

Conservation Commission Minutes
January 14, 2014

Present: Garvan Donegan, Zach Matzkin, Richard Bauman, Mitch Wacksman, John Planinsek, Jim Tasse, Marti Blair, Town Planner Maureen O'Meara, Town Council Liaison Molly MacAuslan

Guest: Ray Haversat

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. The minutes of December 10, 2013 were approved unanimously.
2. Election of Chair and Secretary - Out-going chair Garvan Donegan thanked the Commission for two successful and enjoyable terms. He also endorsed MEACC, the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions, as a valuable membership for the Cape Elizabeth Conservation Commission. In his opinion, we are among the top Conservation Commissions in Maine.

Motion: To nominate Marti Blair as Conservation Commission Secretary.
Passed unanimously

Motion: To nominate Mitch Wacksman as Conservation Commission Chair.
Passed unanimously

3. Cape Elizabeth Land Trust. Ray Haversat is the new trails director for CELT, he is also on the Board. He will immediately begin working at Robinson Woods. He is strongly in support of mountain bikes and of connecting Land Trust trails with Greenbelt trails. He would like to be added to the next agenda to talk about access. They are planning to install an aluminum bridge over the pond in Robinson Woods, after receiving DEP approval. It was suggested that mountain biking groups would be able to provide volunteer assistance. His email is rhaversat@yahoo.com.

4. 2014 Workplan priority setting. The following opportunities were discussed:

SR = Shovel Ready

SR - Repair/replace stone steps at Great Pond, including engineering study. An alternative may be to talk with a stonemason.

SR - Winnick Woods, where the left is after the bridge toward the power line, there are some very wet sections. This would help keep people on town property.

SR - Winnick Woods, finish the second Eastman Meadows trail, and improve signage.

- Priority trails in the north end of town: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6.

- Connection between the Town Farm property to our side of the Spurwink River, including the bridge and the land along the cemetery.

SR - Trout Brook.

- Scott Dyer trail and Vinnie's Walk, including finalizing the correct easement.

- Legal public access from Route 77 into Robinson Woods.
- SR - More comprehensive signage, color-coded blazing on trails and numerically-identified intersections.
- Trails behind Canterbury, including access from Mitchell Road. Ray Haversat commented that he lives in that area and access has increasingly become an issue. He is willing to join the CC in pursuing this.
- SR - Large mudhole on the outer loop at Gull Crest, at the approach to the plastic bridge.
- SR - Town Farm trail, extend the erosion control mix another 100 feet.
- Access to Loveitt Woods from Oakhurst and from the Little League field on Shore Road.
- Expanding boat racks program at Great Pond.
- SR - Eradicating invasive species on town land.
- Divide project list into work that we can do via manual labor versus work that requires negotiating with land owners.
- Survey at Surfside Avenue.
- SR - Clear policy on accessibility. American Trails Association provided a webinar which Maureen watched. Trails not on federal land nor where federal funds are being utilized, are not currently subject to federal legal standards like the Americans With Disabilities Act. Their standards are very reasonable, and waivers are possible.
- SR - Providing trails with handicap accessibility. A suggestion would be the Town Center trail.

Maureen will send us the list, which each Commissioner should review, and send Maureen their top 5 priorities in each category (SR and Needs administrative work).

5. Erosion control mix on Town Farm trail.

Motion: To allocate \$500 to spreading erosion control mix on 100 feet of Town Farm trail.
Passed unanimously

6. Great Pond trail and Spurwink Bridge. Someone is operating an ATV on the Great Pond Trail. There were snowmobilers on the Spurwink Bridge after the recent storms. Signs will be posted on the bridge.

7. Cape Courier article. The Planner will write an article for the Courier describing where snowmobiles are allowed on trails and the policy toward ATV's, on town land.

8. Planning Board review. The Planning Board has the normal high water line proposal on its agenda. The normal high water line is where you start measuring the zone and setback. The current definition dates back to the 70's and the Code Enforcement Officer finds it difficult to use. The standard state definition is the highest annual tide. The Planning Board had a proposal to amend our definition and adopt the state definition. At public hearing, questions were raised regarding why Cape would be giving up a stricter definition to adopt a less strict definition. As a result, Cape is now considering using the Astronomical Tide, which is averaged over a 19 year period of time (epoch). Information regarding sea level rise is also being considered, so now the Planning Board is considering Astronomical Tide plus three vertical feet, to take into consideration storm surges. Setbacks would be measured from this line. There is a public hearing next Tuesday night.

9. Meetings schedule. Maureen stated that the Planning Board is considering doing a training session on stormwater, tentatively in May. The Conservation Commission could join this.

10. MEACC membership. In the coming year, MEACC is planning to initiate a re-grant program for trail-building for towns to access. They offer planning consulting services. Except for a part-time Executive Director, all work is volunteer. They will be working on revisions to the Maine law regarding Conservation Commissions.

Motion: To pay Cape Elizabeth Conservation Commission's MEACC dues for 2014.
Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Next meeting: January 14, 2013