

**Campton Conservation Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 9, 2015; 7pm**

**Members Present:** Jane Kellogg, Jess Halm, Alisoun Hodges, Rebecca Steeves, Shannon Garnsey, Tammy Wooster

Jane served as chair and called the meeting to order at 7:10. Jane moved to accept the July meeting minutes. Rebecca seconded the motion and all were in favor.

1) **FYI:**

**a. Leah Gray**

Jess and Jane went to visit Leah Gray who had recently had surgery. Leah is recovering well, and asked about BWNA. Jess told her about Nature Nights and that the trees that had been preventing access to the beach area had been removed.

**b. NH WAP Brochures:**

Jane shared a new brochure she received from UNH Cooperative Ext. that featured stories of communities taking action for wildlife. All were pleased to see the brochure's cover photo was a group photo taken at one of our Frozen Bog Walks led by Lea Stewart. The new brochure will be added to our display

2) **CCC Site Visit reports:**

On August 12, Rebecca and Jane made a site visit to a Rte 3 property, where currently a trailer resides but the owner would like to build a house. Max Stamp from PRLAC also attended, and submitted formal comments and recommendations relative to the permit application. Jane explained that the site has a steep driveway and there are erosion issues. In her opinion the site was marginal but there is nothing to prevent the permit from being issued. Since then it has been learned that DES has issued a Shoreland Permit, but with conditions.

A site visit was made to another Rte 3 property on July 24th by Jane, Shannon, Tammy, and Corey Clark, a Dam Safety Bureau engineer. The property has a wetland, dam ruins and a canal and is bordered by Rte 3 and West Branch Brook. The owner learned that the wetland in front of her home was formerly a man made mill pond, and is interested in returning it to a pond state. Historically, the canal was used as a water control structure to divert water into the pond. The group walked the property and Corey explained all of the potential engineering and permit processes a complex project of this kind would require. The property owner was left with everyone's contact information and agreed to follow up

if she decides to proceed. Jane reported that since the site visit, the owner had more of her questions answered by Corey in the form of an e-mail, and she would like to meet with the CCC again. Jane urged her to attend our next meeting.

### **3) Conservation Property updates:**

#### **a. BWNA:**

Jess recapped the summer's Nature Nights program at BWNA. Out of the 8 scheduled sessions, 6 were well attended, and one was canceled due to weather. Due to a last minute staff change at the Rey Center, a stand in naturalist was quickly found but was not able to attend every session. Jess and Rebecca rose to the occasion and each served as naturalist for one program night. Jess inquired about the CCC being reimbursed for the pre-paid Rey Center naturalist, and was told we would receive a credit for next year's program. The group agreed that we would need a firm commitment from the Rey Center in writing next year in April, and then decide whether or not to go ahead with the program. Shannon commented that given the CCC's skill set, we are capable of running our own program should we decide to do so.

Jess mentioned that someone had mowed the area along the BWNA roadside sign. Jane said that the state installed some rip rap after the stream between the Red Sleigh and BWNA had washed out, so the mowing was likely part of that work. Jess reported that we received another request to inspect a BWNA tree overhanging the Red Sleigh property. Jess, Rebecca and Jane took a look and did not deem it hazardous, but Ian will take another look at it. Alisoun suggested that Ian take a hard look at all of the trees along the property line with an eye for others that may be dead or dying in the near future. Shannon added that some folks had brought another overhanging limb to her attention, this one above the large rock at the beach access area. Ian will follow up.

#### **b. PCP:**

Tammy reported that she contacted Mike Rej and asked him to mow the PCP field at the end of the summer. She explained to Mike that The CCC did not meet in August, and would have to vote on the mowing expenditure at their Sept. meeting so his payment may be delayed. Mike agreed, and said he would submit an invoice after mowing. Tammy made a motion to expend up to \$450 from the Conservation Fund, for the purpose of paying Mike Rej to mow the PCP field. Alisoun seconded the motion and all were in favor. All will try and check the CCC mail if at the Town Office to look for the mowing invoice.

### **4). Livermore Falls:**

Jane shared that this Saturday there will be an end of the season Friends of the Pemi

group picnic and float down the river if water levels allow. The picnic will be on the Plymouth Common. Jane reported that there have been no new Campton side of the falls developments to date, and there is a meeting scheduled for this week. About a month ago some representatives from the state, energy industry, and some attorneys held a meeting relative to the wind farm settlement, which is supposed to infuse Livermore Falls with some money. Additionally, the application for the Pumpkinseed Bridge to be considered as a NH preservation Society "Seven to Save" site did not get submitted in time. No progress has been made in indentifying who owns the bridge. The idea of conceptualizing a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks on the Campton side was discussed. Jane thought it would be great to enlist the help of a creative person to come up with a pedestrain bridge design which would help envision how the area could look. Alisoun thought it would make a great student project, and Jane said she would bring the idea to the next meeting. Jane said she served as a volunteer greeter on the Holderess side 3 days this summer and Shannon joined her one day.

