

Campton Conservation Commission
Draft Meeting Minutes for our Annual Lands Management Meeting
April 6, 2016; 7pm

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

Our April meeting is reserved for the discussion of land management. Jane served as chair and opened the meeting at 7:10 pm. Jess moved to accept the March meeting minutes . Dave seconded the motion and all were in favor.

1) Pattee Conservation Park (PCP):

It was noted that the PCP field was mowed last year. Jane and Rebecca recently walked the field and thought the current mowing plan of every two to three years should stand. We will mow the perimeter walking path with the volunteer help of PCP neighbor Mike Kimball. Jane will follow up with Mike and tell him the maintenance schedule will be to mow about every 3 weeks depending on growing conditions.

Carol Lenahan has contacted the arborist who assessed the condition of the Liberty Elm tree last year. Carol sent around an email summarizing the watering, fertilizing, mulching, and pruning work completed to date. She also asked the arborist his recommendations for maintaining the tree going forward, and proposed an annual consulting visit, the fee for which would be split between the Garden Club and the CCC. Carol proposed a fee of \$75, and we are waiting to hear back from the arborist. Alisoun moved that we partner with the Garden Club in sharing the maintenance costs of the Elm tree. Dave seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Jane said that she recently thanked PCP neighbor Duncan MacDougall for watering the tree last year.

Jane and Rebecca walked the PCP trails last week in preparation for reporting trail conditions at our Lands Management meeting. While doing this, they noticed that abutting property owners Clint and Anita Lane were installing fence posts that encroached on the Town property boundary line. They had a conversation with the Lanes and learned that they were putting up a fence for a daycare business. The Town Compliance Officer has since visited the site and the Lanes have agreed to move the fence.

The PCP trails need some clearing work, and all hope that they will begin to get some use. Discussion turned to the dilapidated conditions of the Blanchard House, and ideas of how and when to remove it were shared. Shannon said it would be ideal for a demolition project to be put to practical use. The Fire Dept. recently conducted a controlled burn on a nearby house, and Jess had a brief conversation with the chief about whether this was a possible option for the Blanchard House. Jess said that the chief did not seem opposed to the idea, but said it was an involved process requiring inspections and approvals from other entities. Jess will ask the chief to come to a future meeting to give us more details. Alisoun proposed asking the High School trades department if they would consider taking on the demolition as a project. She will follow up on this idea. The group wondered if the building had historic value and Jane recalled there being a photo of the barn somewhere. Dave will follow up with the Historical Society to see if he can dig up any information. All agreed if such a photo does exist we could post it at the parking

area. Tammy suggested having a dumpster delivered on site so the building can be demolished and the debris efficiently hauled away. She will find out dumpster cost estimates.

2). Blair Woodland Natural Area (BWNA):

Shannon and Jess reported that there is a small amount of chainsaw work needed on the trails. Jess has begun planning Nature Nights programming with Katie Morrison, the new Rey Center Director. Jess said that she impressed upon Katie that the CCC's contribution should be reduced since we had to cover 3 of the 8 scheduled sessions last year due to lack of Rey Center staffing. Katie agreed to this. Since our share of the cost will be less, we will only seek one sponsorship. All agreed we will ask the MVSb to serve as sponsor, and Shannon will contact the bank. We will still list the Little Red School House as a sponsor on the flier, and revisit asking for their support in the future. Tammy will let Corey Smith know our plan. Alisoun said we should be sure to thank sponsors and provide a summary of the program's attendance at summer's end. Jess said that Nature Nights is being proposed for Tuesdays this year, so as not to conflict with the library's Thursday summer reading program. She will confirm this with Katie, and work on getting the flier into the Park and Recreation event calendar.

Jane asked whether we should consider a reprint of the BWNA trail guide, as supplies are getting low. It was agreed that the guide needs updating and we should begin thinking about ways to do this. Shannon said that her kids' school was working on a similar project creating a trail guide for The Walter Newton Natural Area and Rainbow Falls. It was agreed that at the very least we could make copies of just the trail map on the back of the guide for now. We will continue to supply guides at the trailhead kiosk until they run out.

