

MEETING MINUTES

ALBANY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 5th, 2016. 5:10 pm

Members present: Rob Nadler, Mike Stewart, Peter Carboni, Cort Hansen. Public: Steve Knox, Sara Knox.

Rob called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm. The minutes for the 11/3/15 meeting have not been completed. No approval of the minutes was undertaken.

Rob said that the Grandview Farm agreement had been signed by the Richardson family.

Rob said that the land use agreement between the NHFG and the Town has been reviewed by the town attorney and that he has some questions on it. A copy of the agreement was provided to members for review with the questions and suggested edits noted by the attorney. Rob said that there was not urgency since any use would not occur until next spring or summer at the earliest. He asked members to take the handout and review it for discussion at the February meeting. Rob said he would ask Road Agent Curtis Coleman about plowing. Mike asked about plowing the parking area at the gate. Rob said he would include that question to Curtis at the same time.

Rob said that he is working with NCC to develop a turn-out lot at the western end of the property.

The topic of goals for 2016 was discussed. Completion of the parking areas was one. The area of the Colton Dow lot under cultivation is being expanded by him. Rob said that he would like to create an access point from Rt 16 and the Kennett Middle School by the CVFD building but was hoping that that project would be funded by USVLT grant money. For the letter from the Commission in the 2016 Town Report, Rob said he would like to thank both Dick Van dyne and Jack Rose for their years of service to the Commission.

Rob said that we will need to have a replacement for Jack on the commission who has resigned due to his moving away from Albany. Steve questioned him and said that there was no requirement to have a selectmen's representative on the commission. Rob said that this was true but based on information he had received from the town attorney, the commission could choose have a selectman on the board and it was up to the commission to decide if that representative had a vote, or not, and that the commission could have up to seven voting members. He felt having a selectman on the commission helped with communication within the various town boards.

Rob brought up the Guppy property which had been discussed at the November meeting and that he expected that there would be a warrant article regarding management of the property if the town obtained final ownership. Steve questioned if selectmen have a plan to do so. Discussion about the property, who and why, went on. Steve proposed that the town sub-divide the property into 2 small, 2 acre lots, retaining the bulk of the forest and noted it has extensive frontage along the Dugway Road. Rob thought that the property has value to the town and that the town should be prepared in the case it winds up owning the property. Cort said it was his opinion that the BOS should author the warrant article not the Commission.

Rob suggested leaving the budget for the Commission at the same level as 2015 and noted that the only expense other than attendance was the mowing, which was withdrawn from the operational budget due to the forest funding being tied up in a long term CD fund.

Public Comments: Steve asked about the USVLT search for an agricultural project manager. Rob noted his conversation with William from USVLT indicates they are still working toward this position and their board is interested in developing more farming projects. Steve asked about greenhouses. The location question will be left up to USVLT as they are willing to have them on the field. As discussed at the November meeting, which side of the tree line on the northeast corner of the field they will be placed would depend on the size and height. Steve noted the 50X60 New England Food Project, a cooperative project with the goal of generating fifty percent of the New England's food needs by 2060. He mentioned several examples of high yield farms in northern New England.

Rob asked for further public comment, with no comments and with no further business to address, he moved to adjourn the meeting. With a second the motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Cort Hansen, Conservation Commission Secretary.