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Town of Grantham
Grantham Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
August 23, 2010

Chairman Richard L. Hocker called the Conservation Committee meeting to order on Monday, August 23, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Room at Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, NH.

PRESENT

Chairman Richard (Dick) Hocker
Andy Eastman
Merle Schotanus
Pat Woolson (Alt.)
Joe Watts (Alt.)

ABSENT

Tom Vogel
Jeremy Turner

Members of the public: None

Approval of Minutes

Chair Hocker started the meeting off by stating there was no quorum for the July meeting so it was canceled and asked the Committee members if they had reviewed the minutes from the June 21, 2010 meeting, were any additions/corrections to be made.

*There being no corrections motion was made by Joe Watts and second by Merle Schotanus to approve the minutes of June 21, 2010. **Unanimously Approved***

NEW BUSINESS

Annual walk of the Flewelling property:

Chair Hocker said that part of the commission duties is to take the yearly walk of the property and review any discrepancies and report to the state. Hocker stated that usually this is done the months of September/October time period. Hocker asked the members to go over their schedules and come up with a time period that will work for them. Hocker said he would contact Steve Walker, Office of Energy & Planning (EOP) State of New Hampshire, to go along and hopefully Don Minor and Karen Partin could participate this year.

Springfield-Grantham Conservation Collaboration:

Pat Woolson indicated that she had met with John Tracy on issues of common interest to each Conservation Commission. Mr. Tracy said that his organization was still actively looking for funds to complete the Spurling Conservation Effort. Since this effort backs to the Eastman Well Field and would be a strongly important means for protecting the well field, Merle Schotanus suggested that Mr. Tracy be advised to seek the funds from The Village District (Dave Wright). Also Mr. Tracy had indicated that he was desirous of

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Grantham hosting a joint meeting of the Commissions for an informational forum for the joint town residents.

OTHER BUSINESS

Flewelling property activity:

Chair Hocker stated to Committee members they should each have a copy of the report from (Office of Energy and Planning)) Steve Walker with recent findings for property visit. Other information updates along with a photo of the accident of the logging truck were included on the last page. Hocker stated most of what he saw on the property during his visit the same day was hardwood cutting in general and white pine cutting in the southeastern corner of the property between Miller Pond and Skinner Brook.

Hocker said there are some issues; the biggest one being the accident and the fact that ongoing timbering is going on the property. The owner more or less does not want snowmobiles and anyone not involved in the timbering business there either. Hocker discussed information received from the town with regards to the conservation sign that was erected by him as to whether or not the sign had been put in the appropriate place. Hocker went on to talk of possible alternate routes to take and mentioned that Steve Walker indicated that the owners were working on a proposal to present to the Conservation Committee. Hocker said that the owners are continuing the lumbering and that they do have a valid Forest Management Plan.

Schotanus commented that the area is totally over cut. Hocker stated that he was hoping that Jeremy Turner would take a look at the property (note-Jeremy did look over the property in June prior to the signoff on the new “intent to cut” and found that only the premium trees were being cut and no forest health improvement was being practiced). Schotanus stated that if the members were going to take a look at the proposal, he would hope this would include the Blue Mountain Snow Dusters (snowmobile club) because he felt this was part of the issue. Further discussion ensued amongst members.

Update on Romano Property activity:

Chair Hocker stated that there were several issues with the property and that he would be meeting with realtor, Sherry Noyes and appraiser, Kevin McManus to walk the property on Dunbar Hill Road and go over the evaluation with them. Joe Watts stated that he would look at the property with McManus and helped him with getting information. Hocker stated that he felt there was still a potential meeting with property owner Tara Romano this October. Hocker said there would be more information at next month’s meeting.

Planning for Conservation sub-committee-continued discussion:

Chair Hocker asked Merle Schotanus for his input. Schotanus said that on the wetlands inventory, he had looked over again information from this past June meeting and that after having made his recommendation about going to Planning/Zoning Boards and

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finding out what they need, has decided to back off at this time. Schotanus stated that he had been in contact with Departmental of Environmental Services (DES) and Town of

New London, NH Zoning Board Administrator Peter Stanley and before the GCC continues any further they will need to do more on the wetlands inventory before approaching the Planning/Zoning Boards to find out what the GCC can do on the policy side.

Schotanus said that his initial look at this, is a two-sided situation with inventory on one-side and policy/regulation questions on the other and essentially what happens is (with information learned from Peter Stanley) with doing the inventory first and based on inventory, they proposed regulations that would be mandated by the Zoning /Planning Boards, not the Conservation Commission and that would be the stage after the inventory.

Schotanus went on to say the inventory concerns by state law needs to be handled by a certified wetlands scientist which means this will have to be contracted out. Schotanus said that he had made a contact and received a quote of approximately \$25,000, which seemed very high but after doing some research, the results were about the same for this kind of a project. Schotanus stated that there is \$200,000 available in the Moose Plate Grant for 2011 that was announced in June and according to his reading of the requirements of the grant; this inventory would meet the requirements for under/over \$5,000 (applications are different for the higher amount).

Additional discussion centered on the possibility of applying for a Moose Grant to help offset the cost of the wetlands inventory. Part of this discussion related to the estimate how long, and who would be involved in the project. A consensus was reached that the estimated cost would be in the \$30,000 ballpark and that GCC will consider applying for a Moose Grant of \$15,000 to offset the cost. It was also agreed that a project of this magnitude would take two (2) to three (3) years to complete. Possible collaboration and cooperation with Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) was discussed. A Moose Grant application was distributed to the GCC members and reviewed with GCC actions needed to meet the October 1st deadline for submitting the application.

Schotanus volunteered to bird dog the project but informed the commission that he could not write the grant because of schedule conflicts. He did agree to provide his best effort in supplying input to the grant application.

Chair Hocker then asked for a Grantham Conservation Committee motion to conduct a Comprehensive Wetlands Inventory Project. And apply for a NH Moose Grant in the amount of \$15,000. Motion by Merle Schotanus and second by Joe Watts. ***Unanimously Approved***

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Smith Lot Forest Management Plan:

Chair Hocker stated that he had contacted Jeremy Turner who indicated that all of the fieldwork has been completed. Meadowsend will be putting it together in a document and hopes to have it to GCC within the next 30 days. Updates at the next meeting.

Frog Pond status:

Chair Hocker stated that the paperwork needed by Ausbon Sargent is with Ken Ryder regarding this project and this will be carried forward to next months meeting.

Revised Shoreland Protection forms:

Chair Hocker let the members know about new developments regarding the Shoreland Protection program and made available the Shoreland Protection forms approved by the Selectmen.

HANDOUTS

None

AJOURNMENT

Chair Richard Hocker asked the members if anyone had any more questions. There being none motion was made by Pat Woolson and second by Merle Schotanus; *the committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.*

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. on September 20, 2010 in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha M. Menard
Clerk