

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Corner Meeting House

Belmont, New Hampshire

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

The Conservation Commission members held a ceremony where they honored Jeff Marden with the dedication of a print they purchased. There were approximately 35 people in attendance. They included family, friends and members of boards that he had served on. The painting was done by Judith Hartke who is a wildlife painter and conservationist. It is entitled "Autumn's Abundance" and features a deer eating grass. There is also a plaque on the painting honoring Jeff. G. Wells-Kay had seen the painting when she was in New York and thought it would be appropriate for a memorial. She showed the other members a picture of it and they all agreed.

Chairman Knowlton unveiled the picture. He said that they felt putting it up in the Corner Meeting House would be appropriate since Jeff spent so much of his time there as a Planning Board member and he also attended Conservation Commission meetings. Chairman Knowlton spoke about how Jeff was committed to protecting local wildlife. Planning Board Chairman Peter Harris said that Jeff recommended rewriting the Belmont Zoning Ordinance to include the idea of wildlife corridors and buffers. Conservation and outdoor life were very important to him.

A map of the town forest was on the wall with pictures of the sign and kiosk that have been recently installed. The town forest was renamed the Jeff Marden Town Forest at the Conservation Commission's meeting in May.

Chairman K. Knowlton opened the meeting at 7: 40 p.m. He appointed M. McLetchie as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

MOTION: N. Wederski made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 3 meeting. It was seconded by D. Naiva.

D. Naiva said that at the October 3 meeting when Foley Oil presented their site plan they showed 4 tanks but would be eliminating one of them. She would like it reflected in the minutes that she and W. Peterson recommended that they eliminate the one that was closest to the stream.

G. Wells-Kay also asked if there was any follow up to the Silver Lake Association request to send a letter to the state representatives telling them how difficult it has been for them to get their divers trained. They have the manpower but not the training. R. Ball said he will draft the letter.

The members voted on the amended minutes and it passed. (5-0)

BROWN PROPERTY, 154 MAIN STREET, MAP 122 LOT 8:

Board of Selectman Chairman Ron Cormier was present to speak to the members about the Brown property on Main Street. He said that when the Board found out that Northway Bank was moving from the property they approached Mr. Brown about purchasing it. At the time he already had a buyer but since then has been unable to get financing. He said that the property has been the topic as a central focal point for the downtown community. They would like the town to purchase it. He thought that it could be utilized but it is old and has high maintenance costs. They would like to tear it down and possibly turn it into green space. It would offer the community a nice park and would enhance the whole downtown. They have asked Bonnette, Page & Stone to draw up some renditions of what they could do with the area. There are two tenants who have contracts until next August so nothing can be done until then. The purchase price is \$300,000 and they have \$250,000 in a reserve fund for land purchases. They are going through the process of getting the remaining \$50,000 from the unexpended fund balance.

The Selectmen have to have a recommendation from the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission before they can move forward. Selectman Cormier said that by opening up the area it could open access to the river in the back and they could put in some kind of river walk. D. Naiva said that it is a step in the right direction. M. McLetchie agrees it is the focal point and supports purchasing it. K. Knowlton said the river walk was something that was conceived years ago when a charrette was done. The Commission has been trying to acquire pieces along the river. They could team up with the Board of Selectman to advise them on the green space and river walk as a joint venture. R. Cormier said that it could be an opportunity for the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and Library trustees to all come together for a common interest.

MOTION: On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by D. Naiva, the members voted to give their support to the Board of Selectmen to purchase the Brown property. (5-0)

TOWN FOREST EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT:

K. Knowlton told the members that a few Saturdays ago he lent his support the Kurtis Bartlett when he was putting up the kiosk he built at the town forest. He said it is well built and has a very large peg board area on it. He would like to put up a copy of the map with a list of the rules. He would also like to put a picture of Jeff with a bio explaining who he was. The town forest sign is also up. They would also like to put some small copies of the trail maps with the rules for people to take. He said he will ask Kurtis if he would like to attend their next meeting.

TOWN FOREST UPDATE:

The members had received copies of the Stewardship Plan for the town forest. K. Knowlton said he would like S. Rolfe to be involved before it is finalized. D. Naiva asked if they should include the written permission from Tioga Estates for using their property. R. Ball said that it doesn't need to be included. There will be a written agreement with them for using their property. He said they were concerned with any liability and do not want motorized vehicles or hunting on their property. D. Naiva said that the Conservation Commission is taking responsibility to ensure that people use the trail properly so they should be signing the agreement as well as Tioga Estates. R. Ball said he will place some discs on the trail stating that it is private property and to please stay on the trail. It should keep people from parking in the Tioga Estates parking lot.

The members discussed what could be done with securing the beaver pond. R. Ball said they could hire someone. When the first culvert floated they had talked about putting up a bridge and armour the opening but they may have the same problem again. He said they need to rebuild the berm. K. Knowlton said that this could be a winter project for them to put something together for the spring.

G. Wells-Kay told the members about the Wilmington, MA town forest and how they are enhancing wildlife habitat by putting in bird boxes and creating open pasture space. D. Naiva listed the action plan for stewardship should include the beaver dam, handicapped access, wildlife habitat enhancement and trail marking.

STAFF REPORT:**DROUIN WETLANDS PERMIT – MAP 116 LOT43:**

R. Ball told the members that the Drouins have received their wetlands permit. They have to delineate the entire wetland by a Certified Wetland Scientist. They need to submit to DES and the Belmont Conservation Commission a GPS located boundary or a surveyed boundary plan of all wetlands. They need to post permanent signs to indicate the location of the wetland every 50 feet along the boundary of the delineated wetland. They also need to notify the Wetlands Bureau of the placement of the wetland demarcation to coordinate on-site review of their location.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by G. Wells-Kay, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins