

MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MARCH 4, 2013

MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was held on Monday, March 4, 2013 at 6:08 p.m. at the Merrimack Memorial Conference Room.

Chairman Tim Tenhave presided:

Members of the Commission Present: Matt Caron, Vice Chairman
 Ron Davies
 Simon Thomson
 Eber Currier, Alternate

Members of the Commission Absent: Thomas Lehman
 Gage Perry
 Councilor Thomas Mahon
 Robert Croatti, Alternate Member

Also in Attendance:

Chairman Tenhave noted Commissioner Perry would be unable to be in attendance due to a family commitment and Commission Lehman due to a work commitment. Chairman Tenhave appointed Alternate member Currier to serve as a voting member.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

APPOINTMENTS - None

STATUTORY/ADVISORY BUSINESS

1. JBD Realty Group, LLC.

Commission to review the proposed construction of a 20,000 s.f. warehouse building located at 35 Railroad Avenue, Tax Map 5D-1 007, which lies within the Aquifer Conservation District.

There being no objection and given representatives of JBD Realty Group, LLC were not in attendance, the Commission went out of the regular order of business.

Commissioner Currier remarked he drove by the property and took a few photographs. He noted the property abuts contaminated soils, and questioned whether those soils were part of the JBD property or all belonging to Jones Chemical. He stated he has spoken with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). NHDES conducted a review of Jones chemical on 2004 and determined the contamination (approx. 2 acres) in the area of this property was not caused by Jones Chemical; however, could be part of the Superfund Site, New Hampshire Plating or the Tannery.

He noted between the 20' easement poles is a sign stating "Contaminated Area. Soils contain hazardous material, which may be hazardous to public health. No trespassing." He commented those signs have been in place for some time although the easement poles were recently erected. He questioned whether the project would impact the property or the Merrimack River. He suggested there is likely a culvert that runs underneath the railroad tracks into the Merrimack River. Chairman Tenhave noted the applicant appeared before the Planning Board at its last meeting.

Commissioner Currier informed the commission he spoke with Jeff Morrisette, Assistant Planner, who has forwarded a letter outlining the concern expressed to allow the Applicant to be prepared to address it.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Grater Woods Stewardship Plan Review

Review of the overall current draft.

The Commission reviewed the revised copy of the Stewardship Plan (Plan) provided in advance of the meeting and made the following additional amendments:

Include definitions for Natural Community and Sustainable Forest.

Chairman Tenhave noted there had been a footnote associated with the last bullet on page 12, which suggested the Commission review the concept of adding the bulleted item to general MCC responsibilities as a requirement for all properties, e.g. formation of a stewardship team. After a brief discussion, the general consensus was to rephrase the language to identify a sub-committee as is the case for other properties, e.g., Wildcat Falls, Grater Woods, etc. Chairman Tenhave suggested the item should be a guiding principal right from the beginning.

Page 12, last bullet; amend to read "Once the Stewardship Plan is accepted, the MCC will create a well-educated and trained sub-committee responsible for oversight and management." and move the language to appear just before the last paragraph on page 11, which reads "The following 5 un-prioritized Stewardship Principles and Goals are intended to provide the guiding structure for the stewardship of The Grater Woods Forest."

Page 11, first paragraph, second sentence; replace the words "should be" with the word "are"

Throughout the document; be consistent with utilizing numbers rather than spelling out amounts.

Page 12, 5th bullet; remove the additional period and comma at the end of the sentence.

Page 13, first sentence; remove the apostrophe from the word "it's", third bullet; add a period at the end of the sentence.

Page 14, first paragraph under #4, second sentence; replace the word "other" with the word "many", include a space so that the sentence beginning with "In order to benefit from" is the start of a separate paragraph. In the second sentence of the now second paragraph; add the word "of" between the words "development" and "any", and add an "apostrophe" to the word "Teams" so that it reads "Team's".

Include, under Definitions and Acronyms, "Stewardship Team - made up of an established sub-committee and the MCC."

Page 14, last sentence; should have a space before it as it is the start of a new paragraph.

Page 15, 5th bullet; replace the word "volunteers" with the words "the Stewardship Team and volunteers", 6th bullet; add a space between the words "sources" and "will", under #5, first paragraph, second sentence; the word "Meadow" should not be capitalized, and the second period should be removed from the end of the paragraph, under #5, 4th bullet; remove the word "the" between the words "with" and "School" and replace the word "bases" with the word "based".

Page 17, first paragraph, second sentence; insert a space between the words "a" and "forest-planning", include space so that the sentence beginning with the words "As individual parcels were purchased..."

is the start of a new paragraph, in the first sentence of the last paragraph replace the word “identifies” with the word “identify”, and in the third sentence, add an “s” to the word “map”.

Page 18, last paragraph; remove the hyphen between the words “poorly” and “maintained”.

Page 20, first paragraph; include space so that the sentence beginning with the words “Several vernal pools and wetlands” is the start of a new paragraph.

