

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NEWINGTON CONSERVATION  
COMMISSION HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2002

Present were Commission members Dorothy Watson, George Fletcher, Kay Akerley, Margaret Lamson, Barbara McDonald, and Selectmen's rep Jack O'Reilly (Jane Hislop arrived later in the meeting.) Absent was Nancy Cauvet.

Chairman Lamson called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

George Fletcher moved that the minutes of the meeting of 5 December 2002 be approved; seconded by Dorothy Watson. Motion carried.

Chairman Lamson explained that she had sent out a revised agenda because she had received a call from Scott Webber of 114 Patterson Lane asking that the Commission review plans to correct his failed septic system as soon as possible. Alan Marshall of Ambit Engineering, Inc. was present to explain plans for the replacement of the septic system and to answer any questions the Commission might have. After reviewing the application and asking Mr. Marshall pertinent questions, Commission members agreed that the proposed replacement was acceptable. Kay Akerley made a motion that the Ambit Engineering plan for replacement of the septic system and deck replacement at the Webber property at 114 Patterson Lane be approved and that the Chairman sign the Minimum Impact Expedited Application. Seconded by Jack O'Reilly. Motion carried.

The subject of a proposed easement on the Frink property was addressed. Present to join in the discussion were Helen and John Frink (owners of the property along with their mother Lydia, and sister Sally), and Tracy Degnan, Conservation Specialist with Rockingham County Conservation District.

Helen explained that the Frink family wished to insure that their farmland stays intact. Their goal is to realize enough money from the granting of an easement to permit restoration of the barn, purchase of a new tractor, and such other investments as will permit the viable operation of a farm. She explained that they had applied for a grant under the NH LCHIP, but their request had been denied. She said they were now looking at the possibility of receiving a grant under the USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection

Program (FRPP). Tracy Degnan explained that the program helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. The program provides matching funds to State, Tribal, local governments, and non-governmental organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements. This means that the applicant for a FRPP must be one of these entities. She said the Town of Newington would be the strongest applicant for the Frink property. The main component of the application involves the payment of 50% of the appraised fair market value of the easement and the entity must share the cost of the easement. Landowners have the ability to donate up to 25% of the appraised market value of the easement.

Helen said the total acreage proposed for the easement is 43.33 acres. They would keep out 5 acres around the house. She had a letter of estimate from a real estate appraiser setting the value of the land at between 1.2 and 1.5 million dollars.

Barbara McDonald asked if the Frinks were thinking about a permitted donation of 25%. John said it was not out of the realm of possibility. Helen said they did not want to commit to such a possibility at this time, but they would commit to a good faith effort to look for and apply for other funds which might be available.

There was discussion concerning submission of the application. It was agreed that it would be desirable to have the RCCD prepare the application. The cost would be approximately \$1500. Jack O'Reilly said this amount could be included in the Selectmen's budget. Barbara McDonald said she thought it desirable that the Frinks submit a letter to the Commission, outlining what exactly they would like the Commission to do and what they as the owners would be willing to do. Helen Frink agreed to do so.

George Fletcher made a motion that the Commission go forward and apply for a grant under the FRPP, and that the sum of \$1500 be obligated for the purpose of preparation of the application by RCCD; all with the understanding that the Frink family make a commitment in writing to the Commission, copy to Board of Selectmen, that they will make every effort to secure 25% of the funding. Seconded by Barbara McDonald. Motion carried with none opposed.

It was agreed that firm appraisal information would be needed by January 9th. The Frinks agreed to meet this deadline. Tracy Degan agreed to send along a sample warrant article and a proposed contract for RCCD services.

Barbara made a motion to adjourn; seconded by George Fletcher. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Kay Akerley,

Vice Chair/Secretary