

CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES, *draft*
Regular Meeting
September 12, 2012
City Council Chambers, City Hall Annex
41 Green Street, Concord, NH

Attendance:

Members present at the meeting included: Jim Owers; Tracey Boisvert; Christopher Morgan; Kristine Tardiff; Rick Chormann; Pamela Hunt; Karen Rose; Jan McClure and Rebecca Hebert, Senior Planner, attended the meeting.

C. Morgan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05.

1. Minutes:

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the August 8, 2012, meeting and the minutes were unanimously accepted with a few minor corrections.

2. Wetlands Bureau:

R. Hebert reported that there were no new permits to review from the Wetlands Bureau. She distributed correspondence from the Wetlands Bureau including a Notice of Approval for the Alteration of Terrain (AOT) Permit for the Anna Philbrook House at the State Office Campus off of South Fruit Street.

3. City Council/Planning Board Action:

The group discussed the proposed City Council committee for the review of the future use of the agricultural land southerly of Gully Hill Road with regards to the proposed conservation easement. J. McClure said that Councilor Candice Bouchard would likely chair the committee. J. McClure asked if the Annual Report had been sent to the City Council yet. R. Hebert thought that this was submitted to the City Council after the budget was approved in July.

K. Rose suggested that the Commission develop a map or brochure that would help to educate landowners about conservation and provide an explanation of why land stewardship is important. T. Boisvert suggested that statewide organizations may already have fact sheets that the Commission could use. K. Rose said that she would check with the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions.

R. Hebert said that the City is developing a map/poster to highlight economic development projects within the City, and it was suggested that the Conservation Commission could also create a map/poster illustrating the trails and open space in Concord. J. McClure suggested that the map could also include the future lands that the City would like to see protected, illustrating a connected ring of open space around the downtown/developed area of Concord with open space connections to the rural areas.

The group discussed the new proposed Concord logo and potential opportunities for the Commission to use Facebook or other social networking media to promote Concord trails or conservation land.

4. Open Space:

The group discussed the Triacca property. R. Hebert said that a closing date has been set for September 25, 2012. She also said that the Five Rivers Conservation Trust has raised enough funds to help Equity Trust purchase the property from the City once the conservation easement is in place. Equity Trust is the owner of Dimond Hill Farm and Jane Presby has a life estate on the property and also manages the farm. Jim Oldham, the Director of Equity Trust has sent a letter to the Conservation Commission expressing their interest in acquiring the land. R. Hebert said that the process for selling the property would be to have the Commission submit a report to the City Council recommending the sale of the land; the Council would then need to hold a public hearing. T. Boisvert asked if the easement could be merged with the Five Rivers easement on the Dimond Hill Farm or if the easements would remain separate. Staff will look into the possibility of merging the easements.

K. Tradiff moved to have staff prepare a purchase and sale agreement between the City and Equity Trust, for the purchase of the Triacca property for the appraised value of the land. P. Hunt seconded the motion, all in favor motion passed.

R. Hebert said that once the City closes on the Triacca property, they will need to work out an agreement with Jane Presby for use of the land. She suggested that the Commission hold off on signing a long-term lease for the property, because the land may be sold this winter to Equity Trust. The group discussed having Dimond Hill Farm submit an insurance certificate and indemnification agreement, and then Jane Presby could harvest the corn on the property and plant a cover crop. If the sale of the land falls through, the City can work to have a lease agreement for the start of next year's growing season. The group agreed to hold off on signing a lease agreement for the Triacca property and agreed that Jane Presby should be able to recover this year's crop.

The group discussed the Pierce property and J. McClure offered to follow up with the landowner and Five Rivers Conservation Trust.

R. Hebert said that she spoke with Phillip Martin regarding his land behind Winant Park. The parcel is approximately 8.39 acres and is landlocked but adjacent to other city-owned lands. K. Tardiff moved to have staff take the initial steps to talk with Mr. Martin and offer the appraised value for the property. J. McClure seconded the motion; all in favor motion passed.

The group discussed the future Langley Parkway extension through the Concord Hospital campus and asked whether or not a trail/pedestrian crossing would be provided behind the hospital to be sure that the residents in the West End neighborhood would continue to have access to Winant Park. R. Hebert said that the preliminary design included a pedestrian crossing, but the trails need to be mapped.

C. Morgan asked about the trails on Daisy Hale's property. R. Hebert explained that the trails cross over a parcel of land to the south of Swope Park. The trails could connect with the Swope Park trails, but the owner has a court appointed legal guardian and the attorney did not recommend that the guardian allow public use of the trails. The property is protected with a conservation easement held by the Forest Society. There is the possibility of the City acquiring the land for recreational and forestry uses. The group discussed this and decided to hold off on pursuing the purchase of the property.

K. Tardiff moved to enter into a nonpublic session for the discussion of possible land acquisition in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(d). T. Boisvert seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Following the discussion the Commission moved to exit nonpublic session and seal the minutes. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

5. Easement Stewardship/Monitoring:

The group reviewed a spreadsheet summarizing the list of the city-held easements that need to be monitored. K. Rose volunteered to monitor the easements with the aerial photography that is available through the City's GIS department. The group also decided to organize a training session on the Hayward Brook easement and asked staff to follow up with Chris Kane to see if he would be interested in leading the session. K. Rose suggested having people fill out sample monitoring forms. R. Hebert said that she would send a letter to the abutting property owners in the subdivision to let them know that the Commission would be monitoring the property in October. She also offered to follow up with Chris Kane and schedule the training day.

The group discussed the Contoocook and North Branch Rivers Local Advisory Committee and the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee. Both committees need additional Concord representatives.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:
Rebecca Hebert
Senior Planner, Secretary pro-tem