When asked about the author of the language for Stand A, Chairman Tenhave stated his belief the descriptions came out of previous plans done over time (by a Forester). Vice Chairman Caron commented he is not qualified to review the information for accuracy. Chairman Tenhave responded it was the responsibility of the Commission, when the section was previously discussed, to ensure the language was proper, and, at this time, the work of the Commission is to ensure any edits made are appropriate and verify whether additional edits are necessary.

Page 20; do not capitalize the words “Overstory” or “Mixed” in the title for Stand A, remove the “s” from the word “Observations”, and delete the first sentence under “Forestry Plan”.

Beginning on page 20; remove periods at the end of the headings in instances where they appear.

Page 21, Stand C; delete the last three sentences, Stand D; “Wildlife” does not include a description, and will remain until such a time as a description can be provided.

The Word “Observation” should be underlined under the descriptions for Stands D (page 21), E (page 22, and J (page 25).

Page 23, Stand G; replace the period after the word “overstory” with a forward slash.

The Commission questioned the origin of the “NOTE” on page 24, under the title of Observation for Stand H.

Page 24, Stand H, Observation; delete the last sentence, under Wildlife; capitalize the word “state” in the second sentence, in the fifth and sixth sentences under Forestry Plan; replace the word “we” with the words “the MCC”.

Page 26, Stand J, Observation; the sentence beginning with “Running the length” should be the start of a new paragraph, under Wildlife; the last sentence should read: “The rehabilitation plan was created in 2010, is currently being acted upon, and is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2013.”

Page 27, Stand L, Wildlife; does not include a description, and will remain. Stand M, Observation, last sentence, second paragraph; replace the word “Sings” with the word “signs”, and in the last sentence of the third paragraph; capitalize the word “projects”.

Page 28, Stand N; remove the hyphen between the words “over” and “story” in the title and add a period to the end of the paragraph under the heading “Observation”.

Page 29, Stand N, Forestry Plan; replace the words “Section 8” with the words “Section 6”.

Given the amount of new information included for the remainder of Sections 2, 3, and 4, the consensus of the Commission was to table discussion of those areas to allow additional time for individual review.

Page 43, second paragraph; underline the words “Soils and Terrain”.

Page 44, second paragraph; underline the words "Management Objective".

The Commission recessed at 8:10 p.m.

The Commission reconvened at 8:15 p.m.

The consensus of the Commission was to continue review of the draft Plan at the meeting scheduled for the following evening, and to pick up with Section 5 Trails.

NEW BUSINESS - None

OTHER BUSINESS

Vice Chairman Caron spoke of a race held at the Horse Hill Nature Preserve, which he stated to have been well-attended. He anticipates a full report will be provided at the next sub-committee meeting.

Chairman Tenhave informed the Commission employees of the Public Works Department reconditioned some picnic tables and located one near the kiosk in the parking lot of Wildcat Falls. Vice Chairman Caron added an additional picnic table has been located at the Horse Hill Nature Preserve behind the kiosk.

Chairman Tenhave noted receipt of an e-mail from New Hampshire Fish & Game stating a desire to conduct a survey of Blanding's Turtles in Merrimack. They have received reports of the endangered species in New Hampshire. The intent is to put turtle traps out during the summer months in the hope of gaining an idea of the activity. They wish to place traps at the Horse Hill Nature Preserve and Grater Woods. His response to the communication was that the Commission would have no objection. He noted the information was passed along to members of the Horse Hill Nature Preserve sub-committee. He also requested Fish & Game share their results with the Commission.

Chairman Tenhave informed the Commission of an e-mail he received regarding a program called "Button up NH", which will take place at the Merrimack Public Library on March 14th. The program is a weatherization workshop intended to educate individuals on weatherizing their homes, etc.

Chairman Tenhave commented, at the last meeting, he spoke of a 33-acre parcel of land for sale at Grater Woods. He noted feedback he has received from the realtor that the price has not had much change. He suggested the Commission discuss the parcel in late March/early April when the overall topic of finances is addressed.

Chairman Tenhave informed the Commission of receipt of an e-mail from the Nashua Regional Planning Commission with regard to upcoming activities. One of the planned activities taking place at Plymouth State University on Friday, March 22, 2013, is the New Hampshire Water and Watershed Conference. During this event, attendees will have an opportunity to speak with educators, scientists, consultants, and students about lake, river, and watershed groups.

Vice Chairman Caron remarked the Winter Carnival was well-attended. He had set up a booth representing the Commission and was joined by Roland Roberge and Debra Huffman of the Horse Hill Nature Preserve (HHNP) Sub-Committee. The new map for the HHNP was made available for review, and some attendees discussed the Town Center Trail proposal. There was a good deal of feedback and questions on the HHNP and the Grater Woods Stewardship Plan.

PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES

Merrimack Conservation Commission. February 4, 2013

The following amendment was offered:

Page 6, Line 4; replace the word "Commissioner" with the word "Commission".

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE TO ACCEPT AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARON
MOTION CARRIED
5/0/0**

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

An Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony will be conducted on March 23, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. at the Nashua Fish & Game. It was noted one of the scouts receiving this honor was the creator of the observation deck located in Grater Woods (near educational trail).

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CARON TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER THOMSON
MOTION CARRIED
5/0/0**

The March 4, 2013 meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan