

February 12, 2014

Members Present: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Betsy Corrigan, Alt, Dirk Sabin, Alt., Ann Quackenbos, Alt

Absent: Phil Markert, Diane Dupuis, Randy Bernard

Staff Present: Shelley White

Others: Mr. Talbot, Mr. Solley

Ms. Payne, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Seated: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Dirk Sabin, Alt, Betsy Corrigan, Alt, Ann Quackenbos, Alt.

Consideration of the Minutes

The Commission considered the regular meeting minutes of the Conservation Commission for January 8, 2014.

Motion:

to accept the January 8, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as submitted,

by Ms. Frank, seconded by Ms. Corrigan, passed by 5-0 vote.

Referrals/New Projects

One Green Hill Circle:

Ms. Payne welcomed Mr. Talbot and invited him to update the Conservation Commission on the progress of One Green Hill Circle. She noted that the CC recommends that they consider native plantings on the site.

Mr. Talbot stated that the developers of One Green Hill Circle are considering indigenous plant material. They are researching septic systems that would accommodate intermittent use for large gatherings. He stated that they are planning on reaching out to different organizations and individuals to determine the various uses that this property could provide.

Mr. Talbot discussed how the OGHC project ties into the Bryan Memorial Plaza Improvements project (funded by a grant provided by the Department of Transportation). He stated that he and Mr. Solley (also present) were members of this improvement committee. He feels that the CC should weigh in on this project as well.

The commissioners and Mr. Talbot looked at a diagram of Washington Depot. This diagram indicated the areas that are covered by the DOT Grant, the Urban Forestry Grant, One Green Hill Circle and the Washington Art Association.

Mr. Talbot reviewed what the DOT Grant could be used for.

There was a discussion regarding the Request for Qualifications that has been sent out for this project and the State's review process. Mr. Talbot believes that the bids are due back by the end of

this month.

Mr. Talbot explained how certain factors including a reconfiguration of the parking in the Depot could help with drainage and preservation of the water quality of the surrounding waterways.

Mr. Talbot stated that the owners of One Green Hill are trying to figure out how to create a space which "stitches the Town together and at the same time invigorates the potential of new businesses or some kind of activity and will help the parking issues" the Depot has.

Mr. Talbot discussed some of the landscaping concepts that have been discussed for One Green Hill and the feedback that they have received regarding potential uses for the property.

There was a brief discussion regarding permeable surfaces.

There was a discussion about tying in the "green spaces" of the Town and how the Conservation Commission could influence this.

Mr. Sabin believes that in order to maximize the future potential of Washington Depot the Town needs to have a comprehensive septic and drainage analysis done.

There was a brief discussion about the pros and cons of Tourism.

Mr. Talbot stated that these committees are making an effort to work together with their projects.

The commissioners and Mr. Talbot talked about how the Conservation Commission could and should take an active role in shaping the green spaces in the Depot. They discussed the removal and replacement of trees in the area.

6:15 pm - Mr. Talbot leaves.

Stewardship

Ms. Payne stated that Mr. Solley is on the Buildings and Property Commission for the Town. Mr. Solley noted that he and Mr. Bedini are Vice Chairs and have been working together on the repairs of Bryan Memorial Town Hall and the Town Garage.

Mr. Solley stated that the Town is almost done with the ground level floor repairs that were needed after the propane explosion at Bryan Memorial Town Hall and an architect has been hired to design the conference room that will be where the old stage was.

He noted that the BPC has rights to the Annual Repairs Budget, and was able to find some money last fall to mow the New Preston Open Space. He explained how they have used this budget in the past for maintenance projects such as carpeting in the Town Hall. He stated that money has been put aside in this budget to do a little more work at the New Preston Open Space weather permitting.

Ms. Payne stated that the Conservation Commission would like to set up a budget for the maintenance of New Preston Open Space and the New Preston Falls and asked Mr. Solley how the CC could work with the budget of the BPC in conjunction with the funds that exist in the Conservation Commission budget. Ms. Payne stated that Town Counsel has advised that the Open Space funds could be used for stewardship expenses of properties owned by the Town to

preserve the natural resources on these properties. She suggested that the CC could use a percentage of these funds annually for stewardship.

Mr. Solley stated that the Board of Selectmen would have to come to the Town for additional money to complete the restoration of the Town Garage and he feels that it would be unlikely that additional funds would be available to the maintenance of the Open Space this year. He suggested that if the Conservation Commission could use the money under the line item of Village Land Enhancement in the CC budget to maintain and preserve open space properties. He stated that he would help work with CC on a budget that includes a line item for the maintenance of the open space properties purchased by the Town.

Other Business

Zoning Regulations:

The commissioners discussed of Mr. Sabin's draft of Viewshed Thinning and Ridgeline Protection to be considered for revisions to the Zoning Regulations. Ms. White will send a copy to Mr. Solley via email for his review.

Cell Tower Update:

Ms. Payne stated there is a possible cell tower site being considered in New Milford just over New Preston Hill.

Town Plan of Conservation and Development:

Ms. Payne asked that the commissioners review the draft of chapters 5 & 6 of the POCD and be ready to have a discussion at the next regularly scheduled Conservation Commission Meeting on March 5, 2014 at 5 pm in the upper level meeting room of Bryan Memorial Town Hall.

Privilege of the Floor

No one from the public was present.

Adjournment

Motion:

to adjourn at 6:45 by Ms. Payne

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting.

Submitted subject to approval,
Shelley White Land Use Clerk