

DEERFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
1967 – FIFTY-FIVE YEARS AND COUNTING – 2022
Meeting Minutes – **March 14, 2022**

Attendance: Haley Andreozzi, Erroll Rhodes, Wes Golomb, Jo Anne Bradbury (Alternate)
Members Absent: Josh Freed, Serita Frey, Chloe Gross
Visitors & Guests: Kaitlin Deyo, Paul Pindris

Acting Chair Haley Andreozzi **opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.** Alternate member Jo Anne Bradbury sat in for Josh Freed who could not attend (excused absence).

Easements and Land Protection:

Project #39: Adami/Cote – 24.76 Ac. – Map 210 Lot 041 – Mountain Rd/Nottingham Rd:

After a public hearing in November, members voted to support the project, **agreeing to contribute \$6,410.00 from the Conservation Fund toward transaction costs for the acquisition.** The easement deed grants the Town of Deerfield an executory interest in the easement, allowing the contribution to be made toward the project.

Kaitlin Deyo from Bear-Paw responded to members' questions regarding the **Adami-Cote deed language** which is based on a standard Bear-Paw conservation easement deed template. Discussion included the landowner's **allowed right to run utilities to the residence or other improvements located in the Excluded Area**, stressing the requirement for those utilities to be buried. The deed also allows the landowner to **maintain an existing driveway**. Although motorized vehicles are prohibited in the section on *Use Limitations* the landowner has reserved the right to **limited use of motorized vehicles in conducting allowed non-commercial activities, as well as use by persons with disabilities** for activities consistent with conservation purposes, and by police, fire or other emergency personnel.

Members questioned the difference between commercial and non-commercial forestry, asking if the difference was in small scale (harvesting for personal use, trail or habitat management) vs. large scale, or based on whether the operation was primarily profit-driven. Ms. Deyo will provide clarification. **Any additional questions can be submitted to Bear-Paw prior to a tentative March 28th BOS signing of the easement deed.**

Project #29: Geraldine Mathews - ~20 Ac. – Map 414 Lot 007 – Cole Rd.

At its February meeting, DCC members informally agreed to contribute \$18,015 toward the acquisition of the conservation easement and will officially vote on the expenditure in conjunction with a Public Hearing to be conducted at a later date. The contribution is contingent upon the Town being granted an executory interest in the easement. Bear-Paw has received **confirmation of \$5,000 in funding for transactions costs associated with staff time, through the NH Charitable Foundation's Great Bay Watershed 2021 group.**

Surveyor Steve Perron will perform a survey that will delineate the easement area and define the exclusion area, which is anticipated to be three to five acres in size. The easement area cannot be subdivided per the terms of the easement deed. Members feel that a survey should be available at the public hearing; however, since **the survey is scheduled for late fall 2022, Bear-Paw may be able to arrange for earlier completion** in order to move ahead with the hearing and DCC release of funds.

Geocaching:

Resident Paul Pindris approached the Conservation Commission seeking permission to allow geocaching on town-owned land, and more specifically, at Peg King Park. The practice, (described as the world's largest treasure hunt game), consists of placing an object referred to as a "geocache", in a hidden area on a property, to be "found" using an app on a phone or a GPS device. The "geocacher" or finder, who uses navigational skills to locate the property and then follows clues to pinpoint the cache, signs a log located within the cache.

There are guidelines that serve to protect the environment and the rights of the property owner, i.e., geocaches cannot be buried, so there is no disturbance to the natural setting, and a requirement that permission be received from the landowner or controlling entity prior to including the location on the geocaching site. Details of a geocache are reviewed and approved prior to being publicized on the site to ensure they conform to guidelines. Mr. Pindris noted that there are geocaches in Bear Brook, Northwood Meadows and Pawtuckaway, and that geocachers are actually stewards of the area

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geocached; “Cache In...Trash Out”. Guidelines can be viewed from the following link:
<https://www.geocaching.com/play/guidelines>

Motion: *Haley Andreozzi moved to allow Paul Pindris to place geocaches on town-owned land that is under the purview of the Deerfield Conservation Commission, following best practices for geocache placement. The motion was seconded by Wes Golomb and unanimously approved.*

Deerfield Master Plan:

Haley Andreozzi attended the **March 10th Planning Board meeting to discuss the formation of a Master Plan Update Committee** for the purpose of updating chapters of the Deerfield Master Plan. In addition to the DCC, the Planning Board has reached out to the School Board, the Heritage Commission, the ZBA and Parks and Recreation requesting a volunteer from each to sit on the committee. Cam Prolman, alternate Deerfield Town Planner, will be coordinating the project.

