

Open Lands Committee
Public Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2006
Council Chambers, Dover City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

In attendance: Steven Bird, Anna Boudreau Marcia Colbath, Joyce El Kouarti, Thomas Fargo, Anne Kotlus, Dona Masi Layton, Cheryl Bucklin Niles, Amy Perry, David Price, Ann Reid, and John Scruton

1) Minutes: Review and approval of edited minutes for the OLC meeting of August 3, 2006.

MOTION: Motion by Steve Bird to approve, second by Cheryl. Motion passed u/a.

2) Treasurer's Report: Steve Bird reported that the balance in the conservation fund is \$842,539.00 and that there was an income of \$28,422.00 for the month of July.

A discussion followed about previously committed funds and their impact on expenditures. There are funds for the Stern property, \$230,000.00, and the Holly property, \$380,000.00, out of the Conservation Fund. That will leave approximately \$232,000.00 in the conservation Fund.

The closing on the Tuttle property exhausted the '04 funds.

If DOT comes through with the \$1.4 million, we won't need Conservation funds to bond anything for a while.

Steve is not sure that we got the \$1,000.00 from the Liberty Mutual Fund (see 8/3/06 minutes)

3) Reports by Task Groups:

A) Easement monitoring: There was a meeting 8/23 of the task group and the schedule for the year was discussed. 7 existing properties need to be monitored this fall. We would like to start placing boundary marker signs on grade stakes, and will need the property owners' permission to do this. Dana Lynch offered to monitor the Willows property. Marcia will speak to the owner. Tom mentioned unresolved encroachment concerns off Long Hill Road extension in the Estes-Moll easement area. Dave mentioned wetland concerns at Estes Moll. Dave will set up a weekly e-mail regarding monitoring for everyone.

B) Outreach and Education:

Farming in NH Forum: Donna scheduled the Farming in New Hampshire forum for Thursday, Nov. 9th, and has reserved the space in the City Hall. Discussion followed on the focus of the forum. The discussion included conserving farmland, economic impact of farming in NH, small farmer concerns, environmental protection concerns, compliancy with NRCC and Farm Bureau standards, assisting agencies, zoning issues, and best management practices. Marcia suggested focusing on the best management of small acre farms. Several possible speakers were mentioned: Joyce offered to contact Kathleen Shae of the NH Farm Museum to speak on the history of farming in NH. Phil Auger was suggested to speak on protecting NH farmland with case studies of farms that have been successfully protected through conservation easement. Tom suggested Nancy Quinlan to speak on best practices, and Commissioner Steve Taylor was mentioned to speak on conserving farmland.

Each speaker should speak for 15 minutes with additional time scheduled for questions. The target audience is conservation commission members and farmers. It was suggested we include small farmers from Maine.

Donna wants help in planning this event and will meet next week to define focus. Marcia suggested she see if she can use the Agway mailing list, and John Scruton suggested the Farm Bureau mailing list.

NH Sea Grant 5 Yr Review: Ann reported that Julia and Sally did an excellent job on their presentation.

Migratory Bird Event: Joyce suggested Darrell Covell from the NH Coop. Ext. Service as a speaker but he is not available this fall. After discussion it was decided to put this event on hold till the spring.

C) Grant Writing: Tom spoke about the NH CELCP Plan regarding NH's coastal watersheds and wild life habitats that are being threatened by increasing development. He passed around a 2-page draft of the plan from their web site. Areas of concern in Dover include: Fresh Creek, the lower Cocheco River, Bellamy River, Rochester Neck, and the Holly "B" property. He suggested we take a look at their web site. Any comments need to be submitted by October 30th. This is a 50/50 grant.

4) Land Trust Standard and Practices:

A copy of: Land Trust-Standards and Practices was given to each member and briefly reviewed. Tom reported that LCHIP money recipients need to comply with these standards and practices.

MOTION: Tom motioned and Anna seconded that the OLC fill out and sign the form on the LTA website and pledge to follow the LCHIP standards and practices. Motion passed u/a.

Dave and Anna noted that we all need to review the standards and make sure we are in compliance.

5) Apple Harvest Day: (Saturday, October 7th)

A sign-up sheet was passed around. It was agreed that we want to recruit volunteers for easement monitoring, promote farming, and exhibit some of our special projects with a poster display. Anna has the old poster and Marcia offered to put something on the website. It was suggested that we have a press release that included that OLC and The Conservation Commission are looking for more people.

6) Updates on Public Projects:

Anna reported on several projects as follows:

Tuttle: We have closed on the 26-acre parcel with 11 acres paid for with FRPP monies and the balance (15 acres) covered by the city. There will be a public hearing 9/21(?) at St. Thomas Aquinas HS. to receive comments on the DOT Newington-Dover projects including Tuttle's Blackwater farm. DOT cannot go forward with funding w/o a public hearing w/feedback. A big issue is DOT's \$1.4 million. This would "button up" the Tuttle property and SRC & City of Dover would like to recoup monies spent including several appraisals.

Holly: They will be closing 9/27. (A celebration on 10/2 was suggested!)

Brown: We need to get the paperwork done; then we will get reimbursed the \$18,000.00.

Stern: still pending; closing soon.

7) New Business:

Tsimekles: 6th St/Long Hill Rd; 104 acres in all with 90 acres of open space.

Anna and Marcia met with Mrs. Tsimekles. They are asking for 23 units. The yield plan is for 20 with a bonus amount of 3. The property offers open space acres, a stone wall, well placed for expanding corridor as the property abuts the Holly property, across from Day property, with nearby parking area (down the road), and existing trails. Marcia noted that the #1 complaint about accessing easement properties is "There's no place to park!" Tom noted that developers are required to provide recreation space. Dave wondered if the developers would put up the boundary signs for us. Perhaps the Conservation Commission could recommend this.

MOTION: Anna motioned and Donna seconded to accept the Tsimkeles property in Conservation Easement. Motion passed u/a.

Discussion followed on establishing guidelines for asking developers for monetary fees. Ann will ask Rachel Stevens with Great Bay Resources what they do regarding fees and developers, and Steve will talk with the city manager about establishing a monetary fee guideline for developers. Tom suggested it could be part of the developer's agreement.

Ann asked about establishing her city e-mail, and about city e-mail use. Marcia, Anna and Dave use it for closings. Marcia is not using it yet for meetings.

MOTION: Anna motioned and Cheryl seconded to enter the Non-Public Session per RS91-A: 3, reason # 3. The motion was u/a with the following members voting: Steven Bird, Anna Boudreau Marcia Colbath, Thomas Fargo, Anne Kotlus, Dona Masi Layton, Cheryl Bucklin Niles, Amy Perry, David Price, Ann Reid, and John Scruton. Joyce El Kouarti left before the vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Amy Perry.