

# Minutes, Atkinson Conservation Commission July 10, 2006 Atkinson Town Hall

**Call To Order** by Chairman Tim Dziechowski at 7:10.

**Attending:**

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

**Guest Business and Plan Reviews:**

**Brian Boyle**, request for 45' wetlands variance, 20 Winslow Drive, Map 13, Lot 29-7. Brian requested a variance for a low-value wetland on Lot 29-7. There are three wetlands in the area of development, but the variance was requested for only this one lot, which backs onto a low-value wetland. The entire area is a basin for runoff, and Michelle expressed some concern about the ability to manage runoff this close to the wetland. Pete also questioned the location of the other two wetland areas, which he recalled were contiguous at one time but are now bisected by the new street into the development. Brian said that there were no runoff problems in this area, even during the massive flooding of this spring. Tim noted that the two wetlands were always separate and distinct, and the road went along the one dry ridge that had naturally separated the two high-value wetlands. Scott made a motion to send a letter of recommendation to the Zoning Board with a condition that they require a 20' natural, undisturbed buffer from the edge of wetlands for this particular lot. The motion was seconded and passed, five ayes, one nay. Brian asked about the purpose of the conservation easement along the back of the area, from Woodlawn Avenue. Tim replied that it provided the only public access to the Sawmill Swamp conservation area, and also provided tie-ins to possible future access routes.

**Internal Business**

**Secretary report:** motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's report:** Tim stepped down as chairman and left the room, and the Vice-Chairman, Paul Wainwright, assumed duties as chairman. The bill for mowing of \$600 for care of grounds (mowing) was presented. A motion was made to approve the bill. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously, with one absence.

**Busby Land Mowing:** Paul attended the last selectman's meeting and put forward the need for an extra \$600 to mow Busby land. The selectmen approved the request, but asked if there was an opportunity for haying. Tim replied that there are several persons who do haying. Dan and Pete pointed out that it is late in the season, and the field was full of non-fodder plants, including vetch, which rendered it unsuitable for anything other than mulch. Tim noted that there is also some debris in the field (old iron posts and wire) that could damage machinery. Pete noted that there were bobolinks and killdeers in the field also, but they have apparently finished nesting. Tim will check with several persons who might be interested in haying the field for mulch, and Scott and Michelle have several covers articles on field maintenance and wildlife considerations they will review and distribute to the commission. Pete will also check the field within two weeks for signs of any wildlife activity.

**Busby lot administrative tax rebate.** As noted in the June 2006 minutes, the closing costs on the Busby land totaled \$1,584. The pro-rated real estate taxes were \$527.65, which was deducted from the proceeds to the Busbys, and the Conservation Commission will submit for an administrative rebate of \$1050.35. Michelle will complete the paperwork with Town Hall to settle final costs.

### **Other Dredge and Fills / Site Walks / Complaints**

Tim checked the status of all Atkinson complaints and dredge and fill requests, and all are still in a "more information requested" pending status. The current open ones are:

**Brooks wetlands** complaint update.

**Hemlock Heights** beach replacement permit

**27 Island Pond Road** dredge and fill without permit

**5 Lisheen Road** dredge and fill without permit

**Freshwater Farms wetlands/site issues.** Pete walked the land with Chuck Morse and concluded there were no violations. Dirt and fill was at least 50' from the wetlands and Chuck was removing debris that resulted from normal nursery operations, not adding or filling.

### **Conservation Easements / Land Purchases**

**Busby lot trail walk.** A site walk was held in June with Dorothy Erwin, labyrinth developer, and members of the Conservation Commission, the Recreation Commission, and Atkinson citizens. The proposed location of the labyrinth was in the woods at the far back of the lot, abutting Bryant Woods and others. The area is steep and wet enough so that it could not have other uses, and a labyrinth is a low-impact use of the land. Tim had also surveyed the area for a bridge across the stream approach from the meadow side, and the banks are steep enough to present a problem. Brian Boyle suggested looking at the bridge Rick Schafer built on his land for ideas on construction. The field mowing and potential uses were also discussed, and deferred for more information. Michelle moved that we approve the initial layout of a labyrinth in the area surveyed on the site walk. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **Planning Board Agenda Items:**

- **Scenic Byway Project:** Pete will draft a letter as secretary for Tim's signature, saying that the Commission endorses the project. The letter will go to the Planning Board.
- **Master plan natural resource inventory update.** The Master Plan Committee is reviewing townwide survey questions for use on a printed survey to be mailed.
- **Brooks properties warehouse application** is still being investigated.
- **Zoning Board Agenda** has only one item: the variance requested by Brian Boyle.

### **Other Business**

- **Trailwrights proposal status, trail improvements:** Pete has continually tried to contact Trailwrights and gotten no meaningful response. Kingston recently got a state grant for trail improvement, and Pete recommended we pursue that avenue instead. Discussion ensued on use of the \$500 set aside for trail improvement, and the consensus (without vote) of the Commission is to use this to improve access and build a bridge on the Busby land. There is also the possibility of getting gravel from the state. Pete will contact Ted Stewart to see if that is possible.
- **DRED federal land grant report:** Sherry Colby of DRED has asked for more information on Atkinson lands. Michelle is puzzled, since this information went to DRED in June. She is in the process of trying to find out who is asking for the information (again) and for what purpose.
- **Updated tax maps:** Elaine has a new spreadsheet, but it is not available to the Commission. Pete also has tried to contact TerraMap, and even sent them a CD of the old information for matching, after Tim had made a call to them. Scott suggested we talk to the Board of Selectmen about the difficulty of obtaining the digital tax maps, which the Commission is legally entitled to. Pete will get on the July 17<sup>th</sup> selectmen's agenda.
- **Jane Jones lot revisited:** this lot is potentially available again. Tim did some research. However, the town legal advisor feels there are problems because the property is tied up in several owners, including the condo association, and there is the issue of the open space covenant on the land. Tim will investigate further, to see if the legal and bureaucratic issues can be cleared up.

- **Forestry plan:** there have been many changes to forestry management laws and regulations. Tim recommended bringing in Matt Tarr or Phil Auger to talk about law changes. Scott pointed out that the forestry proceeds may go into the general fund, and have in the past, unless they are specifically placed in the Conservation Fund (RSA31.1:10). Dan said that good quality wood must be included with the low quality for any logger to consider doing the cutting.
- **Trail maps:** the current supply of maps is depleted, and discussion ensued on how to proceed. Tim had contacted the printer, and 2,500 maps would cost \$942. Some changes need to be made: add the hunting areas to the current map, and correct some typographical and place name errors. A motion was made and seconded to review the map in preparation for a printing run of 2,500. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Canoe Launch Parking:** Tim presented a map that showed the exact boundaries of the canoe launch parking area. Pete will take a copy of this map and survey the parking lot boundaries. There are still some vehicles being parked overnight, and the boundaries are not clear.

The next meeting of the Commission will be Monday, August 7th, at 7:00.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete McVay