

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, January 9, 2007

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

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. A new Commission member, Dena DeSena was welcomed. The other new member, Randy Clark, who was just appointed, expects to attend his first meeting in February.
2. By unanimous vote, December's meeting minutes were accepted as written.
3. **Elections.** Mike Pulsifer was reelected Commission Chairman for a second term by unanimous vote. Dick Bauman was reelected unanimously to a second term as Secretary.
4. **Correspondence:**
 - Last summer Mathew Ginn performed volunteer work on the Great Pond Trail. He moved debris to Route 77 for disposal and replaced boardwalk decking. Mathew has requested a letter documenting his service and the Chairman was authorized to sign a letter from the Commission responding to his request.
 - David Rogers from the Village Crossing assisted living facility contacted Maureen to ask about the possibility of improving a connection between their property and the Town Center Trail. After discussion, it was agreed that a site visit would help us better understand what Mr. Rogers has in mind. Maureen will find out if Mr. Rogers can meet with available Commission members next Sunday at 10:30.
5. **Trail Improvements:**
 - **Stonegate.** The Commission was advised that a small boardwalk near the trail entrance on Rock Crest Drive needs to be replaced. Carol volunteered to determine how long the replacement structure should be and advise Mike Duddy. Mike will let Maureen how much lumber will be needed in addition to that which is left over from other Stonegate projects. Commission members who are available Sunday morning at 9 a.m. will meet at the site to construct the new boardwalk.
 - **Gull Crest.** Telephone poles that will interfere with installation of the floating boardwalk on the outer loop trail must be moved. The boardwalk sections are under construction and should be finished in approximately 6 weeks. A date for the work will be set at the next meeting.

At this time, the Commission decided to proceed with its trail improvements discussion by developing a list of important trail projects to be initiated in 2007. The following projects were recommended:

- **Gull Crest.** Wet and muddy areas that occur in a number of places along the outer loop trail should receive a surface treatment of some type that relieves the condition without interfering with the natural flow of water. Maureen will research the subject and report back to the Commission.

Currently, there is no signage marking the entrance to Gull Crest's trail system or the trail route from the parking area to the woods and no trail system map is displayed. The Commission agreed to address the situation and will consider specific solutions at a future meeting.

- **Winnick Woods.** Maureen informed the Commission that Public Works had recently cleared the parking area and a path to the boardwalk constructed by Randall Hobbs. Public Works was also planning to grade and surface the parking area with gravel and brush hog a field designated by the Winnick Woods Master Plan as a continuously maintained meadow.

The Commission agreed to undertake clearing and marking of the trails that connect to the Dyer-Hutchinson and Cross Hill trail systems as described in the Master Plan. Rehabilitation of the stone potting shed is also planned.

- **Great Pond.** As noted at the last meeting, a Capital Improvement request has been submitted for funds to purchase and install an aluminum frame, composite deck boardwalk system similar to that on order for the Gull Crest outer loop trail. If funding is approved, a determination will have to be made as whether the boardwalk sections float or rest on 'sleepers.'
- **General Trail Projects.**

Addressing the lack of signs identifying important entrances to the Town's trail system was suggested. After discussion, there was general agreement that trail head signs would help make more people aware of this important Town-provided amenity and encourage additional trail use. Carol volunteered to obtain information about the cost of suitable outdoor signs.

- Maureen would like to have additional trails and trail segments be added to the Town's inventory of geographic information system coverages. She recommends the required GPS work be done by OEST, the Town's engineering firm. This item will also be discussed at a future meeting.
- The Commission's ongoing interest in establishing additional neighborhood trail groups will be discussed at the February meeting.

6. Trail Activities Report for 2006. Those who attended the Town Council meeting or watched it on our public access channel were very pleased with the report's content, presentation and how it was received by the Council. In looking back at 2006, Commission members took great satisfaction in the amount of important trail work that had been accomplished and were very gratified it was recognized in such a public manner. The Commission also expressed its great appreciation to Maureen for preparing the report and providing so much assistance throughout the year.

7. Meeting of Cumberland County Conservation Commissions. John attended the meeting as did representatives of nine other Commissions. The principal purpose of the meeting was to gauge the level of interest in creating a County-wide association of Conservation Commissions. It was suggested that such an organization could help its members by advocating in Augusta, securing grants and assisting one another to work cooperatively on projects of common interest. The possibility of hiring a half-time director, paid for by association members, was also brought up. Another exploratory meeting will be called in month or two.

8. Planning Board Items. No items under consideration by the Planning Board were referred to the Commission for review this month. For the general interest of Commission members, Maureen discussed the Planning Board's upcoming consideration of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that would increase the allowed density of eldercare facilities in the RC District and floor area and volume expansion for nonconforming structures in the RP1 Wetland Buffer served by public sewer.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03. The next regular Conservation Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February, 13, 2007.