

**CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
Regular Meeting
July 10, 2013
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall
41 Green Street, Concord, NH**

Attendance:

Members present at the meeting included: Christopher Morgan; Jim Owers; Karen Rose; Kris Tardiff; Becky Hebert, Senior Planner and Gloria McPherson, City Planner.

1. Minutes:

K. Tardiff moved to accept the minutes of the June 12, 2013, meeting with the noted corrections. K. Rose seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

2. Wetlands Bureau:

B. Hebert said that there were no New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) wetlands applications to review this month. She distributed a notice of approval for a Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification permit for a logging operation off of Bog Road.

3. City Council/Planning Board

- a. Whispering Heights – The group discussed the upcoming City Council public hearing for the Whispering Heights land acquisition. The hearing will be on August 12th. The group decided to meet with staff to review the City Council report and presentation at 6:00 PM, before the meeting. J. Owers offered to contact some residents who lived in the neighborhood. B. Hebert said that she would email a copy of the minutes from the Conservation Commission’s public hearing to the group. G. McPherson also suggested that Kurt Meisner attend the meeting.

- b. Conditional Use Permit (CUP) of Unutil Energy Systems, Inc. for impacts to the Shoreland Protection District buffers and wetland buffers associated with the Turkey River for the relocation of a utility easement across the Turkey River – B. Hebert provided an overview of the project. The application will be on the August Planning Board agenda for public hearing. Unutil Energy Systems is proposing to relocate the existing utility line and easement which crosses Clinton Street and roughly follows the Turkey River. The line would be relocated away from the Turkey River to the edge of the agricultural field. The utility poles are difficult to access and maintain because they are so close to the river. B. Hebert explained that the CUP was needed for impacts the Shoreland Protection District associated with the Turkey River. The permanent impacts were very small, because the area of impact is the base of the pole. There would also be some tree clearing within the 75-foot vegetative buffer and two poles would be located in a wetland buffer. The group discussed how the existing poles would be removed. The plans stated that the poles would be cut and removed with a wire. K. Tardiff moved to recommend that the Commission not

object to the plan as proposed. T. Boisvert seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

4. City Open Space:

- a. RMI biosolids permit for Morrill Farm Dairy – The group discussed the request to permit a stockpile and application of biosolids at the Locke Road fields. Morrill Farm Dairy is proposing to use the biosolids for fertilizer and RMI is the distributor who permits the use of the biosolids through the Wastewater Management Division of the NHDES. A discussion ensued regarding the terms of the lease, restrictions on crops that could be grown once the biosolids are applied to the fields, setbacks from adjacent properties, notification to the public, public access to the fields and sources of biosolids. The group decided that more information was needed before making a decision on the application. B. Hebert will invite a representative from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to come to the next meeting to discuss the application and use of biosolids. B. Hebert also said that the fields may be located within the City’s Aquifer Protection District and there may be restrictions on the use of biosolids near proposed community water supply wells.

- b. Other Business – C. Morgan updated the group on the recent meeting regarding the proposed conservation easement on the Gully Hill Road agricultural land. He said that there were a number of things that the committee had asked the Commission to research before the next meeting. G. McPherson said that staff would be able to compile the information. The next meeting is scheduled for July 29, 2013. J. Owers asked if it would be helpful to have a representative from the Forest Society attend the meeting. C. Morgan offered to call the Forest Society to review the list of questions and thought that it might not be necessary to have them also come to the meeting. The group talked about the possibility of proposing an easement on only a portion of the land but questioned whether or not the Forest Society would be willing to accept a smaller easement. The group also discussed the possibility of a term easement and the difficulties of amending easements after they are conveyed.

K. Tardiff moved to enter into a nonpublic session for the discussion of possible land acquisitions in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(d). J. Owers seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Following the discussion, the Commission moved to exit the nonpublic session and seal the minutes. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

5. Easement Stewardship/Monitoring:

- a. Easement Steward Internship - B. Hebert said that the Program Change Request (PCR) for the easement steward internship was not approved by the City Manager, but that there were funds in the property management account to cover the position. The PCR was for the position to be funded through the General Fund, but that during the budget review process it was suggested that this be funded through the Conservation Trust Fund property management account. The internship would be for 10 weeks, 20 hours per week. She said there was a candidate from Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission who was interested in the work and she was meeting with him later this week. K. Rose asked if there would be enough for the intern to do within the 20 hours and suggested having the fee

properties monitored using aerial photographs. T. Boisvert suggested that some of the easements that have already been monitored could be monitored again. B. Hebert suggested that the intern could also prepare current condition reports for the easements that were accepted without baseline documentation. She said that the intern could also GPS and patrol trails and would also be installing the conservation land markers along the boundaries of unmarked easements. The group unanimously agreed to hire the intern using the funds available in the conservation property management account.

- b. Restoration plan for conservation easement violation at 33 Locke Road - The group discussed the revised restoration plan for the property at 33 Locke Road. There was discussion about the size of the plantings and whether or not the owner should plant all sapling size trees or whether or not some of the trees could be seedlings. The plans include 30 deciduous saplings and 20 coniferous seedlings. The group agreed to recommend that all of the trees be saplings. B. Hebert said that Don Jewel the owner of 39 Locke Road stopped by her office to provide an update for the Commission. She said that he is in the process of identifying the boundary of the easement and the edge of the wetlands based on the original survey and will call the City once this has been flagged. The next step would be to meet with him on site to assess how much of the upland area of the conservation easement had been disturbed by the tree clearing. There was discussion about whether or not he would be hiring a qualified professional to prepare the restoration plan and the Commission agreed that he could do some of the work himself but the planting plan would need to be prepared by a qualified professional.

6. Reports:

- a. Trails Committee - B. Hebert said that Five Rivers and the NH Audubon Society would be hosting an organized walk of the West End Farm Trail and asked if the Commission would like to volunteer to help.
- b. Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee – There was nothing new to report.
- c. Contoocook and North Branch Rivers Local Advisory Committee - There was nothing new to report.
- d. Forestry - There was nothing new to report.
- e. Street Trees – The group discussed the City Council referral regarding City street trees. G. McPherson said that Chip Chesley was planning to attend the August meeting to discuss the joint response and that the report to the Council would be on the September Council agenda.

7. Other Business

K. Rose said that Paula Tracey from WMUR is hosting a listening session at the Forest Society at 10:00 AM on Thursday. The focus of the session would be recreation in New Hampshire.

K. Rose said that a colleague has asked her to talk with the Commission about a wildlife concern. She said that there are a large number of painted turtles trying to cross Commercial Street. The turtles cannot cross over the vertical granite curb on the street edge and have been dying. She said her colleague is moving the turtles by hand when she sees them on her daily commute. The group discussed options for making the crossing safer for turtles including installing “Turtle Crossing” signs, Cape Cod berm instead of the vertical granite curb, and notifying the businesses in the Horseshoe Pond area. The

group decided to contact NH Fish and Game to get some additional information about why the turtles are crossing the road; there may be a nesting site along the shoreline of Horseshoe Pond. Fish and Game may have recommendations to help the turtles.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:
Rebecca Hebert, Senior Planner
Secretary pro-tem