

Ashby Conservation Commission
Minutes for the Meeting of September 15, 2010

Meeting was opened at 7:30pm with Cathy, Tim, Bob and Roberta in attendance.

Minutes of the meeting of September 1, 2010 were reviewed and accepted as written.

Treasurer's Report: \$6.59 for postage from petty cash.

Correspondence:

From the Town Clerk, Lois Raymond, (Assessor's Office) is now a certified Notary Public and equipped to fulfill any Notary requirements here at the Town Hall.

Call received from Kevin Johnson, a potential buyer of the property at 420 Simonds Rd. His questions were about wetlands and Board of Health issues. Cathy, Tim and Roberta talked with him and Cathy provided GIS maps.

Old Business:

Pursuant to MGL Chapter 40 Section 8C the Conservation Commission accepted the deed of a new property acquired through the Forest Legacy Program. The Board of Selectmen approved the Conservation Commission's acceptance. Commission Members signed acceptance form. Selectmen also signed tonight. Cathy will get the Town Clerk to put the seal onto the Selectman's signatures.

Open meeting law has some exceptions for Conservation Commissions, notably not requiring open deliberation for an Order of Conditions.

The Watatic Management Committee conducted an investigative hike on 9-11-10. Issues include: no map in parking lot; a lack of signage about rules for the area; identification of the area of erosion and widening of trail. This last could be addressed with workers from Student Conservation Association. Ed Torcolletti suggested that he could apply for SCA in combination with Friends of Wapack. He also will try to install a new sign on Nutting Ledges— no motorized vehicles.

Include Cathy's notes as part of the minutes. - see notes at bottom.

Asian Longhorn Beetle program will be presented at the Library, 9-30-10, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, sponsored by the Commission. Cathy has been working with the project manager for the state. Jack Jackson will lend a set of specimens for the talk as well. Tim created a poster that all commissioners will post throughout the town and Townsend.

RDA or NOI required for well drilling and septic system plan for 102 Deer Bay Road? (Linda & Michael Donnelly invited to this meeting at 7:30PM). There is still an erosion problem from road water. Septic system is old and of unknown quality. The Donnelly's have had some engineering done. They presented 2 plans with Presby system and new construction of one house. 1 has system outside of 100 ft buffer and 1 had house outside the 100 ft buffer. The siting of the house is really under the jurisdiction of the BOH.

Clarification of Hearing notes and meeting minutes postings. Will send both minutes and hearing notes for publication.

Fitchburg Northern Watershed Ad Hoc Trail Group meeting of 9-9-10 report includes a phased view of trail development. At this point, the trails on their maps are not even in Ashby. The trails start near the Lovell Reservoir. There will be Fitchburg Trail Connection signage near the stream and along Rindge Rd. So far, the report has not taken a full project view, but rather a piece by piece and trail by trail approach. A fish inventory was done on the Ashby Reservoir showing pickerel, pumpkin seeds, shiners and bullhead.

Cathy is still working with Alan Ewald to get assessor details for use in ArcView.

Nissiquan group meetings are still happening. Cathy may attend as the alternate if Tim cannot attend.

New Business:

OOB was issued for 63 Ingerson Road (Dennis McRae owner) tennis court construction. Permission for Vernal Pool certification needs to be included. Tim will add more conditions make the changes and we have signed the signature page this evening.

Roberta received a call with concerns regarding 242 Deer Bay Rd and issues of septic leaking. Cathy sent email and voicemails for Rick Metcalf from Nashoba Assoc BOH and Ashby BOH. Unclear how to get evidence of a problem beyond the phone call from a former tenant.

Hearings: none.

Hearings Scheduled:

10-6-10, 8:00 PM, NOI pending for pond at the Ashby Stock Farm, Neal Anderson, Wetland Scientist. Postponed – no NOI received as of yet.

Site Visits:

70 Foster Road for septic replacement, Neil Gorman of Ross Assoc. All outside the 100 ft.buffer. Tim and Cathy. Tim signed the plans.

5 Old Northfield Road, well-pipe replacement. Tim 9-13-10

873 Main Street, Rane Rainville for wetland delineation. Flags set by Neal Anderson Cathy, Tim and Roberta. Cathy and Tim continued on to view the flagging of the area closest to proposed buildings. Another visit for Sunday, Sept 19, @8:30am Meeting at the site.

Site Visits Needed:

Ashby Stock Farm, pond

Still waiting for date and time on a visit to the Valley Road culverts.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:13pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Roberta Flashman

Watatic Management Committee trail survey meeting minutes - 9/11/10

Kathryn Garcia, Ed Torcoletti, Diane Wright, Bob Leary, Cathy Kristofferson

Diane reports that the Ashburnham Conservation Trust still has not signed the plan.

Parking lot kiosk - seriously needs a trail map. needs rules list such as no camping, stay on the marked trails, etc.

Trail kiosk - the Friends of the Wapack kiosk has been refurbished and a new topo installed. no trail map and the topo is all of the wapack range so not necessarily helpful for the typically watatic day tripper.

Everyone viewed the continuous widening of the trails and cutting of new trails and removal of brush meant to delineate the actual trail that has been happening to apparently both shorten the hike and to avoid roots & rocks. These will all create new avenues for erosion. Ed thinks that he will be able to get a work group from the SCA (Student Conservation Assoc) in Spring '11. The logs that the Friends of the Wapack pegged in for one of the really bad areas are about the only thing people have not tossed aside. Maybe the SCA can put in things like

that. It seems best if they first meet with the Friends of the Wapack since they have been trying to save these trails for years.

DCR will forward the its trail BMP guide to the committee since the they would like to get some uniformity on how things are handled statewide. (It's online here:

http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/greenway/docs/DCR_guidelines.pdf)

At the summit we viewed where the end of access for snowmobiles has been proposed. It seems that the spot DFW hoped for down by the spot where the Wapack trail intersects with the access road is perhaps to low and won't be enforcable. Diane believes that ample area to turnaround is necessary. Ed asked about using orange snow fence to delineate the end of access. Cathy wishes there was something less offensive looking.

Evidence of fires and broken glass all too evident on Nutting.

Do we need to block access to the end of the Ant Hill trail from its intersection with the Wapack just past Nutting since there has been evidence of pickup trucks going thru (and getting stuck in) the first stream crossing?

The logging road back down to the parking lot is very eroded. Ed thinks that the SCA could help here too. All agree that the SCA should concentrate on the hiking trails first and foremost and only consider the logging road if time permits.