

August 20, 2003

Present: Susan Payne, Kelly Boling, Joseph Gitterman, and Phillip Markert

Members are asked to call Susan Payne at home (868-9348) if they are unable to attend a meeting.

Susan Payne, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

MOTION: Approval of the minutes from the August 6, 2003 meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission. Kelly Boling made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 6th meeting. Phillip Markert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Regular member Joe Gitterman arrived at 5:05PM.

Referrals from other Commissions

Susan Payne had no update on the Sunset Lane property that the Erbs would like to subdivide. The Planning Commission had a site walk at the property a couple of weeks ago. According to the Planning Commission minutes for their August meeting, Planning intends to refer the Erbs proposal to Conservation - but nothing more on that at this time.

West Church Hill Road Conservation Easement

The 121 West Church Hill Road conservation easement was discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Payne said the Board of Selectmen has written a letter to CL&P requesting they move the pole that is in the middle of the space that was left for driveway access. Ms. Payne has a copy of the conservation easement if anyone on the Commission would like to read it.

Discussion followed regarding markings for easements and how to make them more permanent. Mr. Gitterman and Mr. Markert agreed that metal stakes would make the best markers (metal can be detected with a magnet if necessary). Ms. Payne thought that was a good idea and will talk with Elaine Luckey to see if the Town will put in the stakes. Then the Commission would ask the property owner to provide a baseline documentation and a survey.

Road Discontinuation & Greenway Potential

Kelly Boling reported he is waiting for Planning to comment on the list of roads which have been proposed to them. The ones with significant Greenway potential are; Tinker Hill Road, West Mountain Road and Potash Hill Road. Referring to an earlier comment about giving up the rights of way entirely, Mr. Boling said the Road Committee thinks the right of way should be retained for potential use as passive recreation, even though it is never used, because what may not be suitable for greenway at this time, might be in 20, 50 or 100yrs. The members discussed whether this should be included in the Plan of Conservation and Development or possibly a Town Ordinance. Ms. Payne suggested Planning could include this in their regulations since they have enforcement, whereas Conservation is advisory.

Fritz Byerly and Dimitri Rimsky (Planning) are a committee of two to review Kelly's report on discontinued roads. The Commission agreed they should put together an inventory of all the old roads the Town wants to abandon. Susan Payne said Elaine Luckey has already done a lot of work on that for the Natural Resources Inventory Report.

Monitoring of Town Properties

Linda Frank met with Joan McSweeney at the Middle School, who is responsible for the Environmental Club, and she is very interested in the monitoring of town properties by the school students. She will speak to the principal and get back to Linda in the fall. Part of this would involve the students going into Town Hall, looking up maps, figuring out where things are, etc.

Susan Payne suggested in the fall, the Commission should check out the easements they have.

Subcommittees

Canoe Brook - Linda Frank was in contact with Randy Bernard. Linda thought perhaps the Washington Environmental Council might be interested in developing a plan and researching the options, and said Randy Bernard was amenable to that. Susan Payne said she is very concerned, is not sure what the Town's responsibility is but doesn't think it should be ignored.

Cell Tower Update - Phillip Markert tested with his own cell phone and Rabbit Hill Road has coverage. Everywhere they are proposing a tower already has coverage. Most of the coverage in Washington comes from the dump in Roxbury or New Milford. He will call Diane Dupuis and advise.

Data Management - No new information.

Flora & Fauna - The giant hogweed plant on Valley Road in Warren has been removed with permission of the property owner.

Greenway - No update other than talking with Mike Ajello about doing some trimming and clearing at the falls area. Mike said no permit needed for maintenance. Should organize a work day in the fall and ask Roger if his crew can clean up clippings.

Land Use Info/Welcome pamphlet - Did not meet in August.

Scenic Road Ordinance - Joe Gitterman received some comments from Elaine but needs to talk with her again. Planimetrics thinks the Commission should be looking into State Routes; they recommend 47,109 and 45. Phillip Markert said he thought every road in town should be a scenic road.

Water Resources - No new information.

TPOCD

Kelly Boling has copy of the POCD if anyone wants to read it. There are no substantive changes. It will go to Public Hearing on October 24th.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45PM.

Next scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission is September 3, 2003 at 5:00PM.

Submitted subject to approval,

Martha T. Shade, Secretary