3) Other Business/Updates:

a. Friends of the Pemi:

Jane attended the March Friends of the Pemi/Livermore Falls meeting and learned that the Holderness side parking area contract has been awarded to Hiltz Construction. Work is scheduled to begin this month and end early summer. There is movement toward the state purchasing property for a parking area on the Campton side, and signage is still in the works. There will be significant spending toward an engineering study of the old mill site. Jane was pleased that Selectman Peter Laufenberg attended the meeting and followed up with an email thanking him.

b. Northern Pass:

Jess and Tammy finished the letter to the DOE commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and submitted it ahead of the April 4th deadline. Jess suggested we send a copy to the Select Board and the NHACC, and Tammy will take care of this. Alisoun asked who was doing the roadside white painting along Route 3. Tammy said that at the SEC hearing, Northern Pass insisted that no work was being done in advance of project approval. She will ask the DOT if they know about the painting when she picks up the Adopt a Highway trash bags from the Thornton shed. The SEC adjudicative phase has begun, and we will not be receiving regular updates from the Bury the Northern Pass opposition group. There was a recent SEC bus tour of the proposed route to make stops at viewpoints where towers are being proposed. The tour was open to the public on a first come first serve basis, but criticized as being poorly advertised and announced last minute. There were also complaints that there were critical viewpoints skipped and there was no reasoning behind the viewpoints chosen as stops. The SEC process is expected to take 1-2 years, and 27 interveners have been assigned to arbitrary groups for administrative convenience, essentially being denied their individual statutory rights.

c. Beebe River Upland project:

Jane reported that Nancy Bell's April 4th Beebe River Upland presentation to the Select Board has been postponed due to a new biweekly Select Board meeting schedule. We are waiting to hear what date Nancy will be on the agenda, but it will likely be in May. Jane pointed out that there is a Historical Society sponsored Beebe railroad grade walk on May 28th.

d. Bobcat Hunting/Trapping Proposal Update:

Rebecca reported that a legislative committee voted down the bobcat hunting/trapping proposal on the basis that the Federally threatened Canada Lynx could potentially be trapped. The proposal goes into another session, and it is unclear what happens next. The Humane Society has accused the Fish & Game Commission of deciding their vote before considering public input, and exposed emails recovered via the Right to Know law.

e. Conservation Matters:

It is the CCC's turn to submit an article to Conservation Matters this month. We are using an article written by Research Ecologist Lindsey Rustad, summarizing El Nino related Hubbard Brook data and its implications. The article is a bit long despite Jess' trimming efforts, but we will submit it anyway since others have weighed in that further edits will compromise content.

f. Road Cleanup:

Our spring Adopt-a-Highway cleanup is scheduled for Sunday, April 17th @9 a.m. Jess will submit an announcement in the Record Enterprise, and Tammy will arrange for vest/trash bag pickup with the DOT. Jane will let friends of the CC Emily Kelly and Mike Kimball know in case they want to help. Shannon warned that hypodermic needles have been found in the Bog Road area, and that protocol is to not touch them, but report their location to police.

g. Pike Industries Inquiry:

Jane recently received an email from Pike Industries informing us that they intend to sell and possibly subdivide some of their unused land. They wanted to know if the CCC had an interest in the land or knew of other possible interested parties. Alisoun got some property maps from the Town office and took a quick look at the sites. One is a four acre parcel on the north side of Rte. 49, from Depot Street to the bridge. The other is a larger parcel that runs along the Pemi, is unbuildable, has steep vegetated banks in spots, but has the potential for river access. The group wondered if access from this side could take some pressure from the small boat access point on the other side of the river. Jess said the area is often used by hunters. Dave said that given it is an industrial site, the land has likely been misused or overused. Jane shared a list of groups she compiled that could have interest and/or input, including boat business/ campground owners, Parks & Rec., PRLAC, and Trout Unlimited. Alisoun asked if there was any value in preserving the land as it is, keeping it as open space. Jane said yes, but if it became town property it would have to have public access. We have many questions at this point and Jane will follow up with Pike requesting a meeting and/or site visit.

h. Newsletter:

It has been some time since we've sent a newsletter to the Friends of the CC group. Shannon and Rebecca will work on drafting one together highlighting our work and upcoming events.

i. Website :

Our new website is nearly complete, and Jess will get in touch with Carina about how to get it up and running, and also how to incorporate the constant contact function.

j. NRI:

Great progress was made at our last NRI work session and all agreed that longer weekend sessions are more productive. Jane asked that we really think about what the document cover should look like. We will meet next on Sat., April 23rd, 8 a.m. at the Town Office.

k. Joint CC Meeting:

There will be a Pemi-Baker area joint CC meeting at Boyd Hall/PSU on April 13th at 6pm. Alisoun and Jane attended last year, and each commission briefly summarized major projects. Alisoun will go again this year and share our NRI work, Conservation Matters, Beebe River Uplands project, and Northern Pass opposition.

FYI: Mail opened included a DES newsletter, and the Adopt- a- Highway renewal paperwork. Tammy asked that we decide whether to continue our NH Assoc. of Natural Resource Scientists membership. It is unclear whether our membership was paid last year and it is renewal time. Dave moved to drop the NHANRS membership fee from our budget, since we have not attended any of their workshops. Alisoun seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Tammy will follow up with Carina. Tammy moved to nominate Shannon for the position of treasurer. Jane seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 9:01 pm
Next meeting: May 4, 2016; 7pm
Jess will chair

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Wooster