Canterbury Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes – 2019-09-09

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Present: Tom Osmer (Chair), Steve Seron, Kelly Short, Linda Fife, Bob Fife, Chris Blair, Teresa Wyman, Charlie Krautmann

Absent: Bob Steenson, Ken Stern (Vice Chair)

The Chair opened the meeting at 7 PM

# Meeting Minutes

Kelly moved approval of the CCC July and August minutes. Steve seconded. All approved the minutes for both months with no changes.

# Project Updates

Tom: No permits and no mail this month.

# Other Business

Tom: Charlie met with NH DES regarding a wetland permit to expand both sides of the existing causeway at the north end of the Robert S Fife Conservation Area (RSFCA) field. The CCC will need a permit for an area of about 3,000 square feet (12 ft. x 250 ft). Charlie will confirm this estimate. The permit would be good for 5 years. The plan is to use a woven geotextile base topped with 3/4-inch crushed stone. It is probable that the existing culvert can be reused, and that total causeway length can be kept under 90 feet. This project could be started any time other than during the Spring wet period. The permit will cost about $200.

Tom is waiting to hear from Chris Aiken about mowing the RSFCA field. We can have this work done any time before first snow fall.

Kelly: Recommends that we cut most of the 20 or so trees at the north end of the RSFCA field. Some members want to keep most of these trees. Tom said we have been advised to cut trees in and near the wetland portion of the field to prevent this area from succeeding into forest.

Chris: The CCC needs a multiyear plan for RSFCA field maintenance.

Tom: Ken mowed a pathway through the RSFCA orchard section, from Kimball Pond Road to the RSFCA field.

Bob: Need to mow the far-end of the Kimball Pond dam. Dam maintenance is an ongoing project.

Tom: Ken Folsom says that the confusing signs at the Riverland Conservation Area (RCA) will get fixed. Ken Folsom believes the town (road crew) could mow the path down to the RCA beach. Ken Folsom will get back to us with a plan after talking with road crew personnel.

Kelly: Working on an “alert sheet” to be inserted into Town files of properties with high conservation value.

Tom: Not all properties with high conservation value, including some owned by the Town, are under easement. Therefore, Tom suggested that the insert sheets have different colors to identify which properties are and are not under easement.

Kelly: Working on a new Riverland sign plan, with proposed sign wording and locations.

Tom: The Town road crew is doing trash clean-up at the RCA. Kudos to the Town for this.

Tom: The Select Board has not yet had time to discuss the Sawyer's Ferry Property Management Plan. Tom will continue to ask the Select Board to set up a meeting at which he can present the plan. However, this is not a time-sensitive issue since current conditions are not good for forest harvesting. We need to decide where to store digital and paper copies of the plan.

More generally, all CCC property management plans, NRIs, and related documents need to be archived online, and except for documents with privacy concerns, made accessible to the public via the Town website. Kelly and Chris will work on a menu for the CCC Town website page.

# LUCT Fund and 2020 Budget

Kelly: The current balance of the Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) fund is $193k. In the last two years the amounts added to the fund were $28k and $26k respectively.

Kelly: There are no major CCC 2019 budget issues. Kelly plans to submit dues to the Five Rivers Council (FRC) ($250) and Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee (UMRLAC) (~$275). The CCC needs to start working on the 2020 budget in the next few months. Land management will be a significant cost. The CCC should ask the Town to move Cushman Elm maintenance costs from the CCC budget into a different budget. In addition, the CCC should discuss whether to remove Admin support from the 2020 budget because it has been difficult to find applicants.

Tom: The CCC should consider including Property Management Plans for the Snow Show Hill, Misery Road, Schoodac, and Canterbury Town Forest (Briar Bush) properties in the 2020 budget. The Town also needs an overall conservation plan and to make contributions to the Wildlife Action Plan being prepared by the NH Regional Planning Commission.

Kelly: The estimated cost to mark property boundaries is $350/mi for blazing or $250/mi for painting. We don’t have a cost estimate for doing blazing and painting at the same time. Cost to move the Riverland bridges will be small.

# Action Items

* Tom: Arrange for a meeting space and time for the October CCC meeting; schedule a meeting with the SB to present the Sawyer’s Ferry Property Management Plan; forward his 2020 budget priorities to Ken Stern.
* Kelly: Prepare the file alert sheet for properties with high conservation value; will draft 2020 budget for next meeting; draft design for Riverland signs; pay FRC and UMRLAC dues.
* Ken: Work with Chris Kane to develop a questionnaire for property owners to fill out in the years that their properties are not monitored.