

Conservation Commission
Minutes of Special Meeting – Tuesday, June 1, 2006

Attendance: Commission members Mike Pulsifer, Mike Duddy, Carol Haas (until 7:45), John Herrick, David Sterling, Jonah Rosenfield and Dick Bauman; Town Planner Maureen O’Meara. Jack Roberts also attended.

The special meeting was called to order by Chairman Pulsifer at 7:02. It was scheduled for the purpose of further discussing the Cape Nordic Boosters Club Gull Crest trail proposal in anticipation of the Town Council workshop on June 6th.

1. The May 9 meeting minutes were accepted as written by unanimous vote.
2. John informed the Commission about work done at Winnick Woods by Cape High School students to meet their STP requirements. He raised concerns about what had not been accomplished and with problems related to keeping track of who was on site and for what periods of time. Based on this experience, we may have to establish new procedures for future STP projects.
3. **Gull Crest Cape Nordic Trail Proposal.** Before proceeding with the discussion, Maureen provided the Commission with information she obtained about the Twin Brooks and Pineland trail systems.

The Town of Cumberland built and maintains the Twin Brook Trail System. The trails are laid out on 70 acres of a 270 acre parcel. Trees were cleared to create a 15 – 20 foot wide canopy opening over the trails. Wood chips are used to cover the trails although Recreation Director Bill Landis, who supervises trail maintenance, does not consider it the best coverage material because of the time wood takes to dry out. He would prefer stone dust, which is used at Pineland.

The discussion opened with a question about the Cape Nordic Ski Boosters response to the Commission’s request for information made to Peter Dunfey and Muzzie Barton at our May meeting. The Chairman stated that the Club had not responded to our request.

At this time, a memorandum from Mike Duddy to the Commission was distributed. The memo contains an extensive analysis of the trail proposal and a suggested Commission recommendation to the Town Council. In essence, the memo proposes that we recommend the Council approve construction of the 2.4 kilometer phase 1 trail system, if specific conditions are met, and defer consideration of phase 2.

Mike’s analysis and recommendations generated considerable discussion among Commission members. Several members were concerned about now taking a position in light of the Commission’s previous response that it did not have

sufficient information to make a recommendation. Additional concerns included potential conflicts with other users, lack of snow in Cape Elizabeth, loss of vegetation and other damage and the possibility that the Town might have to assume responsibility for trail maintenance in the future.

The analysis of these topics and others covered in the memo was discussed at length by Commission members. When the discussion concluded, most Commission members were receptive to the idea of recommending that the Town Board conditionally approve phase 1 and defer consideration of phase 2. It was further decided that the Town Council should be sent a modified version of Mike's memo prior to next week's workshop. This would provide Council members with a detailed, written explanation of our position, including the conditions that we would like to see govern the approval process. The Commission approved a resolution to that effect by a vote of 5 to 1.

4. The Planning Board will be reviewing proposed trail wetland crossings in Winnick Woods at its June 6 workshop because a Resource Protection Permit is required for trail construction. Jonah agreed to represent the Commission at the workshop.
5. Due to predictions for wet weather, the Commission decided to cancel the Trails Day event scheduled for June 3rd. The Commission will discuss rescheduling at its next meeting.
6. The special meeting was adjourned at 8:35. The next regular Conservation Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13, 2006.