

**Minutes of the Peterborough Conservation Commission Meeting  
June 17, 2010, Peterborough Town House, 7 p.m.**

Present: Swift Corwin, Bryn Dumas, John Kerrick, John Patterson, Francie Von Mertens, Robert Wood  
Jason Tremblay, Project Manager, MacDowell Dam; Robert Shephardson, Vegetation Control Services

May's minutes were approved.

**MacDowell Dam**

John Kerrick introduced Jason Tremblay, project manager for MacDowell Dam, and Bob Shephardson who heads up vegetation management at MacDowell. Francie Von Mertens explained that a recent shoreland clearing project at MacDowell resulted in a call to the Conservation Commission and a site visit by Von Mertens. Communication between MacDowell and the ConCom seemed like a good idea, especially as there are future shoreland projects planned.

Mr. Tremblay gave a background on flood control at MacDowell, as well as the recent hillside slide caused by a February 5 "microburst." He showed historic photos and said plans are to bring sections of the hillside back to grassland to avoid tree uprooting. It was that uprooting that compromised an upslope swale intended to handle any microburst surge on an intermittent stream.

Work this summer will reestablish the swale and restore the slide area.

Robert Wood, noting the possibility of continuing erosion, said that emergency permitting through the Wetlands Bureau is available that greatly shortcuts the usual permitting timeline.

As for the cutting project that led to a call to the ConCom, Mr. Stephenson said the island below the dam was cleared to avoid woody debris harming the below stream penstock. The island was under water this spring, resulting in considerable debris washing downstream.

Von Mertens said the timing of the cut, during nesting season, was unfortunate. The island had several active nests (robin, catbird, common yellowthroat, yellow warbler) that were disrupted.

Mr. Tremblay said the goal was to get back to the historic grassland/shrub vegetation on the island.

Mr. Stephenson said there were plans to treat invasive species at the dam with garlon 4 trichlopyr. In answer to a question from Von Mertens about herbicide use, he said it was legal to treat vegetation 25 feet from surface water (50 feet from a protected river) without a permit.

Mr. Tremblay thanked the ConCom for the chance to improve communication with the town, and said he would notify the ConCom of relevant projects in the future.

**Budget**

Members approved a \$50 contribution to the Harris Center for an annual conservation award to a ConVal student, an award funded by ConVal town ConComs.

**Harris Center Elm Street lot**

Von Mertens said the ConCom has \$7,000 designated for work on the Elm Street lot, a topic that has come up in the past. She requested approval to hire someone to cut brush so that as much of the lot as possible would be mowable. Most of the brush is invasive buckthorn. She also mentioned the possibility of a pro bono wetland delineation. Swift Corwin said he'd be willing to be the second half of a subcommittee too look into it.

John Kerrick made the following motion (Bryn Dumas second):

**Move to delegate hiring a brush cutter to the Elm Street lot subcommittee.**

The motion passed.

### **DPW liaison**

Corwin said he would re-send Rodney Bartlett's memo to the selectboard concerning upcoming projects (Contoocook Dam and town wastewater treatment are of special ConCom interest). He said the memo was very thorough in explaining the projects.

The wastewater lagoons are to be removed, with plans to restore wetlands in one and possibly create ball fields in the other.

Von Mertens questioned whether more specific communication between Bartlett and the ConCom was needed than a general memo to the selectboard. She said she had heard that Bartlett had asked the Water Resources subcommittee to arrange a public hearing to discuss dam removal/restoration options.

### **Open Space Committee news**

There are no land conservation projects looming, although some are being pursued. The Open Space Committee is putting out a 2011 nature calendar highlighting seven or eight natural events each month with photo and narrative.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be the **third Thursday of July, the 15<sup>th</sup>**.

/fvm