

Topsfield Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, **September 29, 2010**
Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room

Present: Jennie Merrill; Holger Luther; George Hall, Chairman; Mark Erickson; Jim MacDougall; Jud Pratt; Lana Spillman, Administrator; Lisa Nihan-Demeule, Minutes Secretary.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Hall at 7:03 p.m.

Marguerite Philpott, Cheryl Jolley, and Dick Gandt (BoS Liaison) also were in attendance. The O'Malleys subsequently arrived.

Mr. Hall discussed a revised agenda for the meeting. Starting with this meeting, items that do not need decisions by the Commission would be reviewed by Commissioners prior to the meeting as part of a written Administrator's Report. Only those items needing a vote and that raise questions or need clarification would be discussed at the meeting.

CoC: 307-0519:61 East Street, (Map 8, Lot 16) ECTA/Lloyd

Mr. Luther questioned the need for a CoC for work that was never done. Brief discussion ensued, and Mr. Luther made a motion to issue CoC for no work being done. Mr. Erickson seconded. A vote was taken. Unanimous vote in favor.

19, 19R Pheasant Lane, (Map 6, Lot 23 and Map 11, Lot 2), O'Malley

Brigitte and Timothy O'Malley were present.

Parts of the O'Malley's buildings have encroached on Town land according to a LeBlanc Survey letter dated Sept 15, 2010. Mr. Luther suggested the possibility of changing the lot lines. A mutually agreeable outcome/solution would be best. LeBlanc Survey suggested a land swap of 7000 square feet for the 5,700 square feet that has been encroached upon. Mr. Hall shared a past experience with a land swap stating that it is a lengthy process with associated costs. Ms. O'Malley would like a TCC member to visit the property to see which part of the parcel would have the most conservation value. Mr. MacDougall agreed to visit on Saturday, October 9, 2010. Ms. Spillman will accompany him, and Mr. Luther volunteered as well.

Prospective Conservation Commissioners

TCC applicant Marguerite (Meg) Philpott introduced herself. She expressed an interest in outreach and described her previous involvement in the Fish Brook project.

Cheryl Jolley also attended the meeting and spoke of her interest in possibly serving on TCC. She has a degree in biology and taught at Masconomet for over thirty years. She expressed interest in bringing students in to the TCC fold to teach them about environmental issues. Mr. Hall stressed the importance of forging strong relationships with other town groups, land conservation groups, open space committees, etc.

The TCC Strategic Plan Outline was discussed. Long-term goals were discussed.

Mr. MacDougall suggested language to protect the wetlands so they don't diminish. Ms. Spillman suggested identifying specific areas to be protected. Mr. Hall would like to identify zones of town where the most important ecological habitats are, inventory the areas, and protect and minimize the threats to our most valuable ecological assets. Mr. Hall showed a soils map and unique features map.

Mr. MacDougall suggested starting with conservation land and immediately addressing invasive species. He supports Greenscapes because of the dividends that are realized. Mr. MacDougall would like citizens to understand their environmental inputs and minimize urbanization physically, biologically, and chemically above and below the waterline. He suggests starting the education process at TCC proposing a 30-minute demo. TCC needs to delegate and educate. Meetings would have to be streamlined for this. Mr. Hall wants to define Ms. Spillman's job and TCC's job. Mr. Hall will try to rewrite a strategic plan, and Ms. Spillman and Mr. Hall will work on structuring meetings and agenda to achieve goals.

Violation Notice #10-02, 24 (a.k.a. 20) Asbury Street/Lamson House, (Map 21, Lot 10), Finn

Ms. Spillman described unauthorized clearing of Riverfront Area and showed photos submitted earlier in the day by Mark Finn. She will work with Mr. Finn.

Enforcement Order, 270 Boston Street, (Map 41, Lot 87), Albright

Ms. Spillman will make a site visit.

Enforcement Orders, Cross Street, (Map 62, Lot 2), Nash

No new information to be shared.

OoC 307-0663: Rail Trail Summer Street to Route 1

Stakes have been placed. Ms. Spillman instructed seeding and stabilizing of the drainage ditches.

OoC 307-0646: 207 Boston Street/Topsfield Fairgrounds, (May 57 & 49, Lots 4 & 2 respectively)

Ms. Spillman made a site visit. She saw grooves in the soil that were made parallel to the river. She noticed one area where boulders and stone were placed outside the gabion areas. She will advise the removal of silt fence. Mr. Hall suggested a site visit by the end of October.

279 High Street, (Map 71, Lot 26)

Two-thirds of the manure pile is still there.

Water Quality Monitoring, School Brook

Mr. Luther indicated that the water quality monitoring has not been done because of lack of water.

2nd AmOoC 2006-01: 72 Hill Street, Malinowski

October 8 is the deadline for removal of material from the trench. Ms. Spillman will send a reminder letter of impending deadline.

120 High Street/Hickory Beech Development

Outstanding OoCs (307-0507). The TCCAP applies to previously and lawfully developed Buffer Zones.

Conservation Properties under Conservation Commission Management

It's important to start monitoring. In some cases there has been encroachment. Four properties to start with were identified: Conservation Land at 12 Boston Street (English Commons) - top priority, Conservation Land at Pye Brook Community Park, Essex County Greenbelt Property at Morningside River Estates, and Conservation Land from Morningside Drive to Wenham Road.

Mr. Hall suggested taking the Masco volunteers to sites to document features and conditions and informing them how to notify property owners of an impending site visit. Ms. Spillman will work to come up with a plan for volunteer work.

TCCAP Process

The new Administrator Permit process for minor Buffer Zone projects is going well. Homeowners can get permission soon, Resource Areas are protected, and the burden of the application process is avoided. Ms. Spillman will review the history of the property, and she can discuss with the applicant how to do the project.

Jud Pratt made a motion to adjourn. Holger Luther seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Nihan-Demeule, Minutes Secretary

Accepted at the TCC meeting on November 17, 2010

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Commission constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Commission as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.