

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting- August 17, 2017

Minutes Approved on-

Present: Valerie Germain, Joe MacGregor, and Thomas James

Co-Chair Valerie Germain called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

1. Minutes
 - a. The minutes from the June 15, 2017 meeting were tabled in order to clarify Map and Lot numbers on properties referenced in the minutes as 5a and 5b.
2. Old Business
 - a. Scholarship Recipients
 - i. The recipients of the camp scholarship will be invited to attend the September meeting.
 - ii. An oversight occurred regarding camp payment. This has been followed up with Sarah Lafave at the Harris Center along with Denise French and Kristie LaPlante to process payment.
 - b. River Float
 - i. There was a nice turnout for the River Float and the weather was beautiful. Joe reported that the river was clean and clear of trash. There are a few places where there were restrictions to access due to downed logs. The event was in the Transcript-Ledger.
 - c. Samuels Property
 - i. Francestown Land Trust has applied for an LCHIP grant to secure the Samuels property on Mountain Road. The Commissioners approved sending a letter of approval to include with the grant during the June 2017 meeting. This letter has been sent to both grants (LCHIP and Verney) the Francestown Land Trust has applied for. As the property is in Bennington, Joe asked about the possibility of working with or being included on the documentation along with Francestown Land Trust to retain and control the property. The Commissioners fully support the work that the Francestown Land Trust has done.
 - ii. On August 8, 2017 Valerie Germain was invited to be part of the LCHIP site walk of the property. The natural resources of the property were discussed during the site walk. Valerie Germain was asked during the site walk regarding the Conservation Commission and how much land in town is in conservation.
 - iii. The Commissioners discussed possible funding that is available for the Commissioners to put forward to purchasing conservation land. The Commissioners will ask Scot Heath about the land, the restrictions that will be placed on the land, where harvest money will go.

- iv. Francestown Land Trust member Scot Heath will be invited to attend the Conservation Commissioners September meeting.
 - d. Library Program
 - i. At this time, the State of NH does not have someone available to make a presentation on trout. This presentation will be put on hold and it is hoped that it can be rescheduled.
 - e. River Management Program
 - i. Joe reported that Jon and he met with the Greenfield Planning Board regarding the river management plan. The Board accepted the river management plan.
- 3. New Business
 - a. Joe reported that he attended a presentation with Jon by a Dr. Robert Goodby who is an anthropologist. They discussed with Goodby about a site in Bennington that is a Native American historical site. Some excavating has been completed there by Howard Sargent. Goodby is looking into this and will get back to Jon and Joe.
 - b. Timber Cut
 - i. There is a potential timber cut on Old Stagecoach Road between the two cemeteries. Gary Russel reported to Joe that an individual has viewed the property and reported that it is in need of a selective timber cut to remove the debris and improve the health of the forest. It is unknown if the deeds were ever recorded. Joe will be follow up with the Town Hall regarding the property ownership.
 - c. Non-buildable Lots
 - i. The Selectmen are considering auctioning off non-buildable lots on Onset and Birch Drive/Oak Hill Road. They would like the Conservation Commission to review their proposal before the move forward with this decision. The Selectmen requested the possibility of appointing a representative/liaison to review the properties. Joe reported that the properties on Birch Drive/Oak Hill Road has been reviewed in the past. The Commissioners were provided property maps by the Selectmen. The Commissioners would like more information from the Selectmen regarding why they are non-buildable. The Commissioners identified Map 17, Lot 29 as a property they would highly suggest maintaining as Town property as it abuts the wetlands. The Commissioners will ask for further information for Map 13 regarding the other properties that are there that were not identified as non-buildable. The Commissioners tabled discussing the non-buildable lots until more information is available.
 - d. Nastasi Property
 - i. The Commissioners discussed property located on Map 22-2, 23-29, and 23-31 along the river. The land was identified as a habitat corridor. The Commissioners would like to approach the owner regarding the future plans of the property and possibilities to place the land into conservation. Joe volunteered to reach out to the owner. Val will draft a letter to send to the owner with Joe as a contact person.
 - e. Bruce Edes Walk
 - i. The Commissioners set September 9, 2017 for the annual Bruce Edes Walk. The Commissioners will formally invite the following groups: Selectmen, Boy Scouts,

Girl Scouts, Martial Arts, Harris Center, Pierce School students, and Antrim/Francestown/Hancock/Greenfield Conservation Commissions.

- f. Letter of Appreciation
 - i. On June 28, 2017 the Conservation Commissioners received a letter from the Bennington Selectmen thanking them for their ongoing projects that they undertake.
- g. Lot Line Adjustment
 - i. The Commissioners received notification for an approved Lot Line Adjustment adjoining properties on Route 31 and Greenfield Road for Donald Hardwick.
- h. The Commissioners reviewed notification from Department of Resources and Economic Development, Division of Forests and Lands regarding the removal of more than 50 percent of the basal area along approximately 2,500 feet of Mount Road.
- i. The Commissioners made a motion and unanimously approved moving their September meeting to September 28, 2017.

As there was no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Belcher
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary