

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, October 5, 2005
Corner Meeting House
Belmont, New Hampshire

Members Present: Chairman K. Knowlton, N. Wederski, D. Naiva
M. Lewandoski
Members Absent: J. Peverly(u), W. Peterson(e), B. Watteson(u)
Alternates Present: G. Wells-Kay
Alternates Absent: M. McLetchie(e)
Staff: R. Ball, D. Rollins

The chairman opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. He appointed G. Wells-Kay as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

D. Naiva requested the minutes of September 7, 2005 be amended. She wanted it to be reflected in the minutes that after the presentation of the Mountain Lake Village subdivision there was a discussion and questions by the members.

MOTION: On a motion by D. Naiva, seconded by N. Wederski, it was voted to approve the amended minutes of the September 7, 2005 meeting. (5-0)

JOHNGIS – OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISION:

Matt Monahan of Holden Engineering was present to discuss the wetlands crossings and wetland impacts for the proposed roadways in their cluster subdivision located on Province Road. The parcel is a total of 145.83 acres and has 47.8 acres of wetlands on the site. Asked if a wetlands inspector had been out to the property yet he said they are still in the process of applying to the state for a permit to impact 8,663 square feet of wetlands. He said the wetlands are forested, not prime. There will be two wetland crossings, one for the entrance boulevard and another for the interior roadway. Both crossings were designed to minimize the impact to the site's wetlands. He also wanted to discuss the process for transferring the open space land to the town. K. Knowlton said that the Land Use Office is currently putting something together for the Commission so they will have to get back to him. He said that it looks like it can be done and appreciated the opportunity.

BBE REALTY – OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISION:

Attorney Steve Nix and Mr. Richard Gagne were present to inform the members about the proposed 37 lot cluster subdivision located on Sargent Lake Road. It will have approximately 90 acres of open space which includes Badger Brook and a very large wetlands complex. They are proposing a homeowners association that will own and maintain the common land. They would like to grant the town a conservation easement over the open space which will give the Conservation Commission and the town the ability to enforce the rules and regulations. D. Naiva asked if it would be open to the public. Atty. Nix said no. The Commission would have an overview while the association still owns the land. It would be a public private partnership. K. Knowlton said that he wasn't sure if the Commission would want to become involved in this way. He said he would like to look into it further and see out how other towns do it since this is unique to the Commission. R. Ball said that all of the previous open space cluster subdivisions have remained owned by the developer.

CONSERVATION LAND ACQUISITION POLICY:

Chairman Knowlton reminded the members that “the Belmont Conservation Commission is established for the proper utilization and protection of the natural resources and for the protection of watershed resources of the town. Natural resources include air, land, surface and ground waters, fish, wildlife, plants, wetlands, soils, minerals, and scenic quality.” He said that this paragraph justifies why they are trying to acquire properties. They are not in competition with developers. R. Ball said they need to look at completing the natural resource inventory which is the master plan for the Conservation Commission. He has looked at Northfield's inventory on their website and thought they did a good job. It was done by Watershed to Wildlife, Inc. of Whitefield and he would like to ask them if they may be able to assist us with ours. He is going to send them a letter and see if they are interested. Northfield was able to fund the cost with a Mooseplate Grant and possibly we can do the same. Chairman Knowlton suggested to the members that they devote more time on this at their next meeting. It could be more of a workshop. The members agreed.

GROUNDWATER RECLASSIFICATION:

The Land Use office received a call from the Secretary of Tilton and Northfield Conservation Commissions. They are interested in providing a higher level of protection for the well head protection area surrounding their wells. They are investigating having NH DES reclassify that area to GAA and have asked Belmont to also consider reclassifying the portion of their well head area that falls within our community. R. Ball said that we already have the protection in our ordinances. He said that the GAA class would identify potential contamination sources, inventory them and make sure they follow best management practices. He says that is done anyway. After some discussion G. Wells-Kay suggested inviting a member from the Tilton and Northfield Conservation Commission to come to a meeting and discuss it with them. R. Ball said he will contact them and ask them to come to the December meeting.

STAFF REPORT:**GEOCACHE:**

Pamela & Fred Merrill of Wildlife Boulevard sent a letter to the Conservation Commission to request permission to establish a “Geocache” in the town forest. Geocaching is a treasure hunt in which

you find the treasure, or cache, by using a GPS receiver. You obtain the coordinates to find the cache from the Geocache website. Chairman Knowlton didn't see any problem with this and asked R. Ball to send them a letter allowing them to go ahead. He said it would be nice to see some usage in the town forest.

MOTION: On a motion by D. Naiva, seconded by N. Wederski, the members agreed to give Mr. & Mrs. Merrill permission to use the town forest to establish a Geocache. (5-0)

OTHER BUSINESS:

MEETING DATE CHANGE:

Since Chairman Knowlton and M. Lewandoski would not be able to attend the November 2 meeting the members decided to move it up to October 19. There won't be a meeting in November.

ATTENDANCE:

After looking at the attendance record of the members K. Knowlton would like to make G. Wells-Kay a full member rather than an alternate. He suggested that she could switch positions with J. Peverly who has not attended many meetings. R. Ball said he could draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen with this proposal.

MOTION: On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by D. Naiva, the members voted to have R. Ball draft a letter to be sent to the Board of Selectmen to request a change for G. Wells-Kay to become a full member and J. Peverly to become an alternate member.(5-0)

TOWN FOREST:

M. Lewandoski said that the subcommittee have not met yet. He would like to get the walkway repaired this year and also map out the trails. The gates and clearing saplings will have to wait until the spring.

SCHOLARSHIP:

G. Wells-Kay told the members she will be inviting Matt Pickowicz to one of their meetings. He was the student who received the scholarship.

NEW ALTERNATE MEMBER:

Scott Rolfe was present at tonight's meeting and is interested in filling the alternate member vacancy. He is a licensed forester for the State of NH. The members agreed he would be an excellent addition to the Commission. He said he will send a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking to be appointed.

MOTION: N. Wederski made a motion to support the appointment of Scott Rolfe as an alternate member. It was seconded by M. Lewandoski and approved by all. (5-0)

NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

Chairman Knowlton moved to enter non-public session at 9:20 p.m. in accordance with RSA 91-A:3.II.(d). Those present were K. Knowlton, N. Wederski, D. Naiva, G. Wells-Kay, M. Lewandoski, R. Ball and D. Rollins.

The non-public session was closed at 9:50 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by M. Lewandoski, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:51 p.m. (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins

