

Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, November 14, 2006

Attendance: Commission members Mike Pulsifer, Mike Duddy, Carol Haas, John Herrick and Dick Bauman; Town Planner Maureen O'Meara.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pulsifer at 7:08.
2. By unanimous vote, the Commission accepted October's meeting minutes as written.
3. **Correspondence:**
  - A copy of the Chairman's letter to Commission member David Sterling was distributed. The letter was a response to David's resignation from the Commission. In the letter, David's strong interest in the Town's trail system and important contribution to the Commission's work was recognized with gratitude.
  - A copy of the Chairman's letter to Nicholas Quatrano was distributed. The letter thanked Nick for his excellent work in building a boardwalk over a small stream on the Vernon Road to Great Pond trail, which was done as an Eagle Scout project.
  - A copy of the Chairman's letter to Robert Kenning of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge staff was distributed. The letter provided Mr. Kenning with the value of hours and mileage contributed by the Commission to the purple loosestrife containment effort in 2006.
4. **Trail Improvements.**
  - Cross Hill trails. The Commission was informed that the new Cross Hill Trails group constructed almost 50 feet of boardwalk on a major leg of Cross Hill's neighborhood trail system in November. Several Commission members also participated in this effort. Additional boardwalking of a long and very wet section of the same trail is scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> of November.
  - Gull Crest trails. At its last meeting, the Commission authorized Maureen to have *Custom Float Systems* supply and install a floating walkway system on the Gull Crest Outer Loop Trail. Subsequently, the Company submitted a revised proposal with two options; one option proposed pressure treated lumber for the walkway frames, the other option is to use aluminum frames. For either option, the decking could be pressure treated lumber or a composite material. After a detailed consideration of the alternatives, the Commission unanimously chose the aluminum frame option with composite decking because it would create the most durable structure. The section of trail where the walkway will be installed is virtually impassible for a major part of the year because of a wide expanse of running water. Grant funds are available to pay for the walkway, which is expected to be in place by year's end.
  - Stonegate trails. The project to replace three Stonegate Trail System bridges is almost finished. Two bridges, one sixteen feet and the other twenty three feet in length were constructed using salvaged box beams. The third bridge required construction of a five foot square, stone filled crib in the middle of a stream and new walkways from either shore out to the crib. All that is left to do is to construct

a length of boardwalk adjacent to one bridge and fill in a low spot at one end of another. That work is planned for November 19<sup>th</sup>.

- Trail signs. The lack of identifying signs at major access points to the Town's trail system was brought up for discussion. The point was made that many people do not seem to know that much of our extensive and well-used network of trails is a Town provided benefit, a product of taxpayer dollars and the ongoing efforts of Town employees and volunteers. Installing signs at locations where most people access the trails would be one direct way of increasing people's awareness of the Town's involvement. If the signs were not too large or elaborate, it should not be a great expense to purchase or install them. After discussion, the Commission plans to further pursue the idea, including identifying likely locations for sign placement.
  - Great Pond trails. The almost constant maintenance required by the footbridges at Alewives Creek was again brought up for discussion. A Commission member suggested that we consider using the aluminum frame, composite deck design that is planned for Gull Crest, if it performs as expected. The idea was well received and the Commission expects to discuss it again once the Gull Crest installation has been in use long enough for a thorough evaluation. The Commission also requested staff to prepare a CIP request to fund the project.
5. **Planning Board.** No items requiring review by Conservation Commission are on the Planning Board's agenda at this time.
  6. The meeting was adjourned at 8:27. The next regular Conservation Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2006.