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Town of Grantham
Grantham Conservation Committee Minutes
June 21, 2010

Chairman Richard L. Hocker called the Conservation Committee meeting to order on Monday, June 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, N.H.

Chair Hocker stated this evening he would like to announce replacement for member Adele Furdyna would be Joe Watts. Hocker told Joe Watts that the Conservation Committee welcomed him aboard.

PRESENT

Chairman Richard (Dick) Hocker
Merle Schotanus
Thomas E. Vogel
Patricia Woolson (Alt.)
Joe Watts (Alt.)

ABSENT

Andy Eastman
Jeremy Turner

Members of the public: None

Approval of Minutes

Chair Hocker asked the Committee members if they had reviewed the minutes from the May 17, 2010 meeting and if there were any additions/corrections.

*There being no corrections motion was made by Merle Schotanus and second by Patricia Woolson to approve the minutes. **Unanimously Approved***

New Business

Standard Dredge and Fill application: Eastman Community Association (ECA)

Hocker stated that essentially there are six (6) sights planned to have work done to immediate some of the problems that have been encountered in that area. This subject had been discussed at the April 19, 2010 meeting. Hocker said that normally the town has thirty days to comment on the plans and that if the members would like to look them over they will have approximately two weeks to do so. The problems that exist are to do with drainage and erosion. Hocker said that there is a lot of material going into West Cove part of the Eastman Lake. Hocker asked the Committee if they had any suggestions.

Schotanus asked if ECA had submitted a Dredge and Fill application and Woolson wanted to know if so, had it been approved yet? Hocker stated that he had just received a letter from Department of Environmental (DES) before the meeting today saying the

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ECA application for Standard Dredge & Fill had been received and accepted in accordance with RSA: 483 and no variance or waiver is required and would be reviewed in thirty days. Hocker said a letter would be sent to DES with “comments only” with regards to this application from the GCC members within the 30-day period that’s allowed. Vogel said that he would review the DES application and get back to the GCC on this.

Other Business

Update on Romano Property activity:

Chair Hocker stated to members they were well aware from emails received from the realtor and Tara Romano that the committee can proceed with permission to have an appraisal done and possibly completed by August 2010; approximate cost is going to be \$3600. Hocker said as the committee was well aware this is one of the more significant properties that is going to be available on the market and there should be some thought on protecting it. Hocker said that he had alerted both the Town Administrator and Treasurer that they should be thinking about raising a significant amount of money at the next town meeting, which may mean a bonding issue. Schotanus remarked that would be if the town wants to have an interest in this property. There was further discussion amongst committee members on this subject.

Planning for Conservation Sub-Committee continued discussion:

Chair Hocker asked Schotanus if there were any updates. Schotanus stated he had not taken any action on the proposal for wetlands inventory due to the fact he has not heard anything from the commission. Schotanus suggested that maybe the GCC should slow down on this just a bit. Schotanus said that the purpose of the wetlands inventory is to provide information to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment to make decisions and the GCC needs to get some input first from these boards before going any further. Schotanus spoke that a PowerPoint system still needs to be done. There will be more updates at future meetings.

Smith Lot Forest Management Plan:

Chair Hocker explained to new member Joe Watts information pertaining to this plan and if he was interested in taking a drive to/walk the area. Hocker said that Jeremy Turner was not present this evening to discuss any further progress. Information regarding this management plan will be carried over to next months meeting.

Frog Pond status:

Chair Hocker said Leslie Moses in Ken Ryder’s absence took over temporarily and received a packet from Andy Deegan that needed to be filled in for the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust. The information has since been given back to Ken Ryder and in the process of being completed. Hocker stated there would be an update at the next meeting.

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Conservation efforts/other

Chair Hocker brought the attention to the Committee members the Carl Ray property, which has 224 acres and is right next door to the Smith lot, and across from the Flewelling property. Hocker said that he had heard the property has been reverted back to Sugar River Bank. Hocker went on to say that it would be nice to work out some sort of deal to have the land put into conservation and had sent information to three (3) individuals and was waiting to hear something back. Hocker thought it would be a good idea to sell off the house with some land though. Schotanus thought that it would be worthwhile talking to a conservation real estate agent.

