



CITY OF DOVER

DOVER CONSERVATION COMMISSION – MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Second Floor Conference Room - 288 Central Avenue Dover NH
Meeting Date: Monday, January 13, 2014
Meeting Time: 5:30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Hunt (Chair), Marcia Gasses (Vice Chair), Cora Quisumbing-King, Kris Houle, Kevin Perron, Michael Joyce (Alternate), Richard Erickson

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Bird (City Planner)

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Parker, Dennis Grzywacz, William Marshall, Bryant Hardwick, Councilor John O'Connor, James Verschueren, Lucie Callahan, Michael Busby, Jim Maxfield, Mark Ryder, others

The meeting was convened by Hunt at 5:32PM.

Hunt recognized Chris Parker, who asked for a couple minutes of the Commission's time. He thanked members for their volunteer service and continued efforts. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

1. ANNUAL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2014

Hunt explained that the floor was open for nominations for the three officer positions.

Quisumbing-King nominated Hunt to serve as Chair, Gasses seconded. Vote: 6 in favor, Hunt abstained

Perron nominated Gasses to serve as Vice Chair, Quisumbing-King seconded. Vote: 6 in favor, Gasses abstained

Gasses nominated Houle to serve as Secretary, Perron seconded. Vote: 6 in favor, Houle abstained

2. APPROVAL OF THE PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Perron moved to approve the December 9, 2013 minutes, Joyce seconded. Vote: Unanimous

3. OLD BUSINESS

Hunt: Let's move onto agenda item 5 since it is not 6:00 pm yet.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Neighborhood Meeting to receive public input on a proposal to build a public 9-hole disc golf course on the 24-acre Cochecho River Conservation Area (Cassily Property) by the Bellamy Park Disc Golf Club. Property is located off Whittier Street and Hillside Drive.

Hunt: The purpose of the neighborhood meeting is to receive public input on a proposal to build a public 9-hole disc golf course on the Cochecho River Conservation Area. Invitations were sent to property owners in the neighborhood, and other interested groups such as the Community Trail Committee and Dover Baseball.

Bird: I wanted to provide a little background on the property. The 24-acre property is owned by the City after it was purchased from the Cassily family in 2003 for conservation and recreation purposes. The NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program provided funding to assist in purchasing



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the property. The Dover Community Trail runs through the property from Whittier Street to Beckwith Park on Hillside Drive. In 2010 a community garden was established on the property by the Cassily Community Garden Stewards. Although I don't have a sign-up sheet, if any abutters want any of the handouts discussed tonight, just contact me and I can e-mail them to you.

Bird: We did receive e-mails from Eileen Williams of 2 Autumn Street and Mark Ryder of 138 Sixth Street expressing some concerns. Copies were distributed.

Dennis Grzywacz and William Marshall of the Bellamy Disc Golf Club were present to discuss their proposal. The Bellamy course is very popular. We will have to cut a few trees and brush to put in 9 holes. League plays twice a week and we have occasional tournaments. We will use pervious tee boxes to lessen the impacts. There is not a lot of noise from the course. Most large trees will remain but brush would be cut. We would use a portion of the gravel parking lot that is not leased by Dover Baseball.

Perron: Would tree stumps remain?

Grzywacz: Yes, we grind the stumps down to ground level.

Joyce: Have you looked into Shoreland Permit or wetlands?

Grzywacz: No hole or fairway is closer than 200 feet to the river, but we need to review the requirements more closely. We will avoid wetlands for the tees and holes and try to not cross wetlands for the fairways. In Bellamy we used natural materials on site to span wetland crossings.

Perron: What age group uses Bellamy course?

Grzywacz: A wide range of ages are into disc golf. Our club is on the younger side.

Hunt: I want to open it up for questions and comments from neighbors. Please identify yourself and give your address for the record.

Ryder: I live at 138 Sixth Street and moved there because of the adjacent conservation land. Why do you need to move from Bellamy? Are you going to need outhouses for the users? I want to preserve the property for wildlife.

Grzywacz: Cassily is being underutilized and Bellamy is over used. The course has been successful. Disc golf is a low impact use. The demand is there for a second course. We will not have bathrooms as they are not needed. Course play will only take 90 minutes.

Mike Busby: I live at 5 Autumn Street. LCHIP deed doesn't allow active recreation uses. He bought from Cassily. We have lots of wildlife and people use the property all the time. I love Frisbee golf. The bike path needs to be completed. This is more of a nature area that is not compatible with disc golf. The proposed use is not allowed by the deed. Use of the property should be limited to fishing and nature walks. The underbrush provides good habitat for animals. We have a problem with trash and campers.

