

Present: Scott Kukshel, Peter McVay, Tim Dziechowski, Michelle Veasey

Scott Kukshel, chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:43 pm. Quorum present.

There were no guests present.

Agenda items

Approval of the secretary report for June was deferred to the next meeting. Scott noted that Carole Hall had some notes from some previous years' minutes that had not been formally written up or accepted. These will be gathered for approval and for entry on the web site minutes page.

The treasury stands at \$3,000, with no expenditures for the month of July.

Dredge and Fill/Site Walks/Complaints

Scott received an anonymous letter objecting to the building on the McPherson land, where horse trails and larger structures are being added. The easement on the McPherson property states that it may not be zoned commercial, subdivided, or used for business. Tim had looked up the deed, and noted that horse boarding and training could be considered agricultural, not business, but it is a gray area. Scott will refer the matter to the town code enforcement officer, to see if proper permits are filed. The construction or use of the McPherson land is not a conservation issue. However, the commission should check on the use of the conservation land surrounding the McPherson property, since mention was made in the property sale listing of extensive horse trails around the property.

Tim noted that the McPherson property is surrounded by conservation land, but no parking is available. Pete asked if the state could provide an easement for parking on Route 121, based on the state removing the old bridge and area under the bridge being rebuilt on Route 121 into Plaistow.

Eric Bluhmquist sent an email asking about the change in drainage of an abutter on Colony Road. The abutter to his property made changes that is causing water to pool. Since it is not on town land, Scott will refer this to the code enforcement officer.

Special Projects

Town Lands & Trails Brochure Project

Pete met with the Rockingham Planning Commission mapping expert, David Wycliffe, in July, and reported that a preliminary statement of work was formulated:

The Atkinson Conservation Commission will provide:

- Latest tax maps available.
- Status of town ARCview installation
- List of Conservation Lands for Trail Maps, and their characteristics (plot, tax max number, etc.)
- Test of Garmin GPS interface files for possible ArcView import.
- Waypoints of selected points of interest, such as stone wall crossings, special features, etc.

Rockingham Planning Commission will provide:

- Contract time and resources cost estimate
- Maps in ARCVIEW and PDF format, to include:
 - Conservation area boundaries
 - Road centerlines as they cross into conservation map area
 - USGS Surface water (indicating roughly type, such as pond water or swamp/bog)
 - Transportation features, such as powerlines and railroads
 - Contour lines, possibly in vector format. Exact format and density TBD.
 - Feature names where recorded, such as roads, geographic feature names, etc.
 - Buildings where indicated on taxmaps and/or photo overlay
- Photo overlay on maps
- Trails, if possible to import

David could not provide a cost estimate until the tax maps and a list of lands to map was provided. The standard rate for RPC maps is \$40 an hour (no special fees for equipment or software use). The commission members present listed the following conservation lands to be mapped or indicated, and possibly included on a single, large overview map:

- McPherson Land
- SPNHF field and Sawyer land
- Section near Plaistow town forest, tax map 19-18
- Sawmill swamp and adjoining parcels, including the Dickey land trail right-of-way
- Pope Road conservation land
- Marshall Trail
- Stickney lands
- Conservation land near Industrial Way, tax map 16/12-1
- Indicate canoe launch on Island Pond

Michelle proposed that these areas also be posted on the web site, until maps are produced. Tim has an updated list of all lands which he will email to the commission members. Tim also noted that RPC updated the GRANIT database with the latest information on Atkinson conservation lands.

Michelle suggested a fall trail cleanup and maintenance day, possibly on the third weekend in October. There was a discussion on trail marking, including signs, blazes, and area maintenance. A tentative October date will be firmed up at the September meeting, and the Dickey right-of-way onto the Sawmill Swamp, with brush clearing, trail marking, and resetting any signposts as activities. The scouts may be contacted for an activity.

Wetlands Article

Scott presented the next draft of the wetlands article to the Planning Board. The Planning Board will read the article more carefully. Major modifications were to remove references to vernal pools, passive recreation, and prime wetlands.

Conservation Web Site

Scott has found a new web provider, named 1on1.com, with more control and communication features. Pete will archive the current web site and get it to Scott, so the site can be transitioned on the town web page.

Local Resource Protection Priority Worksheets

Tim passed around index cards with the names of lands not under any conservation protection, and asked the commission to sort them in priority for protection. This was from a suggestion for planning from the Rockingham Planning Commission.

Future Conservation Bond Proposal

As part of the research on the need for a conservation bond, Michelle is trying to get numbers of properties built in last five years. School board has promised figures for next meeting. Michelle asked what was the best way to present the information, and how it can be used once obtained. Tim said that we need all data and can cast it in as many different formats as we can, to present an initiative for a bond to the voters in as many channels and forms as possible.

Review of Correspondence

- **Planning Board minutes and agenda:** As noted above, Scott presented the latest draft of the wetlands article. Pete presented a rough draft of a wetlands article tutorial, designed to explain the language and simplify the presentation to the voters.
- The Planning Board is working on an update to the Master Plan, especially with the long-term view of preserving the rural nature of the town.

Other Business

New copies of *Conserving Your Land* are available at \$10.00 each. Scott will order several copies for use in explaining the conservation process and advantages to qualified landowners.

The New Hampshire legislature killed a bill that would modify the strict provisions of land posting, so we will need signs to post all Conservation Lands to keep motorized pleasure vehicles (ATVs and larger) from damaging the lands. Pete mentioned that there is an ATV problem on the Marshall lands, and Scott and Michelle have had similar problems on town land.

There are some member openings on the commission, and current members were asked to look for likely candidates.

Next meeting date is September 13, 2004.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 PM.