## **5) Conservation Projects:**

### **a. Beebe River Tract:**

Jane reported that she heard back from Nancy Bell from the Conservation Fund. Nancy has been out of touch because most of her time has been committed to working on the Federal Forest Legacy Fund application. Tammy said that she read in the Select Board minutes that Nancy met with the Board and described the Beebe River Tract acquisition. Nancy also provided the Board with a packet of materials, and said that the Beebe River Tract property taxes would continue to be paid to the town, and the property will remain gated. Jane said that the Fish & Game study of the tract's fishery has been completed but she has yet to hear of any report released.

### **b. Ellsworth Hill area:**

Jane said there was nothing new regarding the Ellsworth Hill Conservation easement discussion reported at last month's meeting.

## **6) Northern Pass:**

On August 26, Tammy attended an opponent sponsored meeting in Bridgewater about new developments relative to the proposed Northern Pass Transmission (NPT) Project, and how citizen's can get involved.

On July 31st, the DOE released their Draft Environmental Impact Study (IES), and is now seeking public comment until Oct 29th. The EIS details the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action (as presented by NPT) a No Action alternative, and 9 additional alternatives. Comments of any length can be easily made on the DOE website, but must specifically be relative to the Draft EIS.

The Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) is nearing completion of the rules review and revisions process as per SB 99 and SB 245. The new rules must take effect by Nov. 1st, after which they will apply to all large energy projects in the state and will remain in

effect for years. Tammy learned that currently the process and rules, as proposed to date, are extremely biased towards the energy industry. One example of this is that there is no requirement that SEC members make a site visit to a proposed project. Another example is that jobs added as a result of a project are considered, whereas jobs lost are not. There is a call for more specific criteria, since the few rules currently proposed are too generalized and not comprehensive. At the meeting people were asked to write a letter to the chair of the SEC and government officials. Tammy will draft a letter and send it around.

SEC Public Information Hearings are being held in 5 counties across the state. The hearings are required as part of the SEC application process. On Sept 8th, Jane, Alisoun, Rebecca, and Tammy attended the hearing in Lincoln. Other Campton folks identified in the room were Tom Mullen and State Representative Eric Johnson. Representatives from Eversource and NPT detailed the new Forward NH Plan, which is being presented as an improved route with more economic and tax benefits, and promises lower energy costs for NH. In this proposed plan the line would be buried through seven White Mountain towns including Campton. The plan proposes the line be buried along Rte 3., and a short section of I-93, and will avoid the White Mountain National Forest. The hearing format contained a Q & A session where people could ask questions by writing them on note cards. A retired judge moderated and read the questions aloud which were then answered by the panel. There was no direct interaction allowed between the public and the panel, and no follow up to the questions asked. Most of the questions asked were relative to the impact the new route would have on properties, resources and businesses along Rte 3, and why burial along I-93 was not being considered. Project engineers were unable to answer specific questions such as to which side of the road the line would be buried, but made assurances that they would be working closely with towns to minimize impact and disruption. The main reason given for not burying along I-93 was that construction posed too great a safety hazard. Additionally, it was said that the DOT would require that the line be buried along their highway fenceline which would cross too many wetlands and streams. Following the Q&A session was an oral comment period where people spoke overwhelmingly in opposition to the new plan. Jane read aloud a statement on behalf of the CCC which asked that the entire route be buried, but only if it is deemed to be for the public benefit.

The overarching message delivered was to not divide NH towns into winners and losers or tower towns vs. burial towns, but to rather bury the entire route. Jane said that she was particularly struck by the comments made by Grafton County Representative Rebecca Brown, who spoke of the Public Trust and was the only person who articulated the idea of not building the project at all. Written and verbal comments are now part of the official SEC transcript and can be used in the adjudicative hearing.

## **7) Conservation Matters:**

It was Campton's turn in August to write the Conservation Matters column and Jess drafted an informational article about the Northern Pass permitting processes. The

editorial committee felt the article did not fit with the spirit of the column, so a Beebe River Tract article was submitted instead. Plymouth is on deck to submit the September article.

**8) Jane's Planning Board visit:**

Jane said that due to scheduling conflicts she hasn't attended a Planning Board meeting to make her stormwater recommendations, but still plans to.

**9) Work Sessions: Updates/Future plans:**

The CCC held a work session on July 29th where website work to date was reviewed with Leona Minicucci. Also completed was a request made by the Mason CC for Campton CC members to sign a letter in opposition to the NE Direct gas pipeline project. The letter was signed by members from over 30 NH CC's.

It was agreed that our next work session will focus strictly on the NRI, as the end of the year is approaching and we budgeted money to spend on NRI maps. We will meet at Rebecca's on Sep 20th from 8-11 a.m.

**10) Mail:**

Mail opened includes a DES Drinking Water Protection Newsletter, and a Northway Bank Statement to be forwarded to Mary Durgin. Also received was a NHACC membership update request, dues increase announcement, and conference Save the date card. DES sent a copy of an approved Shoreland application.

**Meeting adjourned: 8:57pm**  
**Next meeting: Oct. 14, 2015;7pm**  
Jess will chair, Dave will take minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Wooster