

**Sutton Conservation Commission (SCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 10th, 2016**

Present: Betsy Forsham, Chair, Don Davis, Henry Howell, Jane Williamson, Chris Ashton, Gerry Putnam, Ben Dobrowski, Jean LaChance, Wally Baker, and Bonnie Hill, secretary.

Call to order: Betsy Forsham called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Previous Meeting's Minutes: A **motion** was made by Jean LaChance and seconded by Don Davis to approve the minutes of January 13, 2016. There being no discussion, the minutes were accepted as written.

Financial Report:

Betsy and Don attended the Budget Committee hearing on February 4th. Betsy said that the \$10,000 requested allocation to the SCC's CRF appears to be intact. Regarding the proposed warrant article for funding the Stevens property, Committee member, Tom Paul, questioned why the public should have to raise funds while the SCC has enough money in its Capital Reserve Fund to cover the entire \$85,000. Other people present at that meeting seemed to agree with him. Discussion ensued, covering funding concerns, both the pro and con, of expending \$50,000 vs. \$85,000. Ben asked, "if this is voted down, then is Bob out of luck?" Betsy answered yes, and Bob already knows that. Betsy made a **motion** to amend the warrant article, to ask the town to expend up to \$85,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of the Stevens Lot, and Jean seconded it. **The motion passed with one abstention.** Since the original warrant article is already in print, someone will need to stand up at Town Meeting to propose the amended request, which Betsy agreed to do.

\$4,530 in LUCT came in in January, bringing the total in the Conservation Account to \$106,985.89. The KHR account stands at \$6,572.65, for a total in the Conservation Fund of \$113,558.54.

Correspondence:

- NH Lakes quarterly magazine, *Lakeside*.
- ASLPT winter issue of "Chatter"
- A brochure for the Cottrell-Baldwin environmental lecture series, at Fox State Forest, Hillsborough.
- A series of emails between Chris Connor, a landscape consultant, and Betsy Forsham regarding a possible invasive plant in the stream across from the Vernondale store. We will have to wait until spring to identify the plant and determine if something needs to be done about it.

Wetland Applications and Issues:

None

Review of Intents to Cut and Logging Issues:

- Intent received for T/L #6-509,083, Preston – no wetlands issues
- Intent received for T/L #7-578,502, Dupre, Cotton Rd – no wetlands issues
- To answer Henry's questions from the last meeting regarding timber cutting in or near a wetland, Betsy printed some excerpts from the "Guide to NH Timber Harvesting Laws".

Old Business

Animal tracking walk at Webb/Crowell:

Don made posters to advertise this and handed them out for people to post. Betsy spoke to Mike McManus about the parking lot and he said he would have it cleared for March 5th. According to Dave Anderson, 15 to 20 people is the ideal number for an event like this, so he suggested wide advertising. An ad will be placed in the March 1st InterTown Record, along with a mention in Judy Lowe's column. Posters will be placed at the post offices, library, etc., and a notice put on the ASLPT website.

Bobcat hearings:

Jane reported on the very well-attended public hearing on February 1st at the State House, at which the supporters of the hunting and trapping proposal were heavily outnumbered. She said that the second hearing, in Lancaster, however, had 100 people mostly in favor of it. The final vote will be on Feb. 17th. She asked Rep. Dave Kidder, head of the Fish & Game committee, which way he thought it would go, but he didn't know. Jane wondered about the efficacy of a protest rally at the State House on the 17th. She also mentioned the idea of applying for the bobcat permits, just to keep them out of the hands of trappers.

New Business

March meeting

Due to the conflict with Town Meeting, the March SCC meeting will be held on Thursday, the 17th.

Reappointment of Members

Gerry, Jane and Wally are all up for reappointment in March 2016. Jane will stay on as an alternate, and Wally will continue to represent the select board. Gerry, however, is stepping down, so today is his last meeting. He agreed to keep the mowing machines on his property, and to help out in the future. The members thanked him for his many years of serving. We discussed possible candidates for new members. Betsy will write a letter to the selectmen presenting the names for their approval.

On site visit with Eversource

Betsy and Don met with a forester from Eversource on Feb 2nd regarding two dying trees on conservation land. To save time and trouble, they also looked at two more trees on town land. They agreed that all of the trees could be taken down. One very large tree that is partially in the Enroth Gift could be difficult.

LCHIP threatened

Don forwarded email regarding House Bill 1686 (to Repeal LCHIP) to the SCC. This bill has been ruled "Inexpedient To Legislate" by a finance subcommittee, but will go on to a vote by the full Finance Committee and then to the full House. We can write to Rep. Doug Long to express opposition. Don pointed out that LCHIP is a very effective program because of leveraging: each dollar spent generates three times as much money for preservation purposes.

SCC Properties & S-R-K Greenway Reports:

Report from Henry on bridge work with KRHS students at KHR:

Henry said the students are in a winter hiatus right now. They are building part of the bridge in their own shop. Henry wants to push for other projects, and he wants to involve kids of all ages, from elementary to high school. The projects must be consistent with the school curriculum, and some of his ideas are contour maps, trail maps, turning some existing trails into self-guided nature trails, and some kind of display to educate the town or a group. He asked the members for ideas. Betsy said the high school at

Town Meeting would be a good venue for a display. Jane said some towns have taken the maps from the Wildlife Action Plan and displayed them where people can put in pins to show where they have spotted wildlife. She suggested a map of the Stevens property, to be displayed at Town Meeting. She also suggested researching uses for invasive plants and looking into how to get native NH plants back into the areas where they are. This could include a field trip to Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA to see native plants. Don suggested mapping cellar holes and other stone structures such as dams and stone walls, using GPS, and taking photos of them. Newbury, Lyme, and Bradford have all done this. He said the Sutton Historical Society, the library, and Muster Field Farm are going to be digitizing their collections, and could use help in that project, perhaps with the partnership of a Colby-Sawyer student. Betsy suggested making a map of Webb/Crowell, and making the connecting trail to the vernal pool at KHR.

Miscellaneous

Chris spoke about the Emerald Ash Borer presentation given by Dode Gladders on Feb. 4th. He said there was some positive news, about curing trees with a chemical treatment if they are less than 30% infested, and about a parasitic wasp from China that has the potential to bring EAB down to the level of an ordinary pest. Betsy added that the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid also has a parasitic wasp now.

Adjournment: There being no further business, a **Motion** was made by Jean and seconded by Gerry to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. **The Motion was unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Hill, Secretary

The next meeting will be held on March 17, 2016 @ 6:30 p.m.