

# Hampden Conservation Commission

MEETING MINUTES - Jan 27, 2009

Attending: Don Katnik (Chair), Phil Rapp, Ed Steltzer, Mike Robbins  
Bob Osborne (Town Planner)

1. Acceptance of previous minutes – there was no copy of the minutes from the last meeting (Nov. 25, 2008) to accept
2. New Business
  - a. Conservation Commission Annual Report – *the Town Council needs a report for HCC's activities for July 2007-June 2008. A previous report was edited to remove some items that were no longer relevant and to add new activities (participation in Comprehensive Plan Update process, creating a Tree Ordinance, and participation in the Tree Board).*
  - b. MEACC Shoreland Zoning meeting – *D. Katnik shared an email from Bob Shafto, Executive Director of the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions (MEACC) about interest in a workshop on Shoreland Zoning. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for half a Saturday in March. Phil R. indicated potential interest in attending on behalf of the HCC.*
  - c. MEACC Grant – *D. Katnik shared another email from MEACC about a grant from Outdoor Heritage Fund and The Horizon Foundation to develop a set of "best practice" case studies that focus on ordinances and policies that Maine municipalities have adopted to support protection of wildlife habitat. This grant is in partnership with Beginning with Habitat – they are looking for 6-8 case studies describing a local process that resulted in effective approaches used to guide development to minimize habitat fragmentation, protect riparian habitats, protect wildlife habitats and sensitive natural areas, and/or generate support for municipal acquisition of open space and wildlife habitats. Although HCC supports these Beginning with Habitat concepts and has been trying to implement them, the consensus was that we are not far along enough in this process to have any case studies to submit.*
  - d. Conservation award – *forwarded for approval (Bob O. already indicated that the nomination was consistent with nomination rules and was objective)? A letter has been given to the Town Council; just need to get a plaque made and determine a date to present the award. The HCC does not need to do anything further on this.*
  - e. Town Planner's report – *Hampden has submitted its draft Shoreland Zoning plan to the DEP. One concern is the language concerning unstable bluffs. The ordinance indicates a setback distance from the "top of the bluff," but does not provide an objective means to*

determine the location of this. B. Osborne is looking for an establish rule/"white paper" that could be cited to provide some guidance. The DEP also noted that in some places a stream protection zone is drawn on top of the wetland area when the wetland protection zone should take precedence. This is just a cartographical issue that the Hampden GIS/IT Specialist will address. The next step will be public hearings on the draft plan, which may be "interesting" because some landowners who have lands within resource protection areas are unaware of this because those areas were not depicted on previous maps. D. Katnik explained how recent updates to waterfowl/wading bird areas, which also qualify as resource protection under Shoreland Zoning, have changed the map. These efforts were undertaken by Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife to improve the accuracy of the wildlife habitat maps.

B. Osborne also reported that the number of new subdivision plans being submitted to the town has declined greatly, most likely due to the depressed housing market and economy. D. Katnik suggested that this might be an opportune time to explore possibilities of conservation easements with landowners who may now be much less interested in developing their land and more open to other values of their property. There was agreement that this may be a good time to try more "outside-the-box" approaches.

f. HCC priorities for 2009

Follow up on Comprehensive Plan Update. The Town Council will be looking for assistance from the HCC in reviewing ordinances such as conservation subdivisions. This could require a large time commitment from the HCC beginning in late spring and summer.

Dorothea Dix Survey – there is an issue with the forest management plan for the park. Prentiss & Carlisle will need a way to bring out harvested timber, but the Town currently does not have the right to use the back road through the park because it crosses private land. The Town will work with those landowners to obtain a Right of Way.

We need to be doing a better job of posting HCC agendas and minutes on the Town website.

No other priorities for the HCC were offered. **It was suggested that all HCC members come to the next meeting with some additional suggestions for HCC priorities.**

g. HCC Chair – D. Katnik has been acting Chair of the HCC for 2 years and would like someone else to take over. No one present expressed immediate interest although the idea of P. Rapp and E. Steltzer co-chairing was briefly discussed. D. Katnik said that one of the hardest parts of being Chair was coming up with an agenda for each meeting. It was agreed that the agenda for each future meeting should be set at the end of the previous meeting rather than left up to the Chair to

*decide. Further discussion was tabled until the Feb meeting when other HCC members might be present.*

### 3. Old Business

- a. *Comp Plan – Update. D. Katnik shared an email from Gretchen Heldman, Hampden GIS/IT Specialist, reporting that there will be a Comprehensive Plan Committee meeting on Feb. 4, 2009. This is the first such meeting in several months. Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC), which the Town contracted to assist with writing the Comp Plan, has assigned a new staff member (Stacy Benjamin) to the project. At the Feb. 4 meeting, she will summarize changes made to the plan and review the books and maps. Dean Bennett (Town Economic Development) has a copy of the latest draft of the plan and can be contacted at [dlbhampden@hotmail.com](mailto:dlbhampden@hotmail.com) or at 862-3034 if anyone wants to see a copy. D. Katnik, who has been representing the HCC on the Comp Planning Committee, offered to attend the Feb. 4 meeting and report back to the HCC at our Feb. 24 meeting.*
- b. *Alewives – B. Osborne will post the advertisement for an Alewife “Warden” again. He also will try to ensure that the ad gets sent to any local alewivers already working with adjacent towns.*
- c. *Green Space signs – B. Osborne reported that the funding in his budget that was to pay for the signs has been appropriated for other uses. We need to work with the Community Services Committee to obtain new funding. No one is sure when the next CSC meeting will be.*

### 4. February 24 Agenda

- a. Update on Comprehensive Plan
- b. Response to Alewife Warden ad
- c. HCC Chair
- d. HCC Priorities