



Williamsburg Conservation Commission
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Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2019

Commissioners present - *Marci Caplis, Mary Dudek, Andrew MacLachlan, and Joe Rogers*

Members of the public present - Mark Wamsley, Kestrel Land Trust; Emily Cohen, abutter; Gaby Immerman, Brett Towler, Eric Bloomquist, John Hoogstraten, Nick Dines, all of Mill River Greenway Committee; Sally Loomis, Paul Kennedy, Marcelle Smith, all of the Open Space Committee; Lincoln Fish, forester; Jason Cooney.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Discussion of Old Wolf Hill conservation land. Mark Wamsley of Kestrel Land Trust presented information about progress towards finalizing the deal with the state EOEA, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The EOEA wants a picture of an informational sign in the parking area. As there is no parking area, he asked the Commission for ideas as to where a sign could be posted. One option is to ask an abutter, Phil Merritt, if sign could be posted on his land at the trailhead. A second option is to put a sign at the juncture of Petticoat Hill Road and Unquamonk Road, where there is legal access to the property. Mr. Wamsley said he would speak with Mr. Merritt. He will also send copies of the agreements made with landowners and the EOEA soon.

Discussion of erosion and sedimentation problems at the Dynamic Solar Array and abutting land. Emily Cohen, an abutter of the Dynamic Energy Solar Array, shared concerns about, observations of, and photos of the damage on the site. She said the gullies get larger after each rain storm, and are up to 20 feet deep and filling with fallen trees. Sediments are filling adjacent wetlands, and a large drain pipe is directing sediment onto her property. She has spoken with the DEP, and knows a remediation plan is being put forth, but she feels the plan is insufficient. The Commission advised Ms. Cohen to submit photos and dated notes to David Fowlis at the DEP.

Ms. Cohen expressed concern about not being notified of problems as an abutter. The Commission had been under the impression that all of the land in question was owned by Hull Forest Products. A check on OLIVER confirmed that there are two properties.

Ms Cohen is also concerned about hikers being unaware of dangers. The Commission agreed that she should erect signs warning of dangers.

Ms. Caplis will notify David Fowlis at the DEP that the Commission heard from an abutter, and will forward photos.

Discussion with the Greenway and Open Space Committees about five-acre parcel along the Mill River. Williamsburg purchased five acres of land on December 13, 2018. This parcel is right along the river and is a tangential property to the future Greenway. The Greenway Committee would like to share the responsibility for managing this property with the Conservation Commission, the Open Space Committee, and possibly Woodlands Trails. It has funds available for the removal of invasives, and would like Con Comm to oversee that aspect of the project. It will take 3-5 years and it would be best if Lincoln Fish, the forester, could get started by cutting the bittersweet this winter. He will submit a proposal to the ConComm, which will then issue a permit.

Future issues to resolve with the parcel and its management are: capturing the correct legal language, creating a long-term management plan, deciding which human uses are to be encouraged or discouraged, who is in charge of

governance, and who is in charge of stewardship. The Greenway Committee is planning a public information and feedback session for Sunday, April 28. Conservation Commissioners agreed unanimously to the invasives permitting plan and to take the land on as the stewardship body. Ms. Immerman, Ms. Loomis, and Ms. Smith will advise the Select Board as to language to include in the proposal to the abutter.

Discussion about lot for sale and any potential problems. Jason Cooney of Cooney Landscaping asked for feedback about a lot he is considering buying on Route 9 by Mama T's for constructing a shed for his landscaping equipment. It is a half acre with 160 feet of frontage, so would need a special permit from the planning board. However, his main concern is about limitations due to proximity of river. There is currently a shed there, as well as electricity and water. The lot is clear, well above the river, and previously developed, so commissioners do not foresee issues, though Mr. Cooney would have to file a NOI before commencing work. When and if he makes his plans, he will need to consider where the roof runoff would go. The Commissioners suggested hiring a consultant to help with the permitting process.

Discussion of information from snow removal webinar. Ms. Caplis reported on a webinar she participated in concerning emergency snow removal and the dumping of snow into rivers for disposal. She expressed interest in meeting with the Highway Department and the Board of Health about finding sites to dump snow away from the river.

Issuance of Certificate of Completion for Dunkin Donuts. The Commissioners agreed to issue a Certificate of Completion for work done during construction of the DD building.

Updating FEMA flood maps. Ms Caplis submitted the request for FEMA to update the food maps for the town so that the residents have the information needed for flood insurance.

Site visit to 5 Goshen Road. Joe Rogers met with Jae Casella about trees in the Mill River and potential flooding as a result of damming. Mr. Rogers reported that there are multiple trees creating a dam and directing the current toward a house, and then potentially across the road. He spoke to the landowner about ways to address the issue. An Emergency Certification is an option since road flooding is a potential.

Henhawk Trail. There are 100 acres on this property that are owned by Williamsburg but it is unclear where. Mr. Rogers would like to clarify ownership of that land and tell the Select Board that the ConCom would like to oversee that property. The land is near the Northampton Reservoir.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:55.

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda McCall
Secretary - Williamsburg Conservation Commission