The meeting was informal and lacked representatives from the ZBA, Parks and Recreation and the School. **Given the minimal funding provided for the project, the initial update will focus on the Vision and Land Use chapters.** Wes Golomb commented that although the *Energy* chapter is not being updated at this time, he would like to provide input into anything related to energy in the upcoming revisions. Mr. Golomb has tentative plans for a separate energy workshop which DCC can co-sponsor. Erroll Rhodes, who is representing the Heritage Commission, noted that the document needs to have teeth. The project should involve as many folks as possible; to educate them and get them involved. Jo Anne Bradbury remarked that Deerfield’s old Master Plan was instrumental in making the Town’s case against the Northern Pass project. Ms. Andreozzi mentioned that the plan was to have approximately six meetings between now and December.

Freese Town Forest - Posting:

A solution for the confusion being created by multiple signs, (*Safety Zone/No Hunting Beyond This Point*) at the entrance and across the frontage of the Freese Town Forest has not yet been found. Removing some of them and posting a map in the kiosk was again suggested, along with reaching out to the abutters.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: *Haley Andreozzi moved to approve the minutes of the February meeting. The motion was seconded by Erroll Rhodes. Ms. Andreozzi and Mr. Rhodes approved the minutes as written. Ms. Bradbury and Mr. Golomb, neither of whom were at the February meeting, abstained.*

Finance:

Haley Andreozzi reported that she was given information for the wrong account and therefore had nothing to report. **the balance in the Conservation Fund at the end of January was \$326,963.40.** Current Land Use Change Tax amounts were also unavailable at the time of the meeting.

Public Outreach:

Facebook:

Members agreed that the DCC Facebook page, a tool for sharing information, should lean toward posting content that has less potential for controversy, i.e., trail and wildlife pictures. The loss of control of data posted was also noted as a negative aspect of the medium.

Recorded Meetings:

The equipment for broadcasting the board and committee meetings on ZOOM with livestreaming on Public Access Channel 24 and You Tube is now operational. John Harrington has asked for the name of someone on the DCC who will be charged with operating the equipment. Haley Andreozzi will reach out to Mr. Harrington to determine the degree of complexity involved. Ms. Andreozzi also suggested that **there should be redundancy in training to cover the absence of the designated operator.**

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Stewardship/Easement Monitoring:

Annual monitoring reports for the properties comprising the Great Brook Corridor were forwarded to the Conservation Land Stewardship Program. Unfortunately, both Will Frey and Al Jaeger monitored the Burbank 15-Acre easement but neither monitored the Burbank 92-Acre parcel which will need to be done for 2021. The Curry 342 Ac easement is delinquent and will need to be addressed in the future.

Regulated Wetlands:

Nottingham Rd: A visit to the property confirmed that a wet area within 30 feet of a stream had been covered in gravel and likely constituted a wetland violation. It was suggested that DCC have a conversation with the landowner rather than submitting a formal complaint to DES. Haley Andreozzi reminded the members that the DCC can only act in an advisory capacity and that DCC may not wish to become mediators in these situations. It was decided that DCC should allow DES to take the lead in the matter.

Code Enforcement: Since the Town is in the process of hiring a **new Code Enforcement Officer**, it was suggested that DCC reach out to the BOS and request that any replacement also be capable of enforcing environmental codes, especially since some violations will be town-specific, and DES does not enforce Town zoning.

Permits/Applications/Potential Violations:

Shoreland Permit Application (RSA 483-B): NHDES File #2022-00337

Map 207 Lot 071 – Van Vliet – **3 Willow Lane** - Approved

Announcements/Correspondence/Reminders:

DCC received a **letter from FOCUS** to let us know that funding applications are available for 2022 projects.

A motion by Haley Andreozzi to **adjourn at 9:10 pm** was seconded by Erroll Rhodes and unanimously approved

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 14, 2021

(Please check the website townofdeerfieldnh.com for scheduling changes)

These minutes were prepared and submitted by Judy Marshall. Revisions, if any, will be contained in the minutes of the next meeting and posted to the Town website, after approval by the Deerfield Conservation Commission