Marshall: In our defense, we have been told by LCHIP to take the proposal to the next stage and that is all we are doing.

Grzywacz: The golfers will give way to pedestrians.

Jim Verschueren (102B Sixth Street): I say this is a good idea since the park is underutilized. I was involved with the Community Garden for a while and we were told no structures were allowed. Will Community Trail be paved?



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Bryant Hardwick: I am the Chair of the Community Trail Advisory Committee. There are no plans and no money to pave that portion of the trail.

Verschueren: Who will maintain the course?

Grzywacz: We have trash barrels at every other hole and empty them into a dumpster. We recycle cans and bottles. We would trim any branches and pick up litter.

Hardwick: How many people are involved with your club?

Marshall: We have 76 dues paying members of the club and 130 league members.

Hardwick: What kind of budget do you have?

Grzywacz: About \$6,000 for total cost that we would raise funds for.

Hardwick: Do whatever you can to keep the course as wild as possible. Have the number of police calls at Bellamy Park been reduced since your club has been involved?

Grzywacz: Having more people at Bellamy was one of the selling points with Gary Bannon. Putting a course here will reduce the vandalism and homeless campers and increase safety.

Lucie Callahan (1 Autumn Street): It is very difficult to access the trail from Whittier Street with that pile of dirt. Any thought of leveling of and improving the access?

Hardwick: Need more advocacy for the trail but we have no funds now.

Mike of Sixth Street: I applaud your efforts at Bellamy, but I am concerned for the impacts to wildlife habitat. There is a problem with trash. Underbrush is important to wildlife.

Grzywacz: The fairways are designed to lessen the tree impact. Larger trees are harder to remove for us volunteers.

Houle: Have you given any thought to layouts that stay away from the river.

Grzywacz: Yes I have done many designs.

Quisumbing-King: Have there been any studies on impacts to wildlife?

Grzywacz: No formal studies have been done. I don't see as much wildlife at Bellamy as I used to but I am not there as much.

Jim Maxfield: I am here representing Dover Baseball. I am concerned that this would be a rear-round sport. What are the hours of operation?

Grzywacz: We use day light hours and we do have some members that will play in the snow.

Maxfield: This could result in many more users of the area and parking lot. This could impact traffic along Sixth Street. Where would your users park if there was a baseball tournament going on? We would be concerned with the impact on the lease agreement we have with the City. We run a lot of tournaments each summer. There is not enough parking for both uses at the same time. We are not against this but have questions.

Grzywacz: We are here to hear any concerns. There are likely other groups that we may have to contact. We coordinate any of our events with the Recreation Department at Bellamy.

Maxfield: We do have port potties that will get used by disc golfers. We have night baseball with kids all around and we are concerned with your users hanging around in the parking lot after a match.

Hunt: Okay it seems that everyone has had a chance to ask questions and make comments so I would like to wrap this up. This is all part of the public process and we will keep you in the loop. We will take a look at what everyone has said. Thanks to everyone for coming out tonight.

Quisumbing-King: The issues that I see are:

1. Content of deed



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2. Wildlife habitat impacts
3. Where Cassily fits into Dover's conservation plans
4. Current state versus natural state
5. Volume impact

Joyce: The first thing that needs to be reviewed is the deed.

Houle: We need to encourage alternative plans.

Bird: This group has met with the LCHIP staff and she walked the property. They have not said no yet and want more details on the proposal. It is going to be the City Council that makes the final decision, just like they did with the Community Garden group.

5. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

A. Review of Correspondence Received

- i. Grant Application from NH Sea Grant and UNH Cooperative Extension for Planning for Coastal Flood Hazards and Climate Change Impacts

Hunt: Most members received a copy of this application.

Bird: The Planning Department is hoping to apply for assistance with preparing a Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Since the application is due on February 14th, I will ask for a letter of support from the Conservation Commission at the February meeting.

- ii. E-mail from the Oyster River School District Sustainability Committee

Invitation to attend a free event called Button Up, New Hampshire on January 23rd from 6:30-8:00 pm at Oyster River High School. Event gives information on saving money on home energy use.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Joyce: I am a member of the NH Association of Natural Resource Scientists (NHANRS) and they offer a group membership option that would all of us reduced fees for workshops. I will find out the cost.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Perron motioned to adjourn at 7:30 PM. Erickson seconded. Vote: Unanimous