Hocker stated that he had some issues with the way things are happening in this town that anything that goes to the Town Administrator is then directed to the Selectmen for final approval. Hocker went on to say that the GCC does not necessarily get a direct response. Hocker stated to the Committee as they all new Gerald Miller had done all the “grunt” work on finding the Town Monument (Stone Marker) and had been paid for his work from the Town of Grantham, but not yet from the Town of Plainfield share as far as he knew.

Secondly is the topic on Shoreland Protection of which the Selectmen want to retain the authority and Hocker said he wasn't sure they (Selectmen) knew what they were getting themselves into. Hocker told the Committee members he needs to meet with Becky Newton, Town Administrator on this topic. Hocker went on to explain how the process has worked and what's changing to new member Joe Watts within the Grantham area.

Third, Hocker was explaining to the Committee members that he did not believe the Selectmen had filed a complaint with Department of Environmental Services (DES) to do with Shoreland Protection Act against Raymond Sanville for dumping within 50 feet of Skinner Brook. Hocker believed this had not taken place and should have.

Fourth, Ausbon Sargent has a conservation effort ongoing for which they were asking for a donation of \$2000.00 from the Town of Grantham /Conservation Committee and Hocker said the answer he got from the Selectmen was anything but a yes/no. Schotanus stated that he would like to comment on this and went on to say that it turns out the Eastman Village District has an environmental fund and Schotanus said he suggested to the Ausbon Sargent Fund to talk to them with regards to their situation and apologized to the Committee members for not mentioning this sooner. Schotanus said that he would do some follow-up and check with Andy Deegan on this subject.

Hocker stated that he had been on this committee for almost 11 years and it was obvious there were funds that were sitting out there of which the GCC had administrative control that he was not aware of and, part of that is the front office no longer reports on a consistent basis anything other than their operating budget (which is the monies that are approved at town meeting).

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In realty Hocker said that the committee has four (4) pots of money the first being the operating budget approved at town meeting and generally that is \$1,600 at the present time. The second is what can be called the “Current Use” penalty fund, which is the fee property owners’ pay when they take their land “out of” current use and by town meeting vote the GCC gets 100% of this. Hocker said the last insight he had on this was approximately \$64-65,000 is what the balance was. The third is the recently established fund of which the town put \$20,000 into when first established and voted into at town meeting this year to add \$10,000 to this which Hocker said brings this fund to a total of \$30,000. The fourth and last fund is the Flewelling Trust Fund, which was established at the time the property was conserved and the last check on that over a year ago was approximately \$4,500 and that money is to be expended for improvements to the Flewelling property to support the conservation effort.

Hocker went on to discuss the last issue is the shack on the Smith Lot. Hocker said the property owner who abuts this, his son is the one who put up the shack, and has been notified in writing at least once and told by Jeremy Turner several times that it has to be removed and this has still been ignored. Hocker mentioned this to the Town Administrator and nothing has been done about this to his knowledge.

Hocker asked if anyone had any comments or questions.

Schotanus asked the Committee if it wasn’t time to establish the office of treasurer for this organization to keep track of these funds and told Hocker that he was not trying to criticize his (Hockers) efforts. Schotanus went on to say the reason for this is that the treasurer would constantly be in contact with the Town Administrator and could update the status of these funds at the monthly meeting. Hocker stated that part of the problem is the GCC has not received any reports; also the town report does not even carry that information anymore with regards to the funds that the GCC has listed. Hocker went on to say that in the 1980’s – early 1990’s this information was available in the town report. Hocker then asked the Committee members would they like to think about this while he checked to see what the procedures would be with adding a treasurer. Further discussion ensued with committee members.

Handouts

None

Adjournment

Chair Richard Hocker asked the members if anyone had any more questions. There being none motion was made by Joe Watts and second by Merle Schotanus; *the committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:00p.m.*

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Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. on July 19, 2010 in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha M. Menard, Clerk