

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

September 11, 2019

DRAFT MINUTES

Members present: Andy Fulton, William (Bill) Bolton, Sherry Burdick and Michael Camacho.

Guests present: John Ciampi, Cora Ciampi, Marc Phillips.

Meeting called to order at 7:13 PM by Chairman Fulton.

I. DISCUSSION

A. Conservation Commission Land Purchase John and Cora Ciampi of 135 Chipmunk Falls Road; Tax Map 401, Lot #78 propositioned to the Commission a purchase of their land, a 14 acre, off-the-grid property, having many appealing qualities, and requests the property be marked for Land Conservation. The Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust will not be able purchase due to logistics, but the organization has granted a conservation easement to the land. Summary of the property's conservation values are vast and include, but not limited to the following (1) a plethora of varied wildlife, such as: a colony of bats, black bear, beaver in Dustin Brook, moose, bobcat, red fox, fisher cat, snowshoe hare, chipmunk, mole, mink, deer mice, otter, porcupines, raccoon, one sighting of an albino skunk, skunks, grey flying squirrels, spotted weasels, salamanders, coyote, deer, muskrat in Dustin Pond and woodchuck. Also prevalent are the numerous bird varieties to include spruce grouse, snowy owl, hummingbirds, blue jays, tufted titmouse, hawk, wood peckers, ravens, crows, chickadees, wren, cedar waxwing, cowbird, turkey, Barred owls, Great Horned Owl, purple martins, nuthatch, wren, veery, eastern meadow lark, house sparrow and others. Trees are abundant with White Pine, Hemlock, 4 types of Birches, several Maple, Choke Cherry, Spruce, Aspen, American Beech, Sumac. Other interesting items embrace old moss stone walls, an artisan well with a hand pump, glass and pottery findings, a travel way to By-Pass Rt. 114, an old inn, hand pounded nails of horseshoes, and notably, the property is near Chipmunk Falls, fed by Dustin Brook, believed to be the highest falls in Weare. Mrs. Ciampi then handed the board copies of the following: (1) Wildlife Land Trust conservation easement, (2) tax assessment listing; \$63,867. Buildings details were also mentioned: one metal roof house built with valuable old barn beams, two sheds, one workshop, a well and no electricity. Other details discussed were that the Town of Weare already owns the 7 acre Chipmunk Falls property, therefore this would offer a continuous corridor to existing town property; the 1999 easement does not allow hunting or trapping; future wishes for property are to provide a wildlife sanctuary, with no hunting or trapping or building allowed, and lastly that the boundaries are marked with Wildlife Land Trust signs. Mr. Ciampi left with saying he has owned this property since 1976 and hopes history will prevail here.

Chairman comments:

1. Confirmed with owners there was no knowledge of any pollution or dumping on the property.
2. The property offers valuable conservation topographies.
2. Abutting properties that include rare features in the Town.

3. Larger land blocks are attractive to Conservation Commission.
4. Forth parcel in this vicinity that would be included conservation land.
5. The Commission needs some time to look at finances and review this information. A decision should be made by the end of November. We must consider the balance of merits versus cost; timeline considerations are important.
6. A site walk is needed, ideally with the property owners when the leaves are down in October.
7. Wildlife Land Trust boundary markers.

B. Weare Winter Wanderers (WWW) Snowmobile Club Parks & Woods Property Trail Re-route 2019 Trail administrator, Marc Phillips, rose and explained the need to have a snowmobile re-route on the Woods Property. Several reasons were discussed: an abutter is not keen on the existing trail, as machines are 40 ft from the house. A new trail would be farther from this property; less issues with nearby fields; will be using existing skidder trails, with permissions from Town of Weare Parks and Recreation Department; Parks Gate and Conservation Green Gate will both be closed to keep all traffic away from lower area, therefore trouble with neighbors who have been abusing the trail would cease; the existing easement states that the trail can be moved if both parties agree in writing, then a copy of easement was distributed; the trail would mostly be on the Woods Property; the Board of Selectman recently granted unanimous approval of the re-route. Mr. Bolton then rose and addressed the group, “first as a Citizen of Weare, second a member of WWW club and lastly, a Commission board member”. He stated that the wishes of Ms. Woods, deceased owner of the Woods Property was for the Town of Weare residents to use this path. Also noted were the following points: the easement was not recorded correctly, therefore the Commission does not have authority in this matter as the governing body thru the research he has done. The citizens of Weare own this property, not the Conservation Commission; identified was the purpose of club (1) make sure sport survives, (2) to do it legally and (3) ensuring things are done correctly; the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the club have a generated good relationship over time; no wetland issues as vehicles do not enter water; construction located on all WWW trails follow best practices of the Forest Society; WWW offer improvements to trail with expense, such as wood chip, a needed bridge, ongoing trail maintenance with brush disposal going to side of trail; NH Fish & Game partners with WWW, exercising use of cameras; an almost ready made trail, as only a fraction needs to be cut down; and most importantly, Ms. Wood made it clear to use the path for Town of Weare residents.

Chairman comments:

1. The Commissions opinion and position comes from the monthly meeting, it does not support outside unofficial consideration, therefore no individual speaks for the Commission and decisions are made thru motions and what’s recorded.
2. The Commission’s authority comes through the enabling legislation.
3. Working together is important, regardless of regulators.

Mr. Camacho asked if there were any trees of value or if any other materials were coming in. Mr. Phillips responded that they use only existing materials on the trail and that a very involved member is an erosion expert and will be a project head.

Ms. Burdick moved, Mr. Camacho seconded, that the WWW Club be allowed to put a re-route trail in, which is noted in blue on the proposed map, and a disconnect of use of the yellow trail shown in the paperwork. Discussion. Mr. Bolton requested an addendum to have assess for existing trail through the Conservation Green Gate for maintenance work included in this proposal. Ms. Burdick stated the amendment to be added for the continued usage of Conservation Green Gate by WWW volunteers for maintenance. This was then seconded by Mr. Camacho and all were in favor, 4-0. The Chair requests the WWW provide updates to the Commission about timelines, project completion, and any other pertinent details or if anything changes other than what was proposed.

C. Minutes Put into the parking lot for review at next meeting.

D. Next Meeting Conservation Commission meeting to occur on October 9, 2019 at 7:00 PM.

E. Adjournment Mr. Bolton motioned to adjourn at 8:35 PM, seconded by Ms. Burdick. The motion passed collectively.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney Provencher, Minute Taker

Transcribed from notes