

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, June 3, 2009
Corner Meeting House
Belmont, New Hampshire

Members Present: Ken Knowlton, Ginger Wells-Kay, Denise Naiva,
Keith Bennett, David Morse
Members Absent: Ward Peterson(u), Mark Lewandoski(u), Scott Rolfe(e)
Alternates Absent: Magnus McLetchie(e), Carol Fairfield(e)
Staff: Rick Ball, Denise Rollins

COMPREHENSIVE SHORELAND PROTECTION ACT:

Chairman Knowlton introduced Jay Aube, NH DES Shoreland Protection Specialist, who was giving a Powerpoint presentation on the 2008 revision to the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act (CSPA) to the members and the public. He said that he has done this presentation over one hundred times all over the state. Since the public waters of NH are held in trust by the state, the state has an interest in protecting surface waters and the adjacent shorelands. The public waters are a valuable natural resource and clean water is a public benefit. DES needs to address impervious surfaces since scientific research has confirmed that impervious coverage on shorelands has negative impacts on water quality. Most people think it's the chemicals going into the waters that is the problem. Stormwater runoff is the major threat. DES wants to see vegetated buffers which help promote infiltration by moderating the impacts of heavy rain, extract nutrients and some contaminants from the soil and promote wildlife habitat. Vegetated buffers also produce organic matter and woody debris along with stabilizing and shading the shoreline.

Mr. Aube gave a brief overview of the standards of the CSPA. All primary structures must be set back at least 50 feet from the reference line. The reference line is the natural mean high water level which is determined by the NH Dam Bureau. Towns may maintain or enact their own setbacks only if it is greater than 50 feet. Within 50 feet, a waterfront buffer must be maintained. Within the waterfront buffer, tree coverage is managed with a 50' x 50' grid and points system. Tree coverage must total 50 points in each grid. Trees are given points according to their diameter 4 ½ feet from the ground. In this waterfront buffer no stumps, roots or rocks can be removed and pesticides and herbicides should be by a licensed applicator only. Also no removal of natural ground cover is allowed with a few exceptions: A foot path to the water (up to 6' wide) is allowed along with pruning ground cover that has grown above 3'.

He explained the new unaltered state requirement. Unaltered state means natural, native vegetation allowed to grow without disturbance. Within the area from 50-150' which is called the natural woodland buffer, 25% must be maintained in an unaltered state for lots with ½ acre or less in

size. For lots greater than ½ acre 50% of the area exclusive of impervious surfaces must be maintained in an unaltered state. Existing lawns can be maintained. Lawn is considered altered area.

Next he explained the impervious surface limitations. The definition of impervious surface is any modified surface that cannot effectively absorb or infiltrate water. Examples of impervious surfaces include: roofs, decks, patios, and paved-gravel-crushed stone driveways unless specifically designed to infiltrate water. No more than 20% of the area of the lot located within the protected shoreland may be composed of impervious surfaces. The protected shoreland area is all the land that is within 250' from the reference line. This may be increased up to 30% if there are 50 points of tree coverage in each 50' x 50' grid segment in the waterfront buffer and a storm water management plan is submitted and approved by DES.

He went over many of the activities that do not require a shoreland permit all of which can be found on the NH DES website www.nh.des.gov. Also on the website can be found a consolidated list of the waterbodies that are protected by the CSPA. The NHDES Dam Bureau's official list of public waters can be found there along with any information about the CSPA. After a question and answer period from the audience the members thanked Mr. Aube for the presentation.

After a 5 minute recess Chairman Knowlton opened the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

MOTION: On a motion by G. Wells-Kay, seconded by K. Bennett, the members voted to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2009 meeting as written. (5-0)

WETLANDS STUDY:

R. Ball asked the members if they had any final comments about the wetlands study. There weren't any. The members agreed that Stoney Ridge did a great job on the study.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT:

K. Knowlton said he is waiting to hear from Alvin Nix about what project he has chosen to do. He had spoken with him and gave him the project choices that the members had come up with. D. Naiva mentioned that the Sanborn property will need a kiosk so that may be a future project for an Eagle Scout.

TOWN FOREST:

K. Knowlton told the members that he met with S. Rolfe at the town forest to go over the universal accessible trail project. He said there is a large field near the kiosk where they can store the materials while they are working on it. R. Ball said that they will be able to use the town trucks to transport the material. K. Knowlton said that he and S. Rolfe will put in hip risers for reference points. They are looking at doing the work at the end of the summer or early fall.

BELMONT OLD HOME DAY:

G. Wells-Kay said that she has a couple of demonstrations that she can use for their booth. One of them is a soil test model. R. Ball will print a soil map and highlight the agricultural land in Belmont.

JEFF MARDEN SCHOLARSHIP:

G. Wells-Kay said that the recipients of the scholarship this year are Martin Smock-Joyal and Felicia Hatch.

STAFF REPORT:**JULY MEETING:**

R. Ball reminded the members that the July meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. It will be a work session for them to start drafting a stewardship plan for the Andrew Sanborn property.

BUDGET:

R. Ball told the members that in May they spent \$3,471 for the balance of the wetlands study. There is \$1,100 left in the projects line, \$800 in the general expense line and \$8,000 in professional services.

GILMANTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING:

The Gilmanton CC is sponsoring a public meeting regarding large groundwater withdrawals on Wednesday, June 10 at 7:00 p.m. G. Wells-Kay is planning on attending.

OTHER BUSINESS:**SUN LAKE VILLAGE:**

D. Morse told that members that Philip Brouillard had attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting to request a reduction in his current use penalties for his property at Sun Lake Village. D. Morse said that he had questions on the process used to establish the initial penalties. The Selectmen have delayed their decision until D. Morse can review the files. K. Knowlton said he was concerned that this will set a precedent if they agree to the reduction and this is the only source of income that the Commission has to buy land. G. Wells-Kay feels that as an advisory board they should let the Selectmen know their position. She will draft a letter for K. Knowlton to read at the Selectmen's meeting.

VILLAGE REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE:

D. Morse told the members that the Heritage Commission is forming a Village Revitalization Committee. They are sending letters to all the committee members to see if there is anyone interested in being on it.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by D. Naiva, seconded by G. Wells-Kay, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:25 p.m. (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins

