perfectly legitimate thing. Ms. Allen stated they do not work well, they have to be installed in a specific way and not just anyone can do it properly. It was reported that the beavers have backed up the level of Pudding Pond affecting the Mt. Division Railroad tracks; the Railroad people are requesting it be done, there is no damage to Conservation land.

Mr. Adair asked for suggestions as to what to do. Ms. Allen said if there was another method of killing them humanely..... Mr. Lucy said he is not sure shooting them is any more humane than trapping them. Mr. Adair noted is it difficult to shoot a beaver. Ms. Allen said if they are going to cause a problem she thinks trapping is best. Note was made that the only active dam is near the outlet to Pudding Pond. It was noted the reason for seeking permission is because it is on our land. Mr. Adair suggested someone research to see if the town has any regulations governing this. Ms. Allen offered to check to see if trapping is addressed. Mr. Adair will call Dennis Hill and let him know there is some opposition within the Commission.

c. Member Roundtable – Marshall-West Side Road Property – Mr. Adair, along with Messrs. Weathers, Sires and Holmes, met with Sut and Margaret Marshall in Dec. Since then the appraisal has been updated reflecting a value of \$525,000 for all five parcels [CCC appraiser]. It was noted that Mr. Marshall had Realtor, David Haine, do an estimate of value which resulted in a total of \$887,000 broken down as follows: Ingalls lot - \$250,000 plus timber value of \$44,000, with notation they would have exceptional views. For the Family parcel behind the Cross Farm he used \$1,000 an acre - \$168,000 plus timber value of \$149,000 for a total of \$317,000. For the remaining three lots (owned by Sut and Margaret Marshall) he used \$700 per acre prior to adding in the value of the timber.

Ms. Allen noted for the majority of people in most cases the timber value does not affect land value as much as what people would think. There was question of whether it is "double dipping" with the way the realtor has computed the values. Mr. Adair said when discussing with Mr. Marshall the thought was to negotiate for the two lots: Ingalls and Family lot. Ms. Allen questioned whether there is any chance that might cause some lots to be land locked and it was felt it is not. It was noted the remaining three lots have a right of way between the Kennett and Hussey properties. Mr. Lucy questioned whether we have a figure of what we can afford. Mr. Adair said there is roughly \$600,000 in the land acquisition account.

Ms. Allen said she would like to know which of the parcels has the most benefit for conservation. Mr. Adair suggested it is the two family lots. Mr. Lucy questioned the value

of these two (about 216 acres combined). He questioned the vision the Commission has of what we would do with it. Mr. Adair said we would want to manage it and maintain uses such as trail improvements, snow mobile activities, etc. It was noted it is all in Current Use except the Ingalls parcel. Mr. Adair suggested meeting with Mr. Marshall again and see if we can negotiate a figure for the two family lots. Mr. Lucy stated we need to know what he is thinking, what he would be doing with the remaining pieces if we bought the two family lots. Mr. Adair will try to get Messrs. Sires, Weathers, Holmes and Marshall together to see if they can establish a cost for the two family lots.

Dog Trail behind Whitaker Homestead – Mr. Lucy said it has been brought to his attention that there is a group that would like a dog trail starting by this building and going out as far as the tracks, to give people a place to walk their dogs year round. He said he had checked the area right before the snow came and found people are not cleaning up after their dogs. Mr. Lucy said he is not sure of the exact layout; it is possible they could run the groomer in there and then maybe people would stay off the other trails. He said, technically, that is not our land; however, Mr. Adair stated the woods are our responsibility and the fields are the responsibility of the Recreation Dept. Ms. Allen commented everyone uses Whitaker Woods for their dogs. Mr. Adair stated it would be a lot of work, would have to take a lot of trees down, stump it, and grade it. He suggested getting an estimate from Don Johnson to see what is involved. Mr. Adair asked Mr. Lucy to find out how far down the group wants it to extend. Mr. Lucy said if it is going to happen we should probably look at our own design to see where we want it to be. He will look into it more.

5. Next Meeting – February 12, 2014.

Adjourn: There being no further business, **Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Mr. Huemmler and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:25 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary