

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Attendance: Commission members, Mike Pulsifer, Randy Clark, Dena DeSena, Carol Haas, John Herrick, and Dick Bauman; Town Planner Maureen O'Meara; guest David Rogers, representing the Village Crossing assisted living facility.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm. New Commission member Randy Clark was welcomed.
2. The regular January meeting minutes and the winter festival special meeting minutes were approved unanimously, as written.
3. **Correspondence.** A letter to the Town Council about the December 14 public meeting of Cape residents concerned about 'Oakhurst Woods' was discussed. It written by Bob Dodd on behalf of Cape residents who wish to insure continued preservation of the land in a natural state and establish deeded access to the property from the Oakhurst neighborhood.

Maureen informed the Commission that the Land Trust is currently attempting to determine if one or more abutting property owners are willing to provide the deeded access sought by Oakhurst neighbors. She also said the Town's attorney has been asked to determine whether the Town has clear title to a portion of the parcel and if that would preclude other owners who might wish to subdivide the property from prevailing in court.

4. **Village Crossing Connection.** David Rogers discussed his organization's interest in offering the community an opportunity to park in one of Village Crossing's lots and use trails running through their property that connect to the extensive Greenbelt trail system in the Spurwink marsh area. Appropriate signage would also be allowed. (Two Commission members had previously met with Mr. Rogers at his facility to discuss the idea.)

Mr. Rogers explained that the current owners of Village Crossing have a strong interest in reaching out to communities in which their facilities are located and what he is proposing is consistent with that corporate philosophy. He also pointed out that encouraging people to visit the Village Crossing property could generate future business.

After Mr. Rogers answered several questions, the Chairman thanked him for his offer and told him that we would be back in touch at a later date. In the subsequent discussion, Commission members expressed their enthusiasm for the idea and agreed to add it to our 2007 project list.

5. **Great Pond Winter Festival.** Maureen informed the Commission that the Town Manager had given his approval to hold the festival and that a Town-owned barbeque grill would be made available.

Following discussion, other Commission members and Maureen agreed to do the following:

- Maureen will ask Public Works to deliver the grill to Randy's garage prior to the event and Mike Pulsifer will move it to the Pond Sunday morning. She will also find out if Public Works can clear snow from a portion of the Pond, if necessary. She will ask Jodie Jordan to allow snowmobiles connected with the event to traverse his property. She will also arrange to have the event publicized on the transfer station sign, posted on the Town website and provide information to the local papers.
- Dena will determine if elementary grade and middle school officials are willing to allow information about the event to be sent home with other, school-related material. She previously found out that the festival date does not conflict with any significant school activities. She also volunteered to buy food and supplies and work the grill on event day.
- Randy will make his two snowmobiles and toboggans available and help with the cooking.
- Mike Pulsifer will provide a quantity of children size snowshoes and help to prepare for the festival on Sunday morning. Mike Duddy will provide ice fishing equipment and instruction.
- Dick will assist in the preparation and distribution of publicity materials and help with the preparation work on Sunday morning.
- Carol will determine if her neighbor with an ice boat is willing to demonstrate its operation on the Pond.
- Final arrangements for festival-related work will be made by email.

6. Project Priorities for 2007. At the January meeting the following projects were proposed for inclusion in the Commission's 2007 work plan:

- Addressing wet and muddy conditions on the outer loop trail in Gull Crest.
- Clearing and marking a trail beginning at the Sawyer Road parking area that would connect to Dyer-Hutchinson and Cross Hill trails.
- Replacing the deteriorated boardwalk in the Alewives Brook area with an aluminum-frame, composite deck structure.
- Placing informational kiosks and signs at various locations throughout the Greenbelt system.
- Adding additional trail coverages to the Town's geographic information system database.

Two more projects were added to the list at this meeting:

- Establishing additional neighborhood trail groups.
- Implementing the Village Crossing trail connection proposal described in paragraph 4 above.

After discussion, Commission members voted on their top three projects. Winnick Woods trail construction received the most votes with Gull Crest out loop trail improvements next and signage in third place. The Chairman asked Maureen to include the Winnick Woods project on March's meeting agenda.

- 7. Neighborhood Trail Groups.** After again reviewing the successful efforts of the Cross Hill group, the Commission decided to extend the neighborhood trails group concept to other locations around Town. The locations chosen and designated liaisons are:

Stonegate/Oakhurst – Carol	Broadcove – Mike Pulsifer
Wainwright Drive area – Dena	Great Pond – Mike Duddy

The topic will be discussed again at future meetings.

- 8. Trail Updates.** Maureen informed the Commission that Gull Crest outer loop aluminum boardwalk sections are likely to be delivered to the site sometime in late March. Between now and then, the telephone poles that are in the way must be moved. After discussing the circumstances that will make moving the poles a very difficult job, the decision was made to schedule a site visit for Sunday, February 25th. Skip Murray and Jack Roberts will be invited to participate and provide their expertise.

At this time, Maureen passed out an engineering sketch of a walking path design constructed of structural geotextile fabric and various stone materials. The sketch was provided by Oest Associates, the Town's engineers, in response to the Commission's request. We are interested in employing this approach in dealing with the numerous muddy and wet areas that are found on Greenbelt trails.

- 9. Cumberland County Conservation Commission.** A February 12th email from Bob Shafto to Mike Pulsifer was previously circulated to all Commission members for review. Mr. Shafto has been leading an effort to create an association of Cumberland County Conservation Commissions. According to this email, he has changed direction and is now attempting to revive the inactive Maine Association of Conservation Commissions. His email outlines what has been accomplished so far and work planned for the near future. He is also asking all interested local Commissions to join the organization by making an initial dues payment that is likely to be in the 75 to 125 dollar range.

In the course of discussion, Commission members expressed approval for our supporting such an organization by paying dues for one year. A motion to that effect was passed unanimously. The Commission also indicated that any further support depends on the new organization developing a set of clearly stated objectives that would, if achieved, be beneficial to the Town.

10. Planning Board. No items of interest to the Commission are on the February 26 agenda of the Planning Board. For information purposes, Maureen distributed a draft of the of the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that would increase the allowed volume or floor area expansion of nonconforming structures in the RP1 Wetland Buffer served by public sewer.

11. The meeting was adjourned a 9:25. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 13, 2007.