



TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
2750 MAIN STREET, PO BOX 22
SPRINGFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03284-0022
PHONE (603)763-4805 FAX (603)763-3336
www.springfieldnh.net

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting of November 5, 2009

Note: These minutes are to be considered draft minutes only until approved by the Commission.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by John Trachy.

Members present were: John Trachy, Todd Richardson, Bob Ruel, and Ken Jacques.
Absent were: Daphne Klein, Jane Seekamp, and Cynthia Bruss. Also present were Dave Tucker, Selectmen's Representative, and Betsy Forsham, Chair, Sutton Conservation Commission.

The minutes of October 1, 2009 were approved unanimously.

Conservation Lands:

The October 1 meeting discussed the possible benefits as well as the possible disadvantages of putting town lots into conservation easements. To gain perspective, Betsy Forsham, Chair, Sutton Conservation Commission was invited to speak about the political, economic and educational aspects of placing conservation easements on town-owned parcels in Sutton.

The motivation for conservation easements is primarily a concern that special town lands would be sold by future town meetings and selectboards. Sutton has partnered with the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust which has the obligation under the easements to monitor these lots to be certain that only activities agreed upon under the easements take place. Easements are granted by the Town Meeting or Selectmen, if so authorized (RSA 41:14-a and c).

Educational meetings are held to build support for conservation easements and dispel misinformation. Some meetings include a tax attorney, easement donors, and land trust representatives.

Financing conservation easements is done through the use of conservation funds and a capital reserve fund. Presently 100% of the Land Use Change Tax is placed in the conservation fund each year. Expenses include surveys, stewardship donations, and attorney fees.

Sutton has, on occasion, assisted landowners with the costs of donating a conservation easement. There has not been negative public comment for doing so. Todd asked what criteria Sutton used to determine who should be assisted and if the town Master Plan supported the CC choices for land conservation. Betsy will share criteria.



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Conservation Lands - continued:

There was discussion concerning the proposal to place a conservation easement on the town-owned Brook Lot on Shad Hill. It was mentioned that this property is a good example of a 19th century hillside subsistence farm with the associated stone walls, foundations and orientation, and has the potential for public recreation and education.

Outreach:

- Todd and Cynthia visited with the Springfield kindergarten class this morning.
- Discussion regarding borrowing the "Forever Locked" exhibit for Old Home Day next July was deferred until December as Cynthia was absent.
- Plans for the January meeting of the Springfield Historical Society were deferred until December as Cynthia was absent.

Gile Forest:

- Ken reported that there is a cut planned in the Gile Forest that will remove about 100 loads of chips and 40 loads of logs. Access is through Twin Lake Village roadway.

Joint Springfield-Grantham CC:

- No meeting has been held since September. Bob and John are considering a cost of community services study to illustrate the advantages of open space over development. Grantham is interested in this as well.

Selectmen Reports: Dave noted that little has changed regarding the design that has been prepared by Ross Stevens for the proposed salt and sand shed. Cost is an issue because there are many spending proposals for 2010 from various departments. The budget process will commence shortly and priorities set.

Planning Board report:

Ken related that the Star Lake project is moving forward and is close to finalization. This project is expected to be voted upon at Town Meeting 2010. John mentioned that a vote of support by the Conservation Commission will be on the December agenda.



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Communications and Miscellaneous:

- Kurt Gotthardt of Enfield has offered to assist in setting up a reporting project that maps major wildlife trails, eventually showing the interconnections in town. Anyone interested can contact him at kurt.gott@valley.net
- The Eastman Charitable Foundation Symposium was held on October 11th. Springfield was represented by John.
- The Conservation Commissions roundtable meeting (sponsored by Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust) was held October 29th. John attended and noted that the major topic was the need for public education concerning the need for and effects of land conservation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Sincerely,

John D. Trachy
Chairman