

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NEWINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION HELD ON 9 AUGUST 2001

Present were: Commission members Jack O'Reilly, Jim Leger, Dorothy Watson, Margaret Lamson, Barbara McDonald, Kay Akerley and Jane Hislop, and Town Planner Tom Morgan. Absent were Commission members Nancy Cauvet and George Fletcher. (Present as an audience of one throughout the meeting was Michael Goot of Foster's Daily Democrat)

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Jack O'Reilly made a motion that the minutes of the 12 July 2001 meeting be accepted. Seconded by Dorothy Watson. Motion carried.

Chairman Lamson stated that the information Mark West, wetland scientist, had agreed to have available for this meeting (even though he could not himself be present) would not be available because it was not yet complete. Mark will be present with the info at the Commission's September meeting. The Chairman asked Tom Morgan if he would give a little of the background on the work Mark West will be doing for the town for the benefit of those who were not at the last meeting. Tom stressed, as before, the need for the town to identify what wetlands we have, decide which are important, which are not, which are beyond salvaging, etc. Dorothy Watson asked for an example of the latter - the answer was Pickering Brook.

The Chairman said Atty. Charles Tucker had met with the Planning Board and asked Tom Morgan to comment on the meeting. Tom said Atty. Tucker had been rather pessimistic about the future as regards property rights vs. protection of wetlands. There is no question such conflicts will arise, and that is why we should have readily available information on what wetlands we have, and what priority should be given each.

Chairman Lamson asked Jack O'Reilly if he had consulted the other selectmen in regard to monies available to pay for Mark West's services. Jack said he had; there was no problem.

There was discussion about the piece in the Newington Neighbor which listed several land owners and identified their properties as being of high

priority to preserve. Tom Morgan said the Planning Board had come up with the list. Barbara McDonald said she thought the Plannin Board should have conferred with the Conservation Commission. She asked what the criteria for selection had been. Tom explained that these were those with scenic qualities and those perceived to be threatened with development. He said the Planning Board has a proposal to establish a committee consisting of six people to meet with and discuss with property owners the possible advantages they could realize by easements or other conservation measures to help preserve their land. Chairman Lamson suggested, and Tom Morgan agreed, that the Conservation Commission is quite at liberty to submit additional names for the priority list, or to suggest changes to the list as currently established.

Jack O'Reilly passed out copies of a Union Leader Sunday News article with the headline "New law allows towns to buy property without a townwide vote."

The Board of Selectmen's memo of 11 April 2001 was discussed, specifically the request that the Conservation Commission approve the concept of the Trickey Cove wetlands mitigation proposal as outlined in the attachment to the memo. Jane Hislop made a motion that the Commission approve the concept as outlined. Seconded by Dorothy Watson. Motion carried.

Because Chairman Lamson is a member of the PDA, she stepped aside as Vice Chairman Kay Akerley addressed recent correspondence between the town and the PDA concerning return of the Town Forest to the town. As to the PDA'S suggestion that a management agreement involving the town and the PDA might be possible, Jack O'Reilly said he had informed the PDA that the town is interested in nothing less than outright ownership -- tho maybe a long term lease could be considered. Jack said he was going to try to set up a meeting between the town and the PDA very soon to discuss the matter.

Chairman Lamson asked for a motion to send the names of two Commission members to the Planning Board with the recommendation that they serve on the proposed six-member committee to meet with landowners. Jim Leger made a motion that the names of Barbara McDonald and Dorothy Watson be submitted. Seconded by Kay Akerley. Motion carried.

Chairman Lamson said Gerry Gagne of Meridian Land Services had contacted her with regard to the Conservation Commission making recommendations concerning plantings at the cul-de-sac on River Road and on the berm. It was agreed that lillies, of color and type to permit staggered blooming, would be desirable for the island and that salt-resistant trees (but no white pine) be considered for the berm. Chairman Lamson will contact Mr. Gagne.

Barbara McDonald asked if there were any plans in town for re-cycling. The answer was no. Barbara said she felt strongly that the Conservation Commission should be doing something in this regard.

Members were reminded that the next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, 13 September.

Jim Leger made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jane Hislop. Motion carried; meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Kay Akerley
Secretary