

TOWN OF FITZWILLIAM

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, August 16, 2021
7:00 PM

Members Present: Paul Kotila, Chairman; Hiel Lindquist; Kevin Woolley; Susan Silverman; Beth Vanney; Terri Robbitts; and Robyn Bates, Selectmen's Representative

Members Absent:

Guests Present: Bonnie Wicklund; Kim Barbieri; Richard Marshall; and Rik Ekstrom.

Chairman Paul Kotila called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

APPOINTMENTS:

Master Plan: Rik Ekstrom and Richard Marshall, chair and member of the Master Plan Steering Committee respectively, introduced themselves and the Master Plan to the Commission. The Steering Committee is looking for the Master Plan to be celebratory and to get the community behind it. They are looking to hold a launch event, conduct surveys, update the community through the newsletter, hold a community forum, and finally have a drafted Master Plan in the spring of 2022. Mr. Kotila stated the Commission is at the beginning stages of revising the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI). He requested that the Commission be kept informed as the NRI is integrated into the Master Plan. Kim Barbieri, resident, stated she did Master Planning for a living. She felt that food brings people. She suggested holding a forum using a speed dating set-up and utilize different boards for their areas of expertise. Susan Silverman would like the Master Plan and the NRI to refer to each other as they work hand in hand. She suggested Master Plan officials be present at community events where people are already gathering.

Kim Barbieri: Ms. Barbieri explained that she lives across the street from Massin Insurance at 35 Route 119 West. There are two culverts that go under Route 119, through her yard, and into a brook in the back of her lot. The stream leads to the Children's Fishing Pond behind Town Hall. The two channels in the side yards (away from the road and any right-of-way), have 8 foot long 2x2 granite slabs across the channel in places. Other areas of the channels are open. One of the channels, the water remains in the channel with no flooding. However, the other channel floods and has eroded a portion of her foundation. She asked the Commission if cleaning up the channel that floods is acceptable. Her plan is to take off the overburden to see if that helps with water flow. If that does not work, then remove some stones. If that doesn't work, then remove some of the granite slabs. She stated that the road run-off is not natural, but the stream is. She is a landscape architect by trade, while her husband is in construction. Ms. Silverman stated this is outside of the Commission's purview as it is on private land, but would be interested to see the before/after sketches. Mr. Kotila felt the channel might just need maintenance.

Ms. Vanney asked Ms. Barbieri if she could clip purple loosestrife on/near her property. Ms. Barbieri was agreeable to that, but stated there are no purple loosestrife on her property.

Bonnie Wicklund: Ms. Vanney introduced Ms. Wicklund and stated the pond behind Ms. Wicklund's property has beavers and otters. The pond is experiencing issues with beavers building dams and also with purple loosestrife stopping water flow. Ms. Silverman discussed a solution she found in handling a nuisance beaver on her husband's studio property. The "Beaver Deceiver" device was very successful with no harm to the water or beavers. Ms. Wicklund stated the current beaver dam is across the entire pond. Mr. Kotila stated the Commission had no jurisdiction because it is private land, but he felt some sort of water level

regulator was needed. He described it as an elbow like pipe with a metal cover that will prevent the beavers from plugging it.

REVIEW OF DRAFT MINUTES: July 19, 2021.

Hiel Lindquist motioned to approve the minutes of July 19, 2021 as written. Susan Silverman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Yes: 6 [Kotila; Lindquist; Woolley; Silverman; Vanney; Robbitts]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

OLD BUSINESS

Natural Resource Inventory: The Commission discussed the proposal received from Dr. Rick Van de Poll. Overall, the Commission felt the proposal was costly. Ms. Vanney had concerns that the proposal was only a snapshot inventory and did not contain any changes over time. She also would like a section on contamination sites. Mr. Kotila had concerns about the design part that is to be accessible and user friendly - what would the technical and support requirements be to update and monitor. He was unsure how the interactive maps would work, how to make changes, etc. Ms. Silverman suggested meeting with Dr. Van de Poll to discuss these items. She stated Center Harbor has the NRI maps integrated directly into their tax maps; however the BoS would need to approve any integration into the tax system and there may be costs involved with that. She further suggested that the Commission could take on certain sections of the NRI if the cost is too high for one year. Mr. Kotila asked how the Commission establishes priorities when presented with a list of goals. Ms. Bates did not want to discredit progress that has already made, like water resource protection with the addition of the prime wetlands ordinance. Mr. Lindquist suggested thinking about areas that the Commission could do themselves to reduce cost. Mr. Kotila will follow-up with Dr. Van de Poll and request he join next month's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Site Walks: The LUC discussed site walk protocol stating the purpose is to gather facts. Ms. Silverman added that it is to understand the location of things on the property, but discussion and/or deliberations need to be done at a meeting.

The LUC asked the Commission if applicants should be scheduled for a consultation before or after site walks. The Commission preferred to meet with the applicant before visiting properties.

UPDATES TO ON-GOING BUSINESS:

Budget:

Lindquist motioned to approve the invoice of \$360.00 to Lew Shelley for work within the Katie Metzger Town Forest. Ms. Vanney seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Yes: 6 [Kotila; Lindquist; Woolley; Silverman; Vanney; Robbitts]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

The Commission agreed to conduct another work day within the Katie Metzger Town Forest on Monday, September 20 at 9:00am. Mr. Shelley is not needed and the Commission will do work on their own.

Schupack Easement: Mr. Kotila shared that Matt Buonomano sent an email requesting a Purchase and Sale agreement. This is before the language permitting cabins has been removed from the deed.

Grant Available: The LUC relayed there are grants available through Cheshire County Conservation to assist private landowners with rain gardens, wildlife corridors, and pollinator habitats.

Chinook Solar Project: Ms. Bates shared that the BoS has not heard from NextEra in six months. There is no update to provide.

Rail Trail: Mr. Woolley stated there was a Rail Trail meeting with NHDOT. There is an economic impact grant available to improve the trail. Mr. Woolley had concerns about funding for maintenance.

Meadowood: Mr. Woolley will forward to the Commission a report on Meadowood. The contaminants are migrating north and the levels of DOC and PFA are dissipating. He thought that there is still interest from the SnoMoles to take over the property.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Nolan
Land Use Coordinator

Minutes approved as corrected on September 20, 2021.