

Town of Farmington
Conservation Commission Meeting
Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Commission Members Present:

Dave Connolly, Chairman
Randy Orvis, Vice Chairman
Charlie King, Selectmen's Rep.
William Fisher, Alternate
Richard Ballou, (6:30 p.m.)
Laura Bogardus, Board Secretary
Resta Detwiler

Commission Members Absent:

Jackie Bissell
Rose Muise

Others Present:

Rod Thompson, resident
Elizabeth Burton, resident
Jonathan Bucknam, HWMS student
Donna Ellis, Guidance Counselor, HWMS gr. 4-8
Jeremy Lougee, Southeast Land Trust (SELT)
Robert Hills, resident

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Connolly called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Connolly welcomed new alternate member Bill Fisher to the Commission and invited him to sit as a regular member due to the absence of two members. He also welcomed Selectmen's Rep. Charlie King to the Commission.

3). Public Comment: None.

4). Barry Conservation 4-H Camp Presentation:

Henry Wilson Memorial School student Jonathan Bucknam wrote an essay entitled "My Desire to Attend Camp" to become eligible to attend camp for one week sponsored by the Conservation Commission. Bucknam, who is 12 years old, wrote about what nature means to him, the emotional and social benefits of attending camp, his passion for the outdoors, what he hoped to learn and how he will pass on his experiences to his brothers and sisters.

Motion: (Orvis, second Bogardus) to send Jonathan Bucknam to the camp for one week passed unanimously. Bucknam will attend the camp, located on York Pond Road in Berlin, NH from July 31 to

August 5, 2016. The theme for that week is "North Country Adventure" which will center on all aspects of the outdoors person such as hunting, fishing, survival skills and traditional camp activities. Photos were taken of Commission members and Bucknam to commemorate the occasion.

5). Review of Minutes:

February 10, 2016-

Motion: (Detwiler, second Orvis) to approve the minutes as written passed 5-0-2 (King, Fisher abstained).

6). Old Business:

A). Anti-littering/Resta- Ms. Detwiler said the program has been changed to a Recycling Program at FHS. A video presentation is scheduled for next week at the high school, but she has not heard from the student who volunteered to help with completion of the video. The teacher advising the program recently had a heart attack which may change the scheduled plans she said. Chairman Connolly said the commission got involved with establishing the program after he was approached by a National Honor Society student who was interested in starting a recycling program at the high school. Discussion included there are 30 collection bins currently at the school, the janitors take the items to the town transfer station for disposal, there is a plan to expand the program to the elementary and middle schools, separating aluminum cans to sell for school fund raising purposes, how the town handles recyclables, tipping and hauling fees and finding a better recycling source to get a better deal. Donna Ellis, Henry Wilson School Guidance Counselor said she would like to see a recycling program re-established at her school. She noted the school had a program at one time but it was discontinued when there was no one to dispose of the materials. She added there will be a new Principal and Vice Principal starting there soon and felt it would be easy to get them and the students involved in the program especially where the district is attempting to get all three schools accredited.

B). Arbor Day/Dave- Chairman Connolly said the members previously decided to donate American Chestnut trees to the Henry Wilson School. He told the members that the Principal at the school suddenly resigned due to a health issue and he would like the opportunity to meet with the new Principal before moving ahead with the plan. He added that the school may have to join the American Chestnut Foundation in order to receive the trees at the member rate. Ms. Detwiler suggested the Commission could offer to pay their membership if the school agreed to join. Chairman Connolly said he will discuss the issue with the new Principal at his/her next availability.

C). Earth Day/Resta- Ms. Detwiler said she had been working on flyers to advertise the annual cleanup which will take place on Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 8 a.m. to noon. She noted the flyers have been completed and are available at the Town Hall. Chairman Connolly said he will contact Recreation Dept. Director Rick Conway to confirm the meeting place for volunteers and the Police and Fire Dept. for volunteers and support for the event. He asked Ms. Detwiler to contact local business to obtain permission to post the flyers at their businesses.

Mr. Fisher asked if River Road will be included again this year. Connolly explained that shortly before the clean up, he takes a ride around town looking to see what areas need cleanup and makes a list of those roads. The cleanup lasts for four hours so the number of roads included in the pickup depends on the number of volunteers available he said.

D). R62-006, Bay Road- Mr. Orvis said that after considering the discussion at the previous meeting, he did not think it was worth spending money to acquire the .1 acre property. He said nothing will happen to the property as it is too small to develop or put a home on and is only big enough to erect a monument or sign. Chairman Connolly told the new members the property which abuts the Town Forest, is owned by Aaron Fenderson and has frontage on Bay Road. The property has back taxes and title/deed issues and the owner is willing to donate it to the town if he does not have to pay any legal or other costs for the transfer. Discussion included the issues go back about 25 years, wait to take the property by tax lien, taking the property by tax lien may not solve the deed issues and it would not be fiscally responsible to take on the issue. Consensus of the members was to table the matter indefinitely.

E). Ronci Property- Chairman Connolly reported that he, Mr. Orvis and Ms. Detwiler walked the property today to view the layout of the land in consideration of constructing a handicapped access fishing area. Mr. Orvis described the features of the area and said it looks feasible to construct a wooden walkway to a platform for a handicapped access. He said he was unsure as to the cost for the project but suggested there may be grants available to help with the cost. He added the state may stock more fish in the area with more access sites and suggested the Commission pursue the matter. He added he would donate the survey work for the project.

Chairman Connolly said he thought there would be ADA requirements regarding building and materials used for handicapped fishing accesses but could not find any. He suggested the town may be exempt from liability as we are offering activities on town owned property at no charge to participants.

