

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF DOVER OPEN LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Dover City Hall, City Council Chambers, 5:30 p.m.**  
**March 3, 2005**

Meeting convened at 5:50 pm

Present were: Geoffrey Njue / Ann Reid / Wendy Scribner / Anna Boudreau / Tom Fargo / Steve Bird / Chris Snow / Dona Layton / John Scruton and Janice Gardner

Since the agenda was not published 24 hours prior to the meeting time, this will not be an official meeting. No votes can be taken.

1) January and February minutes will be reviewed at the April meeting.

2) Treasurer's report: As of 1-1-05 the balance in the conservation fund was \$794,933 including \$236,000 in current use taxes and reimbursement from the state for the Williams and Brown properties.

3) **REPORTS FROM TASK GROUPS**

Easement Monitoring - Dave Price is working with Chris Parker to finish up the project. Anna is planning a meeting within the next two weeks.

Outreach & Education - This group met on 2/17. They will ask the owners of the Bagdon Kirkwood property if we can again hold our vernal pool walk on their property. Tom Fargo mentioned a problem re snow mobiles on property (even though regulations say no motorized vehicles on property). Tom is collecting information re complaints.

Dona reported on upcoming workshops; there are three planned for 2005 and four for 2006. Schedule will include workshops on drinking water, wildlife, songbird identification and landowner education.

Ann Reid mentioned that Great Bay Coast Watch will host a program featuring Lindsay Anderson (topic: ground water) from 7 – 9 p.m. on Thursday 3/10.

Grant Writing - Marcia brought up the Green Ways grant application as a possibility for the Dover walking trail. Grant amounts are from \$500 to 2500. The consensus was that the funding being offered and the time it would take to complete the application did not make it worthwhile to pursue this grant.

Trails – The Trails subcommittee met on 2/7. They agreed on a need to determine where the trails are now, and will use GPS to locate them. The group needs to do an inventory and then meet again to discuss next steps. A covered wooden bridge has been suggested for the RR bridge off Washington St.

Media & PR - Dona reported that Anna had written an excellent article on the signing of the conservation easement on the Brown property. Joyce will distribute the article to various outlets. After that article is published, Joyce will write a press release which will announce the signing of the conservation easement on the Williams property.

Landowner Action - The 2/17 meeting focused on the *22 steps to conserve land in Dover*. This document will be revised to add a 23<sup>rd</sup> step. Tom talked about the regional land protection committee he is helping to form. There are very active land protection groups in Lee, Madbury and Rochester, etc. Tom is planning a meeting with 1 or 2 people from each of these communities. Barrington has 1500 acres under town control and needs help / suggestions. Lee, Durham and Madbury are talking about a shared greenway. Dona reminded us of the need for the OLC to appoint someone from the Landowner Action subcommittee to represent the OLC on the regional land protection committee which Tom is in the process of forming.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1) The Joint Committee on Taxation is examining making changes to the Federal tax code, which would reduce the allowable tax deduction for the donation of conservation easements from 100% to no more than a 33%. Tom suggests that we investigate the issue; perhaps partner with the Nature Conservancy and work with our congressmen to learn what their positions are on this issue. Chris Snow volunteered to take on this project.

2) At Dona's request, Steve Bird explained the protocol for appraisals to the committee. Planning Dept. reviews each appraisal for accuracy—those that are paid for by the landowner and those that are paid for by the City. Steve said there is a need to get assurance from a landowner that the landowner is serious about a land protection project before using city funds to pay for an appraisal. It is important to be certain of a landowner's intentions because the Planning Dept. and the OLC are accountable to the City Council for these expenditures.

Tom suggests that we add a proviso re signed letter of intent to sell, pending acceptance of grant.

The group moved into the Non-public meeting at this time.

The committee voted to end non public session.

Reminder from Dona that the April meeting will include a report from the Nature Conservancy on the findings of the Inventory of the Cochecho Watershed project.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm