

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mr. Gerber, Chair at 7:05 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Allen, Angus, Gerber, Hamin, Kaplan (arrived at 7:10 p.m.), Stein

Staff: Ziomek, Ciccarello, Hutcheson, McKinnon

Others: Michael Pill, Ann Kearns, Dick Evans, Terry Blunt, John Body, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hanks, Bob Stover, Magdalena Lofstedt

CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S ACTION

Remembrance of Homer Cowles

The Commission observed a moment of silence in memory of Homer Cowles who died on December 8, 2008.

Approve Minutes

VOTED (5-0-1), Allen, Angus, Gerber, Hamin, Stein voted "Aye," and Kaplan abstained to approve as amended, the Conservation Commission minutes of November 12, 2008.

PERMITS/CERTIFICATES

RE-OPEN - Notice of Intent (continued from 6/11/08) – Paul Cole for development of an 8 lot 11-unit cluster subdivision located at 1194 West Street (Map #25B, Parcel 29). NOTE: This hearing will be continued to January 28, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

VOTED unanimously, to continue the public hearing to January 28, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Informal Discussion RE: land on North East Street – Michael Pill

Dave Ziomek and Harvey Allen recused themselves from the meeting. John Gerber noted that the prospective buyer, Richard Hanks, will need to submit a Request for Determination for an agricultural exemption and will need to show the Commission that the land has been in commercial agriculture for the last 5 years. Stephanie Ciccarello noted that the RFD is scheduled to be heard by the Conservation Commission on January 14, 2009 at 7:40 p.m.

Notice of Intent – Tofino Associates, Inc. for construction of a single family home at Lot 42, Hawthorn Road (Map 21D, Parcel 168).

- Opened the public hearing at 9:00 p.m.

Ellen Stutsman presented for the applicant.

VOTED unanimously, to continue the public hearing to January 28, 2009 at 7:40 p.m.

Request for Determination – Sandra Weisman for relocation of a driveway and parking area and construction of a slab for an existing garage at 195/197 College Street (Map 14B, Parcel 170 & 171).

- Opened the public meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Bob Stover presented. The Commission asked to see more information regarding the location of the isolated wetlands.

VOTED unanimously, to close the public meeting and to continue the meeting to January 14, 2009 at 7:50 p.m.

Notice of Intent – Amherst Department of Public Works for the replacement of 2,513 feet of existing sewer pipe and 250 feet of existing drain pipe within sewer easement between Rolling Ridge Road and Harlow Drive (Map 5D, Parcel 145 and 152).

- Opened the public hearing at 9:15 p.m.

John Gerber disclosed that he is an abutter to the property, but noted that he has no financial interest in the matter. Jason Skeels, Town Engineer, introduced Magdalena Lofstedt of CDM, who presented and answered questions regarding the work to be done.

VOTED unanimously, to continue the public hearing to January 14, 2009 at 7:15 p.m.

MISCELLANEOUS

Amherst Conservation Land Management Presentation

Douglas Hutcheson, Land Manager and David McKinnon, Assistant Land Manager gave a brief PowerPoint presentation to the Conservation Commission regarding their respective responsibilities for the Conservation Department and the work they have been focusing on during 2008.

Tietjen APR

Dave Ziomek gave a brief overview of the Tietjen APR and discussed the need to sign the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Co-Holders Agreement.

VOTED unanimously, to sign the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources APR for the Tietjen farm on South East Street (Map 23B, Parcel 30).

VOTED unanimously, to sign the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Co-Holders Agreement for the Tietjen farm on South East Street (Map 23B, Parcel 30).

VOTED unanimously, to sign the Municipal Approval Certification for the Tietjen APR on South East Street (Map 23B, Parcel 30).

Public Shade Tree Committee

Otto Stein gave the PSTC report and noted that they have drafted a tree removal policy to present to the Town Manager for trees on Town property. The policy will include a cost for removal and replacement - \$75/inch.

Directors Report

Dave Ziomek gave an update of the Hitchcock Center's green building project. Their article on the Fall Town Meeting Warrant was passed by Town Meeting.

The Conservation Department "move" and restructuring will probably take place in early February. Mr. Ziomek shared the organization chart that shows the combination of the Planning, Conservation and Inspection Services departments. Inspection Services will be moving upstairs to the 2nd floor, so there will be changes to the space on the second floor.

Budget process – Town Manager meets with all department heads in December and puts together a budget that goes public on January 16, 2009. All departments are being directed to increase their FY09 budgets by only 2% for FY10. Dave pointed out that our operating budget to maintain trails, etc. is only \$16, 000 a year.

Dave spoke about organizing a joint meeting in January for the Agricultural Commission and Conservation Commission to meet to discuss land projects for the next coming year or two. Libby will be contacting you with a date and time.

Community Preservation Act timeline – Dave noted that he sends in a general "what's on the radar" in December and then narrows it in January & February. Two projects on the horizon are the Johnson CR and the Station Road CR/fee acquisition.

Dave noted that with we have submitted, largely with the help of Nat Malloy, a grant to MA Environment Trust for \$40K. The purpose of the grant is to generate two reports on the state of the Mill River & the Fort River.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 9:55 p.m.