

**Town of Amherst
Conservation Commission Meeting
Wednesday, July 26, 2017
7:00pm**

Attendance: R. Clemens-Chair, R. Hart, L. Gilman, V. Bennison, B. Beckley, B. Widmer-Alt (voting for W. Robertson), F. Montesanto –Alt, P. Lyon Selectman Representative

Staff: S. Corson Planner

Public: W. Ludt Heritage Commission Chair

Administrative:

Rob called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Chair Comments – Rob

Rob led a discussion about the possibility of having ACC meetings televised. Simon informed the group that televised meetings would also be recorded for public viewing after the meeting had concluded. Simon added that having recording could be helpful to Commissioners would missed presentations or discussions. There was further discussion considering the positives and negatives of televising ACC meetings. There was consensus to continue with just minutes at this time.

Minutes (from 7/12) –Simon

Rob brought up a spelling mistake in the minutes. Bill moved to accept the minutes as edited. Vick seconded. All vote in favor.

Election of Vice Chair

Rob announced that Jared became a full-commissioner of the ACC on Monday night (7/24) as appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Rob nominated Vick to become Vice Chair of the Commission. Several stated Vick's qualities. Lee seconded. All vote in favor.

August Meeting Schedule

Rob announced that he was not going to be in attendance for either August meeting. There was some discussion about availability. There was consensus to have an August 9th meeting.

Topics

2017/2018 Budget – John

There was discussion about the Town Budget FY18 approved as of March 14th, 2017. See attached report.

Infrastructure Update – Frank

Frank arrives at 7:35. Frank provided the Commission with an update on bridge repairs and bridge replacements. There was discussion about bridge construction on the Highland Trail.

Frank led a discussion about Eagle Scout projects and how they contribute to trail infrastructure on ACC maintained trails. There was general agreement that people should be encouraged to work on ACC maintained property and the projects should support ACC standards and goals. Rob expressed that he thinks Scouts should get approval from the ACC before beginning projects on ACC maintained property. There is general agreement from the Commission. There was also discussion about the maintenance of infrastructure projects.

Joppa Hill Trail Maintenance – Vick

Vick led a brief discussion about trail maintenance. There was conversation about the possibility of collaborating with the Town of Bedford, New Hampshire.

Walk Book Future – All

Rob led a discussion about the Walk Book that the ACC released and how it is no longer up to date with newly constructed trails and descriptions. Rich shared his ideas about publishing a coffee-table type book that includes geological and natural resource inventories. Rob brought attention to the differences between a publication that reads like a coffee-table book and one that reads trail guide. Rob suggested that the Commission uses website content as the future source for trail guide information. Vick chatted about the possibility of a yearly issue with updated trail guides as appropriate. There was conversation about the importance of delivering the information in both a hard-copy and online format. There was discussion about the cost of printing.

Bruce leaves at 8:45pm.

American Chestnut Plantings – Bill

Bill led a discussion about American chestnut trees. There was discussion about the Commission previously supporting chestnut plantings and that the educational component is worthwhile for the public. Rob asked Bill to pursue further details and noted that he thought the Commission would be supportive.

Metal Prospecting Policy – Bill

Bill led a discussion about the development of a town-wide Metal Prospecting Policy. Bill attended a meeting where allowing metal prospecting on town-owned property was considered and debated. Bill said that the meeting ended with agreement that metal prospecting on town-owned land should not be an allowed activity for the general public.

Rob asked Will to comment on this topic. Will thanked Bill for his summary and shared that he wrote a draft Metal Prospecting Policy and will be seeking review and comment. Simon interjected that contacting the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer and State Archeologist, Richard A. Boisvert would be appropriate and thought Mr. Boisvert might be willing to comment on the draft Policy.

Round Table – All

Rich spoke about putting a display at the Library for Lindabury Orchard. Rich added that he has reached out to Matt Tarr and is scheduling a time to walk the Orchard.

Rob discussed going through files last Tuesday with the ACC's summer intern.

Vick motioned to adjourn and Lee seconded. Meeting ends at 9:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Simon Corson