



CITY OF DOVER

OPEN LANDS COMMITTEE - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: First Floor Conference Room, City Hall
Meeting Date: **Thursday, May 12, 2011**
Meeting Time: **5:30 PM**

Members Present: Anna Boudreau (Vice-Chair), Steve Bird, Anne Kotlus, Cheryl Niles, Ann Reid, John Scruton, Marcia Gasses, Geoffrey Njue

Others Present: Dean Peschel, Lori Chase, Olga Erwin

- 1. Approval of April minutes:** Motion to accept with corrections made by Kotlus, seconded by Gasses. Vote: Unanimous.
- 2. Treasurer's Report:** The balance as of 4/30 is \$632,148.51. Another \$57,780.39 is receivable that have not yet been collected.
- 3. Guest Speakers:**

Dean Peschel and Lori Chase were present to explain the Berry Brook Watershed Restoration Project. Berry Brook is an urban watershed that begins near the Hannaford parking lot on Central Avenue and ends near the Sixth Street Station condominiums as it empties into the Cochecho River. Brook has been rerouted and negatively impacted by development over the years. Horne Street School is in the center of the watershed. Watershed has been subject to flash flooding due to the amount of impervious surface. City and the UNH Stormwater Center have received \$700,000 in grants to implement best management practices. Tree filters and a rain garden will be installed at Horne Street School very soon. Landowners along the brook will be contacted to see if they would grant easements to protect the brook or sign pledges to be good stewards of the brook. Stream restoration will be done near the Lowell Avenue pump station, with trail construction planned. Third project is to work with the Sixth Street Station homeowners to restore the stream channel near the river. OLC would be asked to assist in educational efforts, including video and working with landowners. A meeting is planned for June 7th at Horne Street School for area residents and OLC members are invited to participate. They hope to have a bid field day celebration at the end. Rain barrels will be available for watershed residents at little to no cost.

- 4. Public Projects:** None

5. Report by Task Groups

- A. Monitoring:** Bird and the Conservation Committee did an easement monitoring visit on Morrison Lane on May 5th and met with many residents. They need to prepare a management plan for the open space, better mark the rear property lines, and stop encroachment of lawns into the open space. This may be a good place to use the conservation land signs.

Some OLC members that are participating in the Trout Unlimited trail clean up on May 21st are planning to go to the Cassily property to clean up some trash they discovered during the last easement monitoring visit.

Sheri Towle would like to have an easement monitoring visit now that she has completed trail clearing.



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B. Outreach and Education: Due to circumstances beyond our control, the OLC did not participate in the Strafford County Conservation District Plant Sale.

Geoffrey Njue took the opportunity to announce that he has resigned from the OLC due to his loss of employment with the UNH Cooperative Extension Service. He regrets having to do this, but he must devote his full time and energy to hunting for a job. Boudreau thanked him for his service over the years and said that this is a very sad situation and we will all miss him. Njue left the meeting.

C. Grant Writing: None at this time.

D. Trails: Gasses said that they are working to update the conservation easement to allow the parking lot at the Watson Road trailhead to be built. The Planning Board negotiated with a developer to build the Watson Road trail head, parking lot and gate. Construction is slated to begin after Memorial Day. A discussion ensued on the trail clean up day on May 21st and who from the Trout Unlimited was in charge of PR. Several OLC members will participate again.

6. New Business: Bird discussed the efforts underway to update the Conservation and Open Space chapter of the master plan. Kotlus and Lehocky are on the committee. Lee Skinner, chair of the committee has asked the OLC and Conservation commission to see if there is any consensus on some issues. Bird distributed a list of questions for the OLC members to consider. Since the meeting was running long, Bird agreed to e-mail the questions to all OLC members and they would respond to Bird by e-mail prior to the next meeting.

Reid asked if the OLC should become involved in the pedestrian bridge discussion. The consensus was to not be involved as a group.

Gasses informed the OLC about the City Council resolution that would take all of the Current Use Penalty funds and divert them to the general fund, resulting in no funding for the Conservation Fund. Boudreau said that this should be strongly opposed. Gasses said that the Conservation Commission had discussed this issue earlier in the week and voted to suggest an alternative proposal that would only take the first \$75,000 for the general fund to support a planner and the remainder would still go into the Conservation Fund. Boudreau felt that it is too early to compromise and that the OLC should have been included in the process. After considerable discussion, no action was taken.

Bird informed the group that Bill McCann, Conservation Commission Chair, had passed away the previous week.

7. Non-Public Meeting

Kotlus made the motion to enter into non-public session for report on the status of individual land protection efforts/transactions per RSA 91-A. Niles seconded the motion and a roll call vote was unanimous in the affirmative.



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Bird motioned to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes. Kotlus seconded. Vote: Unanimous Approval.

Boudreau made the motion to begin the process of having an appraisal done for project D. Reid seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous

8. Adjournment

Bird motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 PM. Kotlus seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Minutes taken by Cheryl Niles.