

Town of Newington, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of February 9, 2012

- Call to Order:** Co-Chairs, Justin Richardson and Jane Hislop called the February 9, 2012 meeting to order at 6:35 PM.
- Present:** Justin Richardson, Co-Chair; Jane Hislop, Co-Chair; Nancy Cauvet; George Fletcher; Nell Ann Hiatt
- Absent:** Margaret Lamson, Dorene Stern, and Thomas Morgan, Town Planner
- Public Guests:** Jim Weiner

1) Proposal for Purchase of Saba Property with NHDOT for Wetlands Mitigation and Conservation Easement

Co-Chair, Justin Richardson said he and Town Planner, Tom Morgan offered the Sabas \$100,000 upon counsel of Attorney F.X. Bruton and Selectman, Rick Stern toward the purchase of their property. The final offer was also accepted by NHDOT.

Commissioner, Nancy Cauvet moved to post a public hearing to be held at 6:30 p.m. on March 9, 2012 for the purchase of the Saba property with \$100,000 for conservation easement as proposed. Nell Ann Hiatt seconded the motion and all were in favor. Abutters Jane Hislop and Justin Richardson abstained.

2) Fox Point Pavilion

Discussion ensued regarding the Petition for Warrant Article for the 2012 Town Meeting regarding the construction of a pavilion at Fox Point. Co-Chair, Justin Richardson said he wrote the petition out of consideration for the Commission's intent to preserve natural resources in Town. Justin Richardson also said that the petition's wording, "...the Town shall not expend funds...as provided by RSA 32:10,1(e)" in the negative was to represent the "No Means No" law to prevent building if funds had not been approved.

Nell Ann Hiatt said another concern is not just the cost of the construction, but also the maintenance over time. Jim Weiner of Fox Point Road said his investigations on the history of the proposal for a pavilion versus completing the Carriage House was based on the impression that the Carriage House couldn't be renovated in phases and sections, but had to be done all at once which would be too costly.

Commissioner, Nancy Cauvet said she hopes the large volume of information to be considered will be compiled and available to voters prior to the Town Meeting to minimize rehashing lengthy discussions.

Commissioner, Nell Ann Hiatt asked what happened to conservation plans for the area, and Co-Chair, Jane Hislop said a conservation easement was discussed but never completed.

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3) Other Business

A) Conservation Fund

Co-Chair, Justin Richardson said it will be necessary to consult with the Local Government Center (LGC) regarding the reimbursement of a tax abatement for current use land change taxes out of the Conservation Fund considering the law states that the Fund is only to be used for conservation, and the Conservation Commission has no authority to return current use change taxes.

Additional accounting concerns were raised regarding conservation funds that were put into a certificate of deposit (CD) bank account, with no previous precedent. Commissioner, and former Town Treasurer, George Fletcher said he will call the bank regarding bank protocol on CD's.

B) Commission Alternate Appointments

Co-Chair, Justin Richardson asked Jim Weiner if he would consider being an alternate to the Commission and he said he would. Nancy Cauvet said Mr. Weiner would need to write the Board of Selectmen a letter of interest and then be sworn in by the Town Clerk.

It was noted that Marge Hislop sent in a letter of interest, but still needs to be sworn in.

George Fletcher said he has been on the Commission for many years and would like to step down as a regular, and become an alternate also. Justin Richardson said the Commission would need a replacement, and invited recommendations.

Invoices: Nancy Cauvet moved to pay Attorney F.X.Bruton for legal counsel on the Hislop and Saba conservation easements. Nell Ann Hiatt seconded, and all were in favor.

Minutes: Nancy Cauvet moved to accept the Minutes of January 12, 2012, contingent upon clarification of that a conservation easement was purchased on the Hislop property, not the property itself. Jane Hislop seconded and all approved. Justin Richardson abstained.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 9, 2012

Respectfully

Submitted by: Jane K. Kendall, Recording Secretary

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