Additional discussion included the area is flood prone, what kind of permits would be needed, if any of town staff can write grants and where to find available grants for this type of project. Mr. Orvis will provide links to possible grant sources to Ms. Detwiler to research.

At this point, Mr. Lougee arrived and Chairman Connolly suggested the members take a break and allow him time to set up for the Public Hearing.

Motion: (Connolly, second Bogardus) to take a 10 minute break passed unanimously at 7 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:10 p.m.

7). Notice of Public Hearing:

The Farmington Conservation Commission hereby gives notice of a Public Hearing to be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 7 p.m. to discuss possible expenditures from its conservation fund for a funding contribution to a future conservation easement. This project is located on Pound Road, Farmington, Tax Map 30-4. The hearing will be held at the Town's Municipal Offices, 356 Main Street, Farmington, NH. Dave Connolly, Chairman.

SELT Conservation Project Manager Jeremy Lougee gave a presentation to the Commission on the proposed Hills Farm Conservation Project. Property owner Robert Hills was also present. Mr. Lougee said Mr. Hill owns a 52 acre parcel with road frontage on Pound and Ten Rod Roads. He plans to operate a dairy farm and sell his milk products locally. Photos in the presentation included an aerial view of the property, Hussey Mountain, the second new barn raising, the historic Town Pound, 20 acres of fields, 30 forested acres, wildlife habitats and high quality farmland soils. Discussion included total expenses are estimated at \$213,250, potential revenues total \$116,250 leaving about \$97,000 to be raised, estimated value of the easement, importance of the appraisal and threat of development of the property.

Mr. Hill told the members he is determined to get this project done one way or another. He said he spoke to his children who are okay with the plan. It is a special piece of property that I don't want to see developed he said. He added he would not allow hunting on the property but would welcome visitors to see the farm or walk the woods. There were no other public comments and Chairman Connolly closed the public hearing at 7:25 p.m.

Motion: (Connolly, second Ballou) to expend up to \$10,000 for the Hills Conservation Easement project passed 5-0-2 (King, Fisher abstained). Chairman Connolly said the next step is for the expenditure to go before the Board of Selectmen for approval. He will contact the Town Administrator/Selectmen Chairman to arrange inclusion on their agenda at a future board meeting.

Chairman Connolly also asked Mr. Lougee to provide an invoice so the Commission can pay for services rendered. Lougee said he will speak to the Executive Director to determine whether SELT will bill on a "rolling" basis or wait until the project is complete to bill the Commission.

6). Old Business (continued):

F). Town Forest/April Meeting- Chairman Connolly said Barry Keith is scheduled to meet with the Commission at the April meeting to discuss reclamation of the log landing following the timber harvest, enhancement of the parking area, trail improvements and the Management Plan.

G). French Property/April Meeting- Chairman Connolly said they also plan to discuss Mr. Keith's proposed trail realignment and quotes for the foot bridges to be installed on the property.

H). Any Other Old Business- Responsible ATV Riding- Mr. Orvis reported he is still working on finding a group/person to provide a presentation to the community on responsible ATV riding, how to ride without destroying the land and how to make riding trails. He said he is looking for a presentation lasting about two hours similar to the Invasive Species forum previously held at the Town Hall. The presentation would also be held at the Town Hall but the date has not yet been chosen. Chairman Connolly said the NH Fish and Game has an all day program on ATV riding and he will contact them to see if a shorter presentation is available.

8). New Business:

A). Seacoast Eat Local- Chairman Connolly said he was contacted by Director of Programs Jillian Hall seeking sponsors for the group's mission to connect people with sources of locally grown foods and to advocate eating locally for the health of the environment, community, culture and the economy. Sponsorship opportunities include support of the Winter Farmers' Market and the Seacoast Harvest publication at various funding levels. Consensus of the members was that a sponsorship would not directly benefit the Farmington Conservation Commission.

B). Moose Mountain Regional Greenways- Chairman Connolly said the Commission received an invitation to the MMRG's Annual Meeting and Silent Auction to be held at the Kingswood Tavern Greenside in Wolfeboro on Sunday, April 17 from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Speaker Kevin Gardner will speak on stone walls. The cost is \$30 per person. Chairman Connolly, Ms. Detwiler and possibly Ms. Bissell will attend the meeting.

Motion: (Connolly, second Detwiler) to expend up to \$120 for four members to attend the MMRG Annual Meeting passed unanimously.

Chairman Connolly also announced MMRG has a new Executive Director Patti Burns.

C). Any Other New Business-

1). Invoice- Chairman Connolly reported receipt of an invoice from BH Keith for \$90 for foot bridges and bog crossings on the French property.

Motion: (Ballou, second Orvis) to pay the invoice passed unanimously.

2). Recycle Mobile- Ms. Detwiler presented a flyer offering free rental of a mobile trailer to collect recyclables. The 4' x 6' trailer holds six 32 gallon containers and can be used for display purposes at events such as Hay Day she said. Someone would need to pick up the trailer at Northeast Resource Recovery in Epsom. Mr. Fisher will make arrangements to pick up the trailer for the Hay Day event.

9). FYI:

Intent to Cut- Map 7, Lot 15, 20 acres.

10). April Meeting Dates:

Next Conservation Commission Meeting- Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 6 p.m. The agenda will include election of officers and a Public Hearing with Barry Keith.

School Board Meeting- Monday, April 4, 2016. Members will present the proposed recycling program at the high school to the board.

11). Any Other Business: None.

12). Adjournment:

Motion: (Bogardus, second Ballou) to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 7:50 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary