

ACC Meeting, February 11, 2015 - DRAFT

A joint meeting of the Merrimack and Amherst Conservation Commissions Amherst Fire Department Training Room

7:00PM -Call to Order by Amherst Chair John Harvey
Introductions of attendees – See Addendum list

Grater Woods Complex – John projected a map showing the GW Conservation properties in both towns.

Tim Tenhave, Chair of Merrimack CC reviewed their current GW land and future acquisition goals. He outlined permitted uses and their system of classifying trails: Class A – 11' wide trails suitable for ATV and snowmobiles, Class B - pedestrian; no motorized because of terrain and fragile habitats, Class C - very narrow trails with rough terrain and many sharp turns – suitable for mountain bikes.

Trailheads and Trail Connections – there now are 4 trail heads – 2 in each town. However they don't connect and there is a lack of uniform signage and maps. Usage is not consistent between the towns as Amherst does not permit any motorized vehicles. Merrimack has over the years acquired land that was historically used by vehicles and it is hard to change or discontinue. Discussion of South Grater Rd that leads to Grater Rd in Amherst that Merrimack wants to discontinue as a Class VI Rd. to discourage ATVs. Merrimack CC has enforcement issues as there are many private properties abutting the boundaries.

John summarized the discussion about connecting trails noting that ACC will do the necessary field work to join trails and usage pattern in the Grater Woods bluff area, recognizing that the MCC trail there is not yet official. Wes Robertson will coordinate with the MCC Grater Woods Trails subcommittee to accomplish this.

Bruce asked about MCC plans for logging in their lands – Tim replied that it is not a high priority and would be done only to improve habitats and not for \$\$\$\$. If they were to work for the Amherst side on Grater Rd. it is not clear whether a logging truck could make the corner to turn onto south Grater Rd.

Tim explained that their professional Biodiversity Plan was done by Jeff Littleton- they are very pleased with his work and have found him to be a good educator.

Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas Pipeline

Paul explained the organization of the Amherst Selectmen's Pipeline Task Force with ACC subcommittee of Paul, Rob, Bruce to provide environmental impact data. They are looking at about 14 environmental categories such as wetlands, geology, etc. and plan to provide a page summary of the existing conditions/status for each category = 15-20 pg. document to be ready by March 11th ACC meeting. This will include recommendations and suggestions for alternate routes.

Tim said that Merrimack has not yet set up an official pipeline organization. But MCC wants to have a professional environmental study done of Horse Hill Preserve that the proposed pipeline is mapped to cross. It also will cross the Gilmore Hill Memorial Forest in Merrimack.

Information Sharing & Future Scheduling

Discussion of future meetings – Wes suggested NHACC could coordinate regional meetings in the future. The two Commissions can meet as needed as called by Chairs.

Joint meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

ACC Meeting called to order by John at 9:06

Minutes were approved as sent on Wed.

Treasurer - Bill

Land \$335,302.56

Gift 6,726.63 (Hager closing costs mistakenly charged to this account)

Budget 2,352.34 – to June 30

PB – Rich

Have been working on the Warrant Articles so have not had regular meetings since our last meeting.

Meadows – Jack reported that he inherited a bench for the Currier land from Don Matisse who moved. Don had been personally mowing the field for years. Jack is storing it until a suitable site is found in the spring.

Plans – Interdepartmental Review – the Frog Hollow property subdivision on Courthouse Rd. The division in to 2 lots is so the field can be separated and sold to ALT for use by the town for community gardens / playground, etc. ALT is looking for partners and sponsors for their fundraising campaign.

Bruce moved that ACC donate \$100 from the Gift Account to this effort, Anne 2nd – Approved.

Round Table

Rich brought up the need for annual pruning at Lindabury Orchard and suggested another professional pruning demo in April. He will check if the Friends have any funds to sponsor this. He will contact County Extension educator George Hamilton to see if he would be available,

No other business,

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Krantz, secretary