

**Minutes, Atkinson Conservation Commission
January 9, 2006
Atkinson Town Hall**

Call To Order by Chairman Tim Dziechowski at 7:09.

Attending:

Tim Dziechowski
Dan Kimball
Scott Kukshel
Pete McVay
Michelle Veasey
Paul Wainwright

Guest Business and Plan Reviews:

Paul and Katja Levalee requested a 25 foot variance to place a garage on the property at 14 Kings Grant, map 12 lot 41. The proposed garage is 75 feet from the nearest wetland. Before proceeding, Tim noted that there is a wetlands proposal on the ballot, which means that until the proposal is voted on in town meeting, the ZBA will take into account whatever rule would be more restrictive and would apply those rules. This is an advisement that will be required for all wetlands proposals. The Levalees understood and are on the agenda for the upcoming ZBA meeting. Paul moved to recommend a variance. The motion was seconded and passed. Pete will write an approval letter for Tim to present to the ZBA.

Betournay easement – Tim had drafted an easement which was signed by the Betournays and other interested parties. Once the easement is signed by the Selectmen, it becomes official. The easement is for approximately four acres of land, and public access is not guaranteed if the land is sold. Only the easement restrictions on building will apply.

Scenic Byway Project: The scenic byway project is being pursued by the Conservation Commission and a portion of the project is of interest to other private groups in Atkinson. Pete said he was interested in expanding the project beyond Atkinson, to include other towns along the proposed 121 route through Atkinson, to extend the scenic byway designation from Atkinson through Hampstead, Chester, and Candia. He had already contacted the Hampstead Conservation commission chairman who expressed an interest. Tim said, based on a question from Michelle, that a “scenic byway” designation does not shift responsibility for road maintenance to the town. Pete asked what the procedures for this designation were, so he can contact other towns with the information. Tim said that a package with letters of support, pictures of the proposed byway, and a plan are submitted to the Office of Energy and Planning. There are a number of pictures already available, and a list of 30 historic houses. Pete will research the OEP web site for the proper links and put together the required action list. Tim pointed out that it should be added as part of the town Master Plan as a potential designated area. Dan raised a question about coordination with other town efforts to designate part of the route as a scenic and historic area.

Internal Business

Secretary report: December minutes were approved as amended, with one abstention.

Generic easement: Sumner sent a Nature Conservancy easement to Tim, who will work on it for the next time we need an easement.

SPNHF easement monitoring: The “Trinity Camp” and “Mary Lou Williams” land both need a walk for monitoring purposes. Tim has the Mary Lou Williams plans for a walk.

Conservation Web Site Status: the full wetlands warrant will be put up by Scott.

Treasurer's report

Final 2005 bills: the bill for trail paint and the 2006 NHACC dues were paid, leaving \$105 in the 2005 treasury. Tim had looked at measurement wheels, and was not impressed with the quality, so any further expenditures are deferred.

2006 Budget: Tim presented the 2006 conservation budget to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee expressed some concern over the quality of the trail maps, but the conservation budget was approved at last year's level and half of the grant money. Dan asked if the commission had any major land maintenance tools, and since there are very few, he will obtain a forestry catalogue for reference.

Legal bills for consultations with Sumner: no bill has been received for work done to date. Any outstanding bills for conservation will be paid for out of the conservation fund.

Other Dredge and Fills / Site Walks / Complaints

Continued request for a horse paddock: near wetlands Pope & West Side Drive. Tim looked at the proposed site, and it seems very small. We may do a site walk in the spring.

Brooks Properties - Route 111 Lot 21-4 - DES file 2005-01993. No action.

McPherson lot – a site walk will be scheduled when the ground freezes hard enough. Michelle suggested that we ask for permission from Mr. van Ry to walk across his land. A tentative site walk was scheduled for Saturday, January 21st at 9:00, weather permitting. The group will meet at the post office.

Review of Correspondence

Planning Board minutes and agenda: no action

ZBA minutes and agenda: no action

Conservation Easements / Land Purchases

Stickney Road dredge and fill: was filed for 30 Stickney. tax map 23, lots 36&37. Photos submitted with the request showed that work is already progressing on the site. However, no changes or disruption of the shoreline are being done—only a retaining wall is being replaced. Pete will do a site walk.

Other Business

Trail Map reprint: Tim got back an estimate for reprint costs from Loral printing. 1,000 maps would cost \$744, 2,500 would cost \$942, and 4,000 would cost \$1,135. Michelle pointed out that the initial maps were to acquaint people with the trails, and asked if there was real value in reprinting that many. There was discussion of several other factors: complaints had been received about the accuracy of the maps, perhaps large posted maps at each trailhead would be better, and individual maps or a booklet of maps for each trail might be cheaper and serve a better purpose. Trail markers are also needed, and followup must be done to see if the Boy Scout troops are still interested in this project. Action was deferred pending investigation of trail marking, cost of large map printing and laminating, and the overall purpose and direction of the trail mapping program.

Sawyer land gates have been opened for the winter.

Complaints from hunters: two tree blinds were discovered on land that may be conservation land—the exact locations are unclear. Hunters have complained that hunting is allowed on the land under dispute, because the land was not properly posted. The land must be posted at least every 100 yards to be considered “posted”.

Survey markers on important boundaries: Tim talked to LaVelle about permanent markers on areas where there are problems, such as the McPherson property and right-of-way paths on Sawyer. Cost would be about \$100 per marker. There are issues of easement by prescription on Sawyer Ave and the canoe launch.

Private Session: Conservation Easements / Land Purchases

Commission went into private session under RSA 91-A:3.iii.d to discuss land and possible gift lands. It was moved and seconded to go into private session. Passed unanimously.

Private session was closed at 10:13 by motion that passed unanimously. The minutes of the private session were sealed by unanimous vote under RSA 91-A:3.iii.d.

Special Projects

Forestry plan and forester update: Dan is still editing and correcting the plans.

Wetlands Ordinance warrant: Tim said that the head of town cable broadcasting had approached each of the department heads and said there was time available if they wished to present their department activities. The possibility of a Cable infomercial and press release was discussed. Pete will write a draft press release for review by the commission.

Tax maps from adjoining towns: Michelle moved that Tim be authorized to purchase the tax maps from the surrounding towns. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Commission will be Monday, February 6th, at 7:30.

The meeting adjourned at 10:38.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete McVay