

Conservation Commission Meeting
Thursday, October 29th 2009
7:00pm - Waitsfield Town Office

Members Present: Elizabeth Cadwell, Phil Huffman, Ted Joslin, Leo Laferriere, Chris Loomis, and Spencer Potter

Leo Laferriere called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm.

I. Public Input

There were no members of the public present to comment.

II. Wu Ledges Municipal Forest

A. Ted Joslin spoke with Valerie at the Town Office regarding the conferment of the trail rights originally offered to the town by Ritchie Lawton. Valerie explained that due to the owner's passing, various estate details are still being finalized. Understandably, this has caused a delay in the process. It is the Commission's understanding that the commitment will be forthcoming once other matters are settled. The Town appears to have exercised its option to buy the trail rights, but there are still a few points that need to be clarified.

B. Commission Members spent considerable time pouring over existing maps and a Deed relating to the Lawton parcel. Apparently, there are two Deeds relating to the same parcel. Leo Laferriere will check with the Town Office regarding this matter.

C. Phil Huffman will continue to work on the map for the Mad River Riders. Since there is still some uncertainty about full transference of the trail easement on certain portions of the property, the MRR will need to be mindful of this. Phil will offer guidance as to which portions are fully workable and which portions may not yet be available for enhancement.

D. It was noted in accompanying paperwork that Lot 12 is mentioned in Book 94 and Book 114 of the Town Land records. Ted Joslin will research this further.

E. Leo Laferriere will follow-up with an insurance question related to the Deed on the Lawton property. (Page 3, Item # 8 mentions that the donor's name will be included on the town's policy.) Leo will follow-up to ensure that the donor (or donor's representative) is protected. He will also ask about a possible December 2001 Purchase and Sale agreement.

F. Spencer Potter will evaluate Lot 12 as a Lister and attempt to bring further clarity to the property. He will confer with Mark Grosby and Valerie to gather any helpful accompanying paperwork or history of the property.

III. Northfield Ridgeline Parcels:

A. Russ Barrett has identified type lines (which are areas of similar wood type) for Scrag and will provide a shortened format report. Leo Laferriere and Chris Loomis will translate this information for the Commission and help the town make informed forest management decisions.

IV. Forests, Wildlife, and Communities Project:

A. There will be a Welcome Wagon team meeting on Thursday, November 5th at 8:30pm to train volunteers. (This meeting was subsequently postponed.)

B. There will be a four-Board meeting of the Select Board, Conservation Commission, DRB, and Planning Commission on **November 17th at 7pm.** The location has not been announced.

C. Elizabeth Cadwell shared that she has spoken with AnnMarie Harmon regarding a possible project with the Boy Scouts that would highlight the Arrowwood Data. AnnMarie is currently working with a group of fifth grade boys on a Field Naturalist unit as well as on Forestry badges. The Scouts may be in a position to help plan a larger community-based learning forum for kids their age. It is possible that this might include fifth and sixth graders and their parents working together in teams to learn about different habitat types represented in the valley and the creation of a kid-friendly educational series for Channel 44. Leo Laferriere graciously offered his support for this type of experiential learning approach and requested that the Commission be kept abreast of any upcoming projects.

V. Other Business

A. Phil Huffman shared that the Annual Meeting of the Association of Conservation Commissions will held be on December 5th, 2009 at the Elks Club. It is thought that the focus of this year's meeting will be "Habitat Connectivity." Phil will attempt to locate either a brochure or Website address that offers additional information.

B. The Commission still has two vacancies that need to be filled.

C. Ted Joslin motioned to approve the Minutes from the September 24th meeting. Spencer Potter seconded, all agreed, and the Minutes were adopted.

D. The next meeting of the Conservation Commission is scheduled for Thursday, December 10th at 7pm. (Ted Joslin is scheduled to take Minutes at that meeting. Thank you Ted...)