

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Attendance: Commission members Mike Pulsifer, Mike Duddy, David Sterling, Jonah Rosenfield and Dick Bauman; Town Planner Maureen O’Meara. Bill Goodykoontz, Peter Dunfey and Matt Ginn were also in attendance.

1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
2. Minutes of February’s meeting were accepted as written by a unanimous vote.

3. Correspondence:

The winter 2006 Maine Stream Team Program News was provided to the Commission.

A printout of testimonials to the work of John Morton, the cross country ski trail designer hired by Cape Nordic Boosters Club was also distributed to Commission members. The material was obtained from Mr. Morton’s business website.

4. **Neighborhood Trail Liaison.** Maureen opened this topic by referring to an e-mail from Bill Goodykoontz, a resident of the Cross Hill neighborhood, concerning problems on portions of the Cross Hill trail system. She also distributed copies of a draft “Neighborhood Trail Groups Proposal” that was previously considered by the Commission but had not been adopted.

Maureen pointed out that the neighborhood trail proposal’s purpose was to enlist the assistance of people, like Bill, who are concerned about the deterioration of ‘their’ trails and are willing to take on some maintenance responsibilities.

A general discussion of the merits of the approach described by the Neighborhood Trail Groups Proposal followed. Most Commission members liked the concept but had reservations about how well it would work out in practice. The discussion concluded with a decision to establish a pilot program in Cross Hill with Bill volunteering to serve as the neighborhood coordinator. Dick will be the Commission’s liaison with help from Mike Duddy.

To initiate the effort, Maureen will draft a letter from Bill to Cross Hill residents inviting them to a kickoff meeting at the Goodykoontz residence on Saturday, April 29th. Bill will review the draft and after it is in final form, Maureen will send it out. Those who attend will be told about the Commission’s activities and what we would like to see happen at Cross Hill. The group will then tour the Cross Hill trails to assess conditions.

5. **Student Volunteer.** Mike Duddy introduced Matt Ginn to the Commission. Matt is volunteering to do some trail work. Two projects were suggested. The first requires moving a pile of debris located on the Great Pond Trail to the Route 77 right-of-way where it can be picked up by Public Works. Maureen will contact the landowner whose property would have to be crossed for permission. With any time remaining, Matt will replace damaged and missing deck boards on Great Pond bridges. Mike Duddy agreed to coordinate for the Commission.
6. **Gull Crest Nordic Trail.** Peter Dunfey from the Cape Nordic Boosters Club was present to update the Commission on the Nordic Ski trail proposal. John Morton, the trail designer hired by the Boosters Club, made a site visit the previous day and met with Club members and other “stakeholders.” Jonah represented the Commission at that meeting.

A general layout of the proposed trail was created, which Peter presented to the Commission superimposed on a Gull Crest trail map. As envisioned by the designer, the one way loop trail would follow existing trail routes for most of its length and retains the elevation changes of the somewhat hilly terrain, thereby minimizing grading requirements. Mr. Morton will flag the proposed trail course the next time he is on site.

Peter also told the Commission that, if approved, the trail will be established in stages. The initial stage would be to widen and grade trail sections that are already mapped out. Meanwhile, permit amendments needed for expansion of the Gull Crest trail system would be prepared and submitted, at the Booster Clubs expense.

7. **Gull Trail Work Update.** Jonah informed the Commission that decking of the Sawyer Road extension boardwalk had been completed on the March 11 work day. Again, there was a good turnout of community volunteers. Except for short ramps needed at both ends of the boardwalk (to be built by Jack Roberts) and addition of a few fill-in pieces, the boardwalk project is finished.

The Commission decided to call for another work day on May 6 at 9 a.m. to start work on creating a boardwalk over an extended wet area on the Outer Loop Trail. Telephone poles have already been placed at that site.

8. **Winnick Woods.** Maureen informed the Commission that Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge staff made a presentation to the Town Council’s Ordinance Committee concerning plans for conserving New England Cottontail habitat. Committee members raised Council concerns about limitations and requirements on use of Winnick Woods property that might be imposed by a formal agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on this effort. After receiving assurances that Town use of its property would not be restricted, the Ordinance Committee decided to recommend to the

Town Council a cooperative arrangement with USFWS to manage for the New England Cottontail. The Council will consider the recommendation at its April meeting. In addition, copies of the Winnick Woods Master Plan will now be made available for general distribution.

Also on the subject of Winnick Woods, Randall Hobbs, an Eagle Scout Candidate, has volunteered to build a bridge over a small creek flowing across a Winnick Woods trail. Jonah volunteered to work with Randall on this project.

- 9. Training Session Update.** Maureen informed the Commission that its invitation to attend next month's wetlands training session has been well received with four Town Council members and three Planning Board members expressing their intention to participate. Also, State Soils Scientist David Rocque has agreed to be a presenter.
- 10. Planning Board meeting.** No items of direct interest to the Commission are on the agenda of the next meeting.
- 11.** Meeting adjourned at 8.50. Next meeting is Tuesday, April 11 at 6 p.m.