

Hampton Conservation Commission

Minutes of October 28, 2014

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:04 at the Goodwin Forest Education Center.

Members present: R Thompson, E Hyde, D Barton, Bob Johnson, M Kilpatrick, P Newbury. Special Guest: Jim Parda, Director of Goodwin Center.

Motion made and seconded (Penny, Bob) to accept August minutes. Ev asked for clarification on item #3 (placing parcels of interest in categories). He also commented that it was good that the HCC considered other characteristics such as historic or archaeological value. Minutes accepted.

Jim gave a quick presentation –he’s been here for 10 months; worked for DEEP field forestry for 34 years. Explained the funding sources for Goodwin Forest, and the state departments that manage it along with Friends of Goodwin Forest. Reported on what DEEP was going to do with the large cottonwood tree at the center that was cut down—looking for area carvers and sculptors who might want it.

Old Business:

Bittersweet Farm (46 acres on Hammond Hill Rd.): Randy gave overview of meeting that voted in favor of having the HCC use funds to assist with the DoAg purchase of the development rights; the Campion family put a thank you to the Town in the Gazette.

Walktober walk at Blue Flag meadow: Bob reported that it was well attended; about 12 people attended during the 2-day period. Lots of positive feedback. Bob thinks that next year we will be more prepared with signage and advertisement; he did not know that TLGV did not provide signs unless specifically asked. Bob wrote a thank you to TLGV for their assistance, and had put an article in the Gazette advertising all the Hampton walks, which also were well attended.

Edwards property: the kiosk is being built and the signs will be put up by the road crew as soon as they have time. When both are up the HCC will schedule a walk per the request of Joshua’s Trust.

Windy Hill/Kimball Hill properties: the Town is discussing selling the 20-acre Kimball Hill property. Members discussed the need to be involved in this discussion and weigh in on its disposition. The Chair believes the Town should keep this property. The service forester still has not had the time to look at it for harvesting timber. There is also a possibility of connecting the two properties through some type of trail system.

Members decided that the HCC Chair should invite the Selectmen to the next meeting possible to present their suggestions and intentions for the property’s disposition. At that point the HCC can present its own opinion.

Ev also thought it would be useful to discuss selling property to have more money to purchase open space.

Randy suggested a walk on the Windy Hill property soon. Discussion re: how to get the public more involved in walking these properties. Suggestion re: turning Jericho Rd/Sharpe Rd. into a walking trail. It is currently not maintained but is not discontinued.

Significant Tracts: discussed having meeting devoted just to significant tracts. Also discussed eliminating the priority method of listing important properties and assigning separate values and reasons for putting them on the list. We should have parameters developed, and not specific pieces, so that if something comes up, we can assess it appropriately. Randy reminded us that a state ordinance mandated that we keep a list of important properties. So the HCC has to refine its categories and parameters regarding why things are important, and then creating a list of this.

Communications: Thames River Basin meeting last week in Eastford—Chair said he went.

The Chair informed the members that he'd been in contact with Naomi Ayotte who will be submitting her resignation from HCC, as her schedule does not permit her to attend meetings at this time. The Chair will approach other residents who might possibly be interested in filling that seat.

Adjournment: 8:10pm

Next meeting: November 27, 2014, 7pm at the Town Offices.