

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, May 3, 2006  
Corner Meeting House  
Belmont, New Hampshire

Members Present: Chairman K. Knowlton, N. Wederski, B. Watterson, D. Naiva,  
G. Wells-Kay, M. Lewandoski  
Members Absent: W. Peterson(u)  
Alternates Present: S. Rolfe  
Alternates Absent: M. McLetchie(u)  
Staff: R. Ball, D. Rollins, C. Daigle

The chairman opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

**BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by D. Naiva, it was voted to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2006 meeting as written. (6-0)

**MOTION:** On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by M. Lewandoski, it was voted to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2006 meeting as written. (6-0)

**OXBOW INITIATIVE:**

Patricia Bass of Concord and Ann Emerson of Canterbury were present to inform the members about the Oxbow Initiative. It is a grassroots group started in Canterbury by people concerned about the location of the proposed Concord Regional Solid Waste/Resource Recovery Cooperative (co-op) municipal solid waste landfill. They believe it's proposed location in Canterbury at an oxbow along the Merrimack River is not environmentally sound. They are going to all the Conservation Commissions of all the 27 cities and towns that are members of the co-op of which Belmont is one. Each city or town selectboard or city council appoints a representative to the cooperative board. All of these towns had landfills at one time. In the 1980's the state encouraged them to close them so the towns formed a cooperative and built an incinerator in Penacook. All waste that is not recycled is sent there.

Ms. Bass passed out an informational booklet about the Oxbow Initiative and the proposed landfill. One map shows the location of the landfill site along the banks of the Merrimack River. The river snakes around the proposed site creating an oxbow. The location of the landfill would place it

between two conservation areas. Another map shows the 8,845 acres of riparian conservation lands and aquifers near the proposed site. Included is a fact sheet which states that up to 21 million cubic yards of trash would pile up over 40 years, rising 160' above the river. The Canterbury Planning Board hired an engineering firm to perform an independent analysis to that presented in the application submitted by the co-op to DES for the proposed landfill. A position statement summarizes the geologic activity of the site. The course of the river continually changes and eventually could cut right through the landfill according to the report. There is also a statement by the Canterbury Conservation Commission focusing on the site specific permit application that is in at DES. They give examples why this is a very poor location for the proposed landfill.

Ms. Bass said that she is hoping that the Belmont Conservation Commission will agree with the Oxbow Initiative that this is a bad site for a landfill and will issue an advisory opinion to their Selectboard. She said she is looking for towns to raise public opinion about this project. They have a petition with almost two thousand signatures opposing it. Chairman Knowlton asked what the town of Canterbury's opinion is about the landfill. She said that their Conservation Commission has voted to oppose it and those people who attended town meeting unanimously opposed it. B. Watterson asked what the Selectmen of Canterbury's stance was. Ms. Bass said that they preferred to not make a statement and had their Conservation Commission make a statement for the town. She said that the co-op considered over ninety sites for this landfill all within each of the member towns. D. Naiva asked if price had something to do with choosing this site. Ms. Bass said yes and also because of the sandy soils. The co-op had been quietly buying up the abutting parcels. Before they left she said she hoped the members would agree that this is not a good site for the proposed landfill and would write to their Selectmen and also the Governor.

D. Naiva asked the members if they were going to take some action on this now. N. Wederski said they should think about it and discuss it at next month's meeting. D. Naiva proposed that they support the concept and that this site is most likely not the best site. K. Knowlton agreed that it should not be located near the river. B. Watterson said that he would like to find out why the Canterbury Selectmen refuse to take a stance. He also thinks that they should have come up with 2 or 3 other site solutions. After further discussion the members decided not to take action on this at this time. They would like to hear from the Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin who is the town's representative to the co-op or from Jim Presher, the co-op's director.

### **PROPOSED CAMPGROUND REGULATIONS:**

R. Ball said that he put this on the agenda because there's going to be a public hearing concerning the proposed regulations on May 8, 2006. K. Knowlton asked if there have been any campground proposals brought to the Planning Board. C. Daigle said that nothing has been submitted yet but there has been some inquiries. She said that the proposed regulations are intended to drive the quality of the campground. They are looking for campgrounds that have high quality. Chairman Knowlton said that it looks like the Planning Board has done a pretty in depth job and a lot of things have been looked into. D. Naiva agreed that they look very comprehensive. She said that she will be attending the public hearing and will report back to the Commission. G. Wells-Kay will also be attending.

### **STAFF REPORT:**

**2006 TREE STEWARD AND EARTH TEAM NATURAL RESOURCE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:**

This program is being offered by the UNH Cooperative Extension Service. Participants are asked to become a volunteer tree steward. They would need to dedicate a least 40 hours of service over 2 years through a wide variety of projects and activities that help improve natural resources.

**LRPC ANNUAL MEETING:**

The Lakes Region Planning Commission will hold their annual meeting on June 26, 2006.

**VERNAL POOL IDENTIFICATION:**

There will be a vernal pool documentation workshop at the New England College. It will focus on identifying vernal pools.

**NEGEF GRANT:**

The Commission has been awarded a \$1,000 grant from the New England Grassroots Environment Fund. R. Ball told the members that the selectmen will be accepting it at their next meeting. It will be added to the Commission's operating budget. R. Ball said that it could be used for maps and newsletters.

**OTHER BUSINESS:****NH COVERTS PROJECT:**

K. Knowlton told the members about the NH Coverts Project being offered by the UNH Cooperative Extension service. They have a camp in the Hancock area where volunteers go and receive intensive training to promote wildlife habitat conservation and forest stewardship.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Chairman Knowlton is concerned about the attendance problem and would like to get it resolved. He is looking for an active membership and W. Peterson has been missing quite a few meetings. D. Naiva said that there are policies in place and they should follow the policy. It states "Members shall attend all meetings and must inform the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson or clerk of expected absences. If a member misses five (5) consecutive meetings with no contact, this shall be evidence for non-interest. The Commission shall then vote to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the member be removed from the Commission." G. Wells-Kay suggested that the policy be changed since it doesn't speak to unexcused absences. In the Rules of Procedure it states that "the Conservation Commission shall, from time to time, prepare, amend, and revise its Rules of Procedure." It was suggested that W. Peterson become an alternate member and make S. Rolfe a full voting member. G. Wells-Kay said that W. Peterson should be contacted to find out why he hasn't been attending the meetings. The members agreed. K. Knowlton said that he would contact him.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION:** On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by M. Lewandoski, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:02 p.m. (6-0)

Respectfully submitted,

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Denise Rollins

