

Hampden Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
for
April 25, 2005

Present: Ed Steltzer (Chair), Bob Osborne, Michael Robbins, Mark McCollough, Don Katnik, and Wally Jakubas (Secretary)

No minutes were available for the March meeting since we did not have a quorum at that meeting.

Old Business

Compost Bins

Ed reported that the Town Manager, Sue Lessard, already ordered the compost bins and begun advertising their availability. The compost bins were purchased with funds approved by the Town Council and not with Conservation Commission (CC) funds. It was suggested that the CC assist in promoting the compost bins. It was decided that first, we would see how well they sell, and then, if necessary, do a promotion at the transfer station. Mark offered to make a flyer for the promotion.

Conservation Commission Ordinance

The ordinance creating the Hampden Conservation Commission was passed by the Town Council and is now in effect.

ATV Signage

We discussed making signs that prohibit ATV use available to landowners along the pipeline right-of-ways in Hampden. The CC is concerned about the damage being done to wetlands and vegetation along the pipelines. Bob Osborne agreed to develop a list of names and addresses of people whose property abuts the pipeline right-of-way, and Wally agreed to draft a letter to the property owners.

Recycling Discussion

We were not able to discuss recycling options (e.g., curbside recycling) with Greg Nash because he was ill and could not attend the meeting.

2005 Goals

We finalized the CC goals for 2005. These goals include (1) increasing the Towns recycling rate, (2) coordination of the hazardous waste disposal day in October, (3) reducing junk mail being delivered to people in town, (4) informing landowners of Maine's new ATV laws and reducing habitat damage due to illegal ATV use, (5) mapping the trails in Hampden, (6) standardizing the nomination procedure for the Conservation Award and selecting a nominee for 2006 award, (7) evaluating town lands for conservation potential, (8) exploring the concept of developing conservation easements with the Town Council, (9) putting together an information packet for landowners on conserving open-space, including information on federal subsidies for land conservation, (10) investigating the use of water-flow devices (e.g., beaver deceiver, beaver

proof add-ons) to prevent beavers from plugging town culverts, (11) working closely with the open space committee.

Mark McCollough moved that we approve these goals, and Michael Robbins seconded the motion. Goals were approved unanimously.

New Business

2005 Conservation Award

Sue Lessard was not happy with our nominee for the Conservation Award. We discussed formalizing the nomination process and some of Sue's concerns. We felt that it would be beneficial if Sue would attend our next CC meeting to discuss her concerns.

Ichabod Lane Trail Clean-up

Wally and his wife will be hosting a trail clean up / barbecue for the trail connecting Ichabod Lane to the wetland conservation area near the subdivision on April 30. The trail is currently flooding in several places, in part, due to a blocked culvert. We discussed using some of the \$400 in the CC FY05 budget to pay for gravel for the trail and for building a beaver deceiver for the blocked culvert. Wally will coordinate these activities.

Proposed Expansion at the Landfill

We discussed whether or not the CC could do anything about the proposed expansion of the Hampden landfill. We decided that there was not much we could do as a Commission.

Town Planner's Report

We had a lengthy discussion on the proposed open space areas for the Webber Brook Property (Bud William's old farm) being developed by R. H. Foster off of Route 9. The developer is proposing that 3.8 acres of meadow be set aside and 11.43 acres of upland forest. Mark raised the point that it would be far more beneficial to the Town, residents of the subdivision, and wildlife, if a corridor along the Souadabscook River and Webber Brook was set aside as open space, rather than the upland forest. Bob pointed out that at this phase of development process it may be difficult to change the proposed plans, and that the developer might be willing to set aside land along the river in addition to the proposed open space set-asides. Some members of the CC felt that our options were limited at this point in the planning process, and did not want to rebuff the developer's reported intention to protect land along the river. We requested that Bob initiate a formalized process whereby we would see plans for open space set-asides in the initial planning phase of a development from now on. Michael Robbins moved that we accept the open space proposal as originally presented, and Wally Jakubas seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 in favor, 1 opposed, and 1 abstaining.

We discussed the Sunset Ridge development and felt the developer may be trying to get around site law regulations. We were also troubled by the proposed open space set-aside. A site visit was scheduled for May 11 at 6 PM.

The next CC meeting will be May 24.