

Minutes of the Meredith Conservation Commission Meeting February 4th, 2010

Members present: Don MacFarlane, John Sherman, Peter Miller, Robert LeCount, Paula Wanzer, Mark Billings

Alternate members present: Dan Heyduk, Mark Tuckerman

Heyduk was appointed a voting member for this meeting.

Guest: Phil Warren, Meredith Town Manager

The meeting was called to order by Chairman MacFarlane at 7:00 PM

Minutes of January 21st, 2010

On motion of Billings, seconded by Sherman, the minutes of January 21st, 2010 were approved by unanimous vote.

Dredge and Fill Report

The following applications to the Department of Environmental Services were reviewed since the last report:

Meredith Village Savings Bank
24 Route 25
Tax Map U-5, Lot #117

Recommended Approval
Reconstruct existing parking lot, repave
No change in size or location

Donald Butler
85 Redgate Lane
Tax Map U-9, Lot #9

Recommended Approval
Construct 17' x 12' perch beach install 6' x
30' seasonal dock

Scannell, Ryan & Benoit, Heather
139 Pinnacle Park Road
Tax Map U-21, Lot #24

Recommended Modification
Rather than removing existing 40' seasonal
and constructing new 70' seasonal dock in
new location the Commission recommended
eliminating need for new 70' seasonal dock
by extending existing 40' seasonal dock to
60' to reach water depth of 3'

Eames/Hamlin Ecological Assessment

Presently, town policy requires the soliciting of multiple bids on projects costing more than \$5,000. Town Manager Phil Warren informed the Commission that this threshold would be raised to \$10,000 in a few weeks. That solves the Commission's dilemma regarding how to proceed with consultant Peter Ellis' proposed Eames/Hamlin ecological assessment, which has an estimated cost of \$8,000. On motion of Sherman, seconded by Heyduk, the Commission voted unanimously to contract with Peter Ellis to conduct Option 2 of his proposed plan at said cost of \$8,000, subject to approval by Town Administrative Services.

186 Acre Forest

Heyduk informed the Commission that an individual is interested in donating funds to have a memorial bench installed in the 186 Acre Forest. The bench would be granite, estimated cost \$500 - \$1000. The Commission has no policy regarding memorial benches in town forests at present. The need for such a policy was acknowledged. By consensus, Heyduk was given the green light to proceed with this bench request.

Balloting for naming the forest is in process.

Town Meeting - Page Pond and Forest Warrant Article

Wanzer gave Commission members a sneak preview of the slide show that will run on endless play in the lobby at Town Meeting, which consists of slow motion close ups of some of the beautiful flowers that bloom in the Page Pond wetlands, accompanied by loon sounds. Members gave Wanzer a well deserved round of applause for this truly lovely and creative slide show.

Large maps will be displayed on easels in the lobby.

LeCount inquired as to whether our lobby display would include text of some kind. Handouts with our talking points could be made available. Miller noted that the Town has distributed handouts with all the warrant article talking points to attendees in recent years.

2010 Activity Plan

The Commission reviewed the status of most of the items on the plan. Some highlights:

NRI Phase II – Is now on the Town website, minus links.

Town Forest Easements – How to prepare for forthcoming meeting with SPNHF? Need to bring maps of our most critical forests. Miller, Sherman, and Billings to follow up, with MacFarlane assisting with maps.

Forest Management Plans/Town Forests – Ecological assessments should precede forest management plans. Could have forester Shaun Lagueux inventory the forests in the meantime. It was noted that prior forester Brenda Brown did inventory most or all of the forests some years ago, thus we would be looking to update those. Does Lagueux know about those inventories, and do his cost estimates reflect that? Need to inquire.

Dockham Timber Cut – Will be completed in a week or so.

Town Forest Ordinance – Need to put on future agenda to bring this to closure. The Ordinance committee recommends proceeding with signage, not ordinance, at least initially.

Nature Education/Field Trips – Could contract with Peter Ellis to lead one or more outings.

MCC Annual Report – Has been written, commented on, and revised.

Smyth Easement – Trail has been routed, will be cleared, signed, and blazed in the spring following completion of timber harvest. Bronze plaques, which arrived this week, will be mounted on site, and the roadside sign installed at Hamlin Parking Lot. The Hamlin/Eames trail map will need to be updated, and the materials on display at the kiosk will need to be redone. Miller suggested an informal ceremony be held in the Hamlin parking lot when the new roadside sign is installed and the trail is ready for public use.

Sherman Conservation Easement

Note: John Sherman recused himself from discussion and vote on this item by leaving the room.

Billings, pinch-hitting for Pisapia, noted that all the revisions recommended by counsel Lee Mattson have been incorporated in the revised draft of the easement. On motion of Miller, seconded by LeCount, the Commission voted unanimously to endorse the Sherman Conservation Easement as currently written. This matter now moves on to the Meredith Board of Selectmen for review at workshop and formal acceptance at regular meeting.

Timber Harvests

Page Pond and Forest: The Town received another check from Lagueux for \$794 dated 1/29/2010. This brings the total received to date to \$62,094.35.

Dockham Town Forest: The Town received a check for \$3,689.76 dated 1/29/2010.

Spear Property/Snake River

Billings will draft an easement for all relevant parties to consider. Sherman noted the easement should preclude forestry. Miller noted it should also preclude agriculture and aquaculture.

MCC Workshop February 18th

Topics to include town forest ordinance, volunteer recognition.

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Miller
Secretary