

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 25, 2009**

Present: Tom Duston, Chairman; Steve Fisher, Kathy Thatcher and Amy LaFontaine, Secretary.

1). Tom introduced David Wood as a guest and potential member of the Commission. Kathy moved to approve January 28th minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Steve and passed unanimously.

2). DES permits, Complaints, etc –

A). Chris & Sally Norton are appealing DES 2008-01265 denial of appeal. The appeal was filed by CT Valley Environmental Services, Inc. There has not been any correspondence back to Tom.

B). Alex Kwader – 081219-5 Alteration of Terrain Request for more information from DES.

C). Linda Fijol –

1). 2004-0058 Forest Ave Letter from DES regarding lack of response on violation.

2). 2009-00558 Complete Forestry Notification. Kathy will send a letter to DES about allowing forestry with outstanding DES violations. Kathy suggested filing Commission paperwork by map and lot #. Map and Lot # remains the same even when property changes hands. She suggested it as a summer project. Part of the Fijol property is actually in Westmoreland.

3). Grants & Events – There will not be a winter event. The Commission is still waiting for Lew Shelley to complete the steps and the puncheon walkway @ Route 63. He has completed the rest of the projects.

4). Spofford Lake Report – David stated that the State has reduced funding by \$1,000 to the Lake Host Program this year. The Commission donated \$2,000 last year. The request was made for \$2,500 after the Commission had approved \$2,000. Tom moved to approve \$2,500 from the Conservation Fund for Milfoil Prevention Programs. The motion was seconded by Steve and passed unanimously. David is working on a NH Lakes Watershed report for Spofford Lake. David's e-mail address is ROWSpofford@myfairpoint.net. Steve's e-mail has changed to myfairpoint.net.

5). Tools – Lynne was supposed to order 2 new pairs of Loppers from Florian. Steve needs to talk to Ron Fish at the Transfer Station about servicing the brush hog.

6). Trail Stewards, Trail Development & Land Projects –

A). The Commission requested \$25,000 a year in a Capital Reserve Fund for the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The program is not officially in place yet. Tom had a contingent ready to speak at Town Meeting for this warrant article. It is on hold until next year.

B). Pat Haley on Atherton Hill Road wants to donate an easement for the California Brook Project. The transaction costs are an issue. The Commission previously approved a Landowner Assistance Fund in September 2001:

“This fund, established by the Chesterfield Conservation Commission with a \$10,000 grant and administered by the Mondnock Conservancy, will be for

the proper utilization and protection of the natural resources and for the protection of watershed resources of the Town of Chesterfield. This fund will provide supporting grants to landowners donating land or conservation interests in land within the California Brook Natural Area or on contiguous land protection projects. The money would help defray the cost of surveys, deed research, legal expenses contributions to the Mondanock Conservancy Easement Stewardship Fund, etc. The money is not to be used for land or easement acquisition but may be used as part of the donated match for such acquisitions.

The Chesterfield Conservation Commission will give the Monadnock Conservancy some latitude in dispensing these funds. We ask, however, that grants be relatively small (typically \$500 to \$1,000) and be used as ‘deal makers’, that is, when a landowner of conservation group is unable to raise or secure all of the funds associated with an easement or sale and a modest grant from this fund would make it work.

We hope that the majority of the grants be within the town but realize that the ‘utilization and protection of the Town’s *natural resources*’ could cover nearby areas that are connected to the town through trail networks, protected open space lands, or visual/aesthetic acuity. We do feel that the grants should be limited to the California Brook Natural Area as bounded by Route 9, Base Hill Road, Route 10 and Route 119, and for the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Greenway west of Pisgah Park.

We would like an annual report briefly explaining each grant for the year.”

Tom moved to approve the paragraph underneath the italics to read: “The Chesterfield Conservation Commission will give the Monadnock Conservancy some latitude in dispensing these funds. We ask, however, that grants be used as ‘deal makers’, that is, when a landowner of conservation group is unable to raise or secure all of the funds associated with an easement or sale and a grant from this fund would make it work”. The motion was seconded by Kathy and passed unanimously. There is currently \$12,000 in this fund and as far as the Commission knows it has never been used.

C). Tom met with Cynthia Nichols today about the Wildlife Report. He asked her to put together a proposal for the work outlined in the plan.

D). Tom is making signs for the Trail Junction at Moon Ledge to be installed in 2009.

E). Tom stated that the Cersosimo lots across from Pisgah are now for sale.

F). Tom will be meeting with the Hauert’s next week about an easement. Discussion about this easement has gone back to 1995. John Summers is donating easements on 2 properties on the corner of Old Swanzey Road and Stone’s Mill Road.

G). The neighbors to the Brown Property are working on a brochure to promote donations for the purchase of the property. The Commission has informally committed up to \$15,000 for transaction costs and up to \$10,000 for the purchase. If \$100,000 is not raised the money can be returned to the donors.

H). There is a snowshoe on Saturday to look at the logging on the Wright property. There is an easement on this property.

7). Other –

A). NRI – Kathy met with Jeff Littleton last week. He has provided an action plan and will be at the next meeting to discuss. A Date, Time and Place for the Amphibian Workshop needs to be finalized. Volunteers are needed. Tom stated that he was under the impression that Jeff would be recruiting students for some of the work. Sign-Up sheets will be put up at Town Meeting, the Library, and the Town Offices. Attendees from the Forum will also be recruited. There should be a contact on our website as well. Kathy stated that Jeff had found a Chesterfield School Stream Identifiers document from 1993 that may be incorporated into the NRI. Kathy would love to get the school involved.

B). The CT River Joint Commissions will be holding a public meeting on February 26th to present revised shoreland protection act from 7:30 to 9 PM @ the Town Hall. If there is an extra packet of handouts someone will grab a copy for Ruth van Houten.

C). Tom moved to request that the Selectmen appoint 2 additional regular members and any number of alternative member deemed appropriate by the Commission. The motion was seconded by Steve. This motion was also made on April 22, 1992. David Wood would like to become a regular member. Amy would prefer to remain an alternate. Hazel Hunter would also like to be an alternate. Tom stated that he believed Bill intends to resign. The motion passed unanimously. Tom had the 1992 minutes for the Commission’s motion to support the Monadnock-Wantastiquet greenway.

D). The bill for NHACC dues for \$225 is due by April 1st. This bill is normally received in October of the previous year. Amy will submit it for payment.

E). Kathy discovered in the CT River Recreation Management Plan that the State does not propose increasing ATV use in Pisgah. “Proposed ATV trails on other state lands should only be developed after ample public discussion and if responsible state agencies can monitor the trails.”

8). Adjournment - The next meeting will be March 25th. Steve will be the Chair. The meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy LaFontaine
Secretary

Approved:

Tom Duston
Chairman

Date: _____