

Fitzwilliam Conservation Commission

16 Nov 2015– Minutes

Present:

Members: Barbara Green, Paul Kotila, chair, Rick Brackett

Absent: Dorothy Zug, Hiel Lindquist, Cheryl Norskey

Guests: None

Review Minutes of 19 Oct. 2015:

Approved as presented. ALL IN FAVOR

Agenda Review:

No additions.

Discussion of Metzger TF Stewardship Plan:

Kotila asked that we disregard previous email about this, as it was based on an earlier version. He has modified the latest version, going mostly by suggestions from Lindquist. The main idea is to make our priorities clear under “landowner goals and objectives”. Members discussed various wording changes to reflect this. Kotila will resend the document to the ConsCom members with language edits. When we return it to Bay State Forestry, we will request that they review the subsequent suggestions. They are aware that we were not happy with the plan as previously submitted. They reiterate our goals but don’t address them. How can they help us execute our goals?

Also, Brackett will check on the official documentation regarding the boundary issue for the part of the KMTF not under easement.

Prime Wetlands Project Status:

Rick Van De Poll’s next presentation will be at 6 p.m. on Dec. 21st. He will share preliminary rankings of selected areas. Before that we should have updates on the Gasseau property and proposed pipeline. Members felt that the selectmen’s plan to promote the event via the newsletter, bulletin boards, and website should be adequate.

Gas Pipeline Update:

Members discussed the FPU panel discussion, which Kotila and Sable attended on Nov. 12th. The panelists chosen seemed well informed about the issues.

The official filing date for the NED project is Nov. 20th. Then it goes to environmental review.

Members discussed the response from Gov. Hassan to the regional association of Cons Com’s NED opposition letter, which our Commission signed. The governor’s letter is already posted on FERC’s website, along with a letter from the state Director of Charitable Trusts Unit, which requests that Kinder Morgan “conduct sufficient research and submit maps showing all parcels along the proposed route that are subject to any

restriction for charitable purposes.” That issue is already being addressed through our attorney, Kotila said.

He also received a letter from Selectman Silverman regarding a conversation with Richmond regarding wetlands mitigation. KM said they intend to work mitigation out in the planning process, but if this fails, they would pay into the Aquatic Resource Mitigation fund (ARM). It is not guaranteed that the funds would stay within the town. Towns are grouped according to watersheds, so impacts in our region could extend as far as Lebanon, for instance. We could be competing for grants with larger towns to the north.

Open Space Committee – Updates:

Kotila reported that the OSC is reaching the end of contacting landowners in priority areas and are in the process of working on the east end of town. They have apprised owners of the OS Plan and asked if they are interested in pursuing conservation or easements. Zug will meet with the new owners of the Fisher property and will follow up.

Monadnock Advisory Committee – Update:

Lindquist has sent Kotila a summary of the last meeting, which was routine, but the proposed pipeline came up relative to Rhododendron State Park. Members discussed the possible pipeline route. Since it can’t be collocated with the powerline, the park could be impacted. There has not been much information from the State regarding their involvement in this.

Site Walk Reports:

None.

Budget Reports:

Payroll: YTD -- \$855.45

Expenses YTD -- \$664.94

Green was unable to attend the CIP Committee meeting on 11/12/15. We need to know whether the select board and budget committee are recommending our request. The Budget Committee hearing is Dec 10th at 7:15 p.m.

Planning Board:

Minutes are posted online.

A cell tower proposal for Webb Hill Rd. has been under consideration, according to Green.

Other Business:

Kotila and Lindquist went to the NHACC meeting in Concord on Nov. 7th. It was very well attended. It is a non-profit organization serving member Conservation Commissions.

Kotila attended sessions on fish and invasive plants. There are some pretty significant updates on the Wildlife Action Plan that we should look at to update our information. The community assistance program is still in effect. Down the road we should look into that. We can be monitoring and updating our info as it becomes available. We could combine this with the Prime Wetlands study to update our NRI, possibly next year. It could be done as an addendum or as a more extensive project, depending on how much change is needed. We should look into joining more organizations that can benefit us.

Brackett has been asked whether the Conservancy might choose Fitzwilliam to do a vernal pool study. This could probably not happen till after 2016, but he will look into it, he said.

Correspondence:

TD Bank announcement of new location of account; memo from Debbie – 1% cost of living salary increase; letter from Suzanne Gray re Gov. Hassan’s response to pipeline opposition.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Next meeting: Dec. 21st.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Sable, Secretary