

Minutes, Atkinson Conservation Commission
April 2, 2007
Atkinson Town Hall

Call To Order by Chairman Tim Dziechowski at 7:12

Attending:

Randy Bishop
Tim Dziechowski
Dan Kimball
Denise Legault
Pete McVay
Michelle Veasey

Guests:

Mark Goss
Luke Hurley
Dennis Krause
Katja Lavalee
Chuck Morris

Guest Business and Plan Reviews:

Dennis Krause, land steward, Sawyer land. Dennis has been investigating alternatives to paint and blazing for trail marking. He showed weather- and tear-proof plastic bands made of FTF-19 material. The material is also resistant to UV and gamma-ray fading. He also presented a preliminary trail marking system: the main trail on the land is an old carriage trail, and scouts and others have put in trails over the years. The main trail would be marked in blue and the two major secondary trails would be marked in red and yellow. Denise asked if these bands could be illegally removed. Dennis said that in an experiment, approximately half did disappear. Pete asked if there was a standard for marker height (there is), so the bands could not be placed high enough to be vandalism-proof and still be visible.

Trail marker materials are \$20 a linear yard (86" wide). A motion was made to allow Dennis to purchase not more than \$100 of material in a test of trail marking. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Katja Lavalee, Pope Road trail issues and signage. There is considerable damage by young ATV riders riding the trails. Whether or not this riding is illegal is ambiguous because the RSA governing trail access is ambiguous and legislative action to clear up this ambiguity has not passed the General Assembly. However, under RSA 36:A the Conservation Commission does have authority to monitor the lands and put up signs. The Selectmen can also make a temporary ordinance to define use and access to the land. There was some discussion about classifying the conservation trails as municipal trails through a warrant article, which was deferred for study. Katja volunteered to do the posting. Other options to be considered are appointing a land steward for the Pope Road lands and having a trail maintenance program.

Discussion followed on trail maintenance plans. Katja had spoken with Tracey Bouvier of the state concerning trail maintenance and management. Pete suggested resurrecting the dormant trail project and making it a two-stage grant proposal through various state and private agencies. The first project would be to assess need, and the second project would be a plan to do the work based on the assessment. The trail project would include boundary signage, trail markers, path design and maintenance, and bridges and raised walks over wet and fragile zones.

Chuck Morris, Mark Goss, and Luke Hurley: Freshwater Farms, expedited wetlands application for irrigation pond Map 20, lot 6 & 8. Mark Goss presented the plan for an irrigation pond near the wetlands area draining into the pond and wetlands behind Freshwater farms. The abutter, Rick Shaefer, has been appraised of the plans and has no objection. The pond would be a reservoir for nursery irrigation during dry periods, and is on poorly-drained soil and occupies less than 2,500 square feet of surface area. A motion was made to sign the approval for an expedited application. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Lili Bao, 25 Stickney Road, Map 23 Lot 26, needs pictures to document reference shoreline for retaining wall repair. The state is asking for proof that the old line is where it is. Approval by the Conservation Commission was given in the January 25th, 2007 meeting of the Commission. Pete provided a CD of the pictures taken during the site walk for Lili to use as part of the application.

Earth Day. April 22nd. Atkinson academy requested a presentation of the Conservation materials to the school. Michelle will contact the school to get details and several members of the Commission volunteered for this and other Earth Day activities. Proposals were discussed for other activities around conservation lands in the town, including a bird walk, forestry walk, and perhaps an "open house" for the new Busby lands and labyrinth. Tim also mentioned that the phone company had replaced a number of telephone poles and would give the Commission the old poles for use in bridges and other projects.

Internal Business

Secretary report:

A motion was made to approve the Feb 2nd minutes. The motion was seconded and passed with four ayes and one abstention.

A motion was made to approve the Feb 2nd minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed with four ayes and one abstention.

A motion was made to approve the March minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report:

The bill from the **Rockingham County Conservation District** for the Sawyer land walk with Scott Kukshel, Dan Kimball, Scott Kukshel, and Jack Sapia was 6 hr @\$80/hr. The bill was paid but a late fee was assessed, so the final paid bill was \$480.

Tim mentioned that the SPNHF conference *Saving Special Places* was covered under conference funds. Anyone from the Commission attending should save their receipt for reimbursement.

Busby lot administrative tax rebate: Tim met with Selectmen who approved the rebate, which will show in the next budget.

Pete submitted a bill for reimbursement for the purchase of two copies of *A Hard Road To Travel*. The \$44.00 purchase expense had already been approved by the Commission in the January meeting.

Michelle asked about purchase of supplies for the field folder project. A motion was made to approve the expenditure for folders and materials to put the field books together. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. There was some discussion on how to keep the books up to date and avoid prescription of parcels from use prior to 1968 legislation.

Other:

Dredge and Fills / Site Walks / Complaints

- 2006-00066 Paul Masone, Stickney Road, shoreline restoration, approved but administrative action being taken by DES.
- No file # 27 Island Pond Road, dredge and fill without permit: no action.
- 2006-02263 Poole unpermitted dredge and fill ("fire pond") approved. The Conservation Commission will file an intervention on this request.
- Map 5 Lot 2, Paley, brush dumped in wetland, DES complaint to be filed (per discussion with Eben Lewis, DES enforcement).
- 2004-02460 Mildred Reynolds, 23 Chase Island Road, construction of seawall without permit.
- DES rules changes update: an endangered species bill has passed the house and is going to the Senate. This bill has a proviso that any project must include a section on a plan that any endangered species is not disturbed. Also, new mandatory minimum state setbacks for CSPA (class 3 or greater rivers) was passed. Atkinson has no waterways greater than class 4. DES will have sole authority over larger streams and ponds.

Review of Correspondence

Planning Board Agenda Items:

- Scenic byway project update - logging in "tunnel". The abutters to the proposed Route 121 scenic byway had done tree clearing on the west side of the road to open their vista. Dan had talked to them. They will not cut down any hardwoods—they are just getting rid of the pines. They are opening the land to get rid of dangerous pines. They have completed the clearing. Under state roadway rules, abutters have the right to clear and maintain their property unless otherwise designated by the town through the tree warden.
- There was a proposal by Peter Lewis to construct water tower on open space land at Jameson Ridge (Dickey Land) development.

Zoning Board Agenda items:

- David Brown, 11 Lippold Road, application for expansion of existing home within same footprint and conversion from seasonal to year round - approved with requirements for gutters and dry wells to control runoff
- Mullett family variance application for three-lot subdivision on former Betournay land – denied.
- Patrick Mallon, 8 Valcat Lane, application for wetlands variance, expansion of existing house and conversion from seasonal to year round - postponed to April meeting.

Other Business

- Matte lot purchase - Closed and recorded, \$14,016. total costs.
- Trail mailbox repairs (especially Sawyer mailbox) and restocking. The Commission noted that the mailboxes on both Sawyer and Marshall lands had been vandalized and the Marshall Land entrance sign was down. Michelle agreed to replaced the mailboxes, but noted that vandalism could vitiate any repair and maintenance attempts on the mailboxes. Pete volunteered to reset the Marshall sign.
- Busby barn roof: still under conservation. \$3,000 cut to \$500. Randy will see about a donation to help repairs.
- Recreation deed exchange: still pending. Sumner declared that article 26 has no standing.
- Possible future land swaps. Tax bills are going out, and conservation easements would save on taxes. Many people are upset at the tree cutting on route 121, and want to know what can be done. Both of these conditions provide opportunity for promoting easements.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:52.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete McVay