

GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Open Session Minutes

June 6, 2009

Chairman Bruce Easom called the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m. in the 1st floor meeting room in Town Hall. Members Wayne Addy, Craig Auman, Marshall Giguere, Ryan Lambert, Peter Morrison, and David Pitkin were present. Conservation Administrator Barbara Ganem was also present.

Attorney Robert Collins has reported to the Commission that Bob Lacombe would like to have the Groton Woods area called the “Robert J. and Deborah M. Lacombe Sanctuary”. This would be in recognition of the amount of acreage he has donated to the Town of Groton. Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere, it was

VOTED: to name what has been called the Groton Woods Conservation Area (after the name of the development) the Robert J. and Deborah M. Lacombe Sanctuary.

Members reviewed draft comments to Secretary Ian Bowles (Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs) in response to the Crystal Spring Estates Environmental Notification Form. P. Morrison said he was not in favor of having multiple backyards along a conservation area as this usually becomes the favorite dumping grounds. The fact that a lot of this land backs up to protected conservation land is a plus however. The developer was allowed a more dense development in exchange for protecting open space. Members agreed it will be necessary to have a clear delineation between lawn and where the conservation-restricted land begins. In general, an approximately 50 ft. wide buffer is provided on each lot. Giving Deerhaven as an example, members felt that boundary markers should be in place prior to the issuance of Occupancy Permits.

B. Easom questioned whether it would be possible to reduce the size of the lots, and donate the conservation-restricted land to the Town, but members thought this might result in undersized lots under Planning Board requirements. Holding multiple restrictions on private lots is likely to be a management headache. Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by D. Pitkin, it was

VOTED: to send a letter to Secretary Bowles that includes a strong statement about markers at the boundaries to clearly delineate the area of the Conservation Restrictions. Future monitoring is likely to be a burden on whoever holds the Conservation Restriction, and it should be a single entity who holds the CR.

All were in favor.

Member Morrison mentioned that Roy McGregor has expressed an interest in haying the parcels on Pacer Way. Surrenden Farm is another property where we intend to have agricultural activities. M. Giguere noted it has been the long-time intention to do a ‘request for proposals’ for farming of some of our conservation lands. B. Ganem cautioned against the appearance of

favoring one individual when there could be several farmers who are interested in farming specific parcels. C. Auman pointed out the Commission has been concerned about nesting bobolinks in the fields along Pacer Way. P. Morrison said this is not a protected species, and B. Ganem noted it is reported as a diminishing species in the Breeding Bird Atlas conducted by MassAudubon. Habitat is one of the eight interests protected under the Wetlands Protection Act. The other concern is the detention basins located within the Eliades Conservation Area on Pacer Way and how they would be managed.

B. Easom suggested we do RFPs for Pacer Way, Surrenden Farm, Jenkins Rd., and the Shattuck-Lewis land abutting Baddacook Pond. Hay, row crops, or grazing could be considered for these properties. Members questioned whether Town Counsel had issued an opinion on the adverse possession claim for Ames Meadow.

Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by P. Morrison, it was

VOTED: to prepare an advertisement for farming of Pacer Way, Surrenden Farm, Jenkins Rd., and the Shattuck-Lewis land abutting Baddacook Pond conservation lands.

B. Ganem said it would go in the newspaper and be sent to a list she is developing of local farmers.

W. Addy expressed some concerns about his continuing to represent the Conservation Commission on the Great Ponds Advisory Committee. The Committee appears to be active, but he is not receiving regular notice of meetings. Members suggested checking with Town Clerk to see if he has meeting minutes on file as this board is subject to Open Meeting requirements for minutes and meeting postings. Larry Swezey is currently Chairman of the Committee, and Commissioners recommended he be contacted by telephone. Mr. Addy reported he has attended two meetings, but has not seen any minutes, and he has been notified that it is time for re-appointment. Members asked that he report back after talking with Mr. Swezey. Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere, it was

VOTED: to re-appoint Wayne Addy as the Commission's representative to the Great Ponds Advisory Committee for the upcoming year.

C. Auman noted that he had been appointed to the Housing Task Force which has not met in two years, but they expect to get underway again shortly, and he has agreed to be re-appointed.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by D. Pitkin, it was

VOTED: to re-appoint Bruce Easom to the Community Preservation Committee for the upcoming year.

Upon a motion by D. Pitkin, seconded by W. Addy, it was

VOTED: to re-appoint Peter Morrison to the Station Avenue Study Committee for the upcoming year.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by W. Addy, it was

VOTED: to re-appoint Ryan Lambert to the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee for the upcoming year.

There being no further business, upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by P. Morrison, and a roll call vote of C. Auman, B. Easom, D. Pitkin, M. Giguere, P. Morrison, R. Lambert, and W. Addy, it was

VOTED: to enter Executive Session at 8:50 a.m., not to return to Open Session at adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara V. Ganem
Conservation Administrator

Approved as drafted 6/23/09.