

Conservation Commission
July 9, 2002
Regular Session Minutes

DISCUSSION – MARIN – SKYFIELD DRIVE

Julie Marin, 79 Skyfields Drive was present to speak to the Commission about the problems with the trail abutting her property. Members Clements stepped down since he is an abutter.

Gary Rutherford of 85 Skyfields Drive was also present and voiced his concern about people getting lost going to the trails in that area. He said they are lost before they even start. He stated that they wander up the driveway then take a turn around the house. He maintains that if the trails were marked better it might help a lot. He also stated that people are on his property at least 4-6 times every weekend. Kevin Tomany, of 89 Skyfields Drive said he is a physician and he treats Lyme's Disease and said that he maintains the grass at a lower level in order to minimize tick infestation. Chairman Corwin stated that ticks come off deer. Dr. Tomany stated that mice also host the parasites. Member Clements stated that Town land should be clearly distinguished whether the grass is long or short. The Conservation Commission has a responsibility to protect the Town's interest. Paul Funch commented that the Trails Committee feels that the trail itself should be safe for passage, and cleared leaving normal vegetation. Chairman Corwin noted that something like a five foot swath should be left. Member Morrison stated that he was part of the Commission at the time of the donation of land and is not sure of the fact that the mowing was an issue of the donators, but more of where the trail should be located. Mr. Rutherford stated to take a look at the covenants and you would see the no doubt there was an issue of the aesthetics. Mr. Funch noted that the posts should be at the 50 ft width. Member Morrison suggests that if the neighbors would like to keep it manicured they could move the mower blade higher to distinguish between the trail and the yard. Vice chairman Owen stated that two critical boundary markers are missing around Mr. Rutherfords land. If the Commission is to pay for surveyors, there will be concrete, and lime around them. Member Chace commented that she would hate to see this situation go to that point but understands that the Commission will if need be. She also noted that Member Morrison had a good idea with the mowing and would also like to see some native vegetation go along the border of the trail. Member Clements noted that it seemed worthwhile to define the boundaries of the Town's land. It was Julie Marin's understanding that the posts near her property were pretty accurate. Vice chairman Owen stated that her jungle gym is actually on Town property, and to try to eyeball it is very deceiving. Chairman Corwin asked if we have a differential GPS or are we just using the satellite base? Mr. Funch said we may. Member Morrison made it clear that the abutters should let the grass grow for a couple of weeks, then mow it so that it is visually different. The Commission will come back and see if this works and he will be happy with that. Chairman Corwin asked how the abutters felt about that. They replied that it may work. Chairman Corwin stated that it sounded like a plan.

DISCUSSION – TRAILS COMMITTEE

Paul Funch has mapped the parcel purchased from the Hurd's and asked permission to put up trail medallions. He will also ask the GCT. Chairman Corwin granted permission to put up trail medallions to the Trails Committee. Member Morrison expressed concern for the long range plan of moving the trail over a little bit so as not to upset future owners of the land. Member Owen stated that the land doesn't look too rough. Member Morrison moved to authorized the Trails Committee to use their best judgment to maintain the trails. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – GROTON SCHOOL WATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE

Clerk O'Connor read the public hearing notice to consider the Notice of Intent submitted by Groton School to upgrade its present water treatment plant.

Dan Nitzsche from Bay State Environmental Consultants made the presentation.

Last year Groton School received a permit for a replacement of the sewer line. The work being proposed now is at the end of the sand filter beds. A 16 x 10 ft precast concrete building is going to be brought in, replacing the shed. The other area is just out of the buffer zone. 12 trees will have to be cleared. 42 ft is the closest the work will be to the resource. Also discovered in the field was another silt fence that was a remnant of work previously done. The silt fence will be moved up to the location of the new work. There will be an electric line right along the edge. Total impact is 1757 sq. ft. in the bz. Chairman Corwin asked if there was an area that was previously disturbed. Mr. Nitzsche replied that there may have been when power was put in to the boathouse, but there is a constructed berm to allow a barrier. Vice Chairman Owen moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Robinson /Holt – 176 Shelters Road

The Commission received a letter requesting an extension of the Order of Conditions for a replacement septic system at 176 Shelters Road DEP #169-560

Member Morrison suggested that we look at the site. It was put on the agenda for the next site walk.

Academy Hill – LandWest Inc.

Don Yonika presented the Commission with a species list for Academy Hill. Member Morrison made a motion to close the public hearing. The hearing had been kept open pending the list. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Old Ayer Road – Salzman - COC 169-769

Member Clements moved to issue a Certificate of Compliance to Edythe Salzman – 78 Old Ayer Road. The motion was seconded and passed 6-1. Chace abstained.

Squannacook Sportsmen Club – CR

Beth Montgomery gave a brief summary of some suggestions in securing a conservation restriction for the Squannacook Sportsmen Club, either the Trust or the Commission. Member Morrison stated as long as it is protected by one of them. Wendy Good, GCT, said her personal opinion was that the Commission should hold the conservation restriction since the Commission owns abutting land. It would keep the continuity. Member Morrison agreed. The other issue is that there is a trail to the back of the pond and would like to see the restriction extended to the back of the pond. She feels that it is important to get these on the deed. Sharon Olefstein was present and said that she lives on South Road and owns a small horse property, she came to the meeting tonight to petition to allow horseback riding on this parcel. Member Morrison invited her to be present when the Commission votes on the restriction.

Wildflower Lane – CC Land – Trails

Beth Montgomery suggested that the Commission mark the trails right away so that people buying the homes will be aware of the trails when they move in. Vice Chairman Owen suggested that this would be a good Eagle Scout project. Chairman Corwin suggested the Associates mark the trails. The Commission decided to use the color yellow to mark the trails.

Lost Lake Pirates

Beth Montgomery explained her understanding of the Lost Lake Pirates. A group of treasure hunting people go to different places looking for purposely hidden boxes. A family went to Sargisson Beach looking for the treasure. The group was notified that there is a fee to park at the Town Beach.

Gibbet Hill Orchard – Rumors

Clerk O'Connor explained that there were rumors about 75 houses to be built at the end of Mayfield Rd. People misread the article in the Lowell Sun about 75 houses proposed for the Gibbet Hill Orchard on Farmers Row.

Webber/Gibbet Hill Update

Member Morrison explained that the Commission has been asked by the Selectmen to write a letter supporting the Webber's preservation of Gibbet Hill, Angus Hills, and Brooks Orchard. This letter will be sent to the state in hopes of receiving money from the state. Clerk O'Connor volunteered to draft the letter. Member Morrison requested Ms. Montgomery research important points of why we should preserve the land. Member Morrison made a motion to write a letter in support of the preservation of the three properties Gibbet Hill, Angus Hill, and Brooks Orchard. The letter will be addressed to Senator Bob Durand. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Kiley – Request for Extension – Baddacook Pond – 169-368

Robert Kiley requested an extension for the house construction on Baddacook Pond. Member Morrison moved to issue an extension to Kiley 169-368 for a period of one year. The motion was seconded and passed 6-1 (Chace abstained).

Nicholson – 216 Hollis Street

Alan Nicholson submitted a driveway change for 216 Hollis St. Member Morrison made a motion to accept the change in plan. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Minutes – June 11, 2002

Vice Chairman Owen clarified one point of a name mix up for the June 11, 2002 minutes, then made a motion to accept as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Special Meeting

Chairman Corwin suggested holding a special meeting next Tuesday, July 16, 2002 at 7:00 PM to write the Order of Conditions for Academy Hill.

Clerk O'Connor made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 PM. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Regina Hull
Land Use Assistant

Approved as drafted

January 28, 2003