

**Minutes of the Peterborough Conservation Commission Meeting
May 26, 2011, Peterborough Town House, 7 p.m.**

Present: Jo Anne Carr, Swift Corwin, Bryn Dumas, Matt Lundsted, John Patterson,
Susan Stanbury, Francie Von Mertens
Guest: John Jordan, Rob Rich

Minutes for March and April were approved, as were member reimbursements for two expenditures.

Clement-Jordan conservation easement, Elm Hill Road

John Jordan gave a history of the Clement-Jordan property on Elm Hill Road abutting Casalis State Forest. Reviewing the draft conservation easement, Swift Corwin recommended striking the last sentence under USE LIMITATIONS 2-B. The sentence was struck.

John Patterson questioned whether agriculture should be allowed as in a traditional conservation easement that allows agriculture and forestry. John Jordan responded that the individual houses have yard space for gardens, and the field is not part of the easement and therefore the homeowner association could permit larger-scale agriculture in the future.

John Patterson made the following motion (Susan Stanbury second):

**Move to recommend that the Peterborough Select Board accept the
Clement-Jordan conservation easement on 52 acres off Elm Hill Road.**

The motion passed unanimously. Swift Corwin thanked Susan Stanbury for her considerable work shepherding the easement through its various stages of Open Space Committee, Office of Community Development and Conservation Commission.

Susan will continue that process through the next steps of town counsel comment and town select board consideration of approval.

Town forest / land stewardship plans

Swift Corwin said the forestry management plans done for town conservation land in the late 1980s need updating to maintain the town's status as a tree farm. He recommended starting with the Walcott property off Scott Mitchell Road and the Kane property east of East Mountain Road on up the slope of Pack Monadnock. The Walcott parcel was cut in 1992-93 and the Kane parcel in 1997.

Swift led members through the typical process of a forestry management plan in which forester and landowner prioritize goals / objectives as the most important foundation for the plan. A plan also contains history of land management and land uses for the property; natural resources including soils and wildlife; access and use limitations.

Based on that information, the forester does a timber stand inventory with recommendations for management steps that meet the landowner's objectives and a timetable for those steps.

ConCom members then suggested the following goals / objectives: Wildlife habitat enhancement (possible patch cut; maintaining generous stream corridor buffers; no cut areas); recreation (trails, view cut); revenue; following best management

practices (winter cutting to minimize erosion and disturbance of nesting birds; maintaining intact stone walls); healthy forest (including invasive species alert); protecting water resources. Education was mentioned along the lines of public relations especially with neighbors. The Kane cut 15 years ago lacked both clear communication with neighbors and clear communication between forester and ConCom.

It was agreed that revenue could not be a guiding goal as the ConCom's charge is natural resource protection. As part of the public outreach/public relations, it was agreed that revenue should be spent for demonstrable public benefit rather than disappearing into the conservation fund. In the past, before there was a capital reserve fund for land acquisition, timber harvest money leveraged purchase of town conservation land.

Swift Corwin said he would be willing to do a management plan for \$12 an acre, considerably below scale. Von Mertens said that to do an "in-house" hire, ConCom must be able to document that the rate is clearly below the going rate. ConCom member Richard Pendleton was hired in a similar manner for a prior large ConCom project.

Jo Anne Carr made the following motion (Bryn Dumas second):

Move to proceed to hire Swift Corwin to do a management plan for the Walcott and Kane town-owned parcels at a \$12-per-acre fee, contingent upon determining and demonstrating that that fee is below scale.

The motion passed unanimously.

Susan Stanbury and Swift will work on the documentation needed for to demonstrate the fee is below scale. Francie suggested UNH Cooperative Extension forester Karen Bennett could help that documentation.

Other/Updates

Walcott blueberry field. Swift Corwin said he walked the field area with John Trautwein as a further assessment of forest encroaching on field and what steps are needed. Long Hill Estates conservation easement. Swift reported the slope easement and sandpit restoration issues have been taken up by the Planning Board and Rodney Bartlett. He will continue to track progress there.

Daloz conservation easement. John Patterson reported the shack remains standing. He will speak with town administration about which town entity issues the letter of non-compliance.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is June 16, 7 p.m. at the Town House.

/fvm