

FINAL

CANTERBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, March 8, 2021

Members Present on Zoom:

Kelly Short (Moderator), Ashley Ruprecht, Teresa Wyman, Ken Stern (Acting Chair), Steve Seron, Lois Scribner (secretary)

Members on Phone:

Bob and Linda Fife

Guest:

Mark Stevens

Absent

Sara Riordan, Chris Blair

The meeting was opened by Kelly at 7 pm with member introductions.

1. Minutes 8 February 2021

Ken Stern moved that the minutes of 8 February be accepted. Steve Seron seconded. Kelly invited comments or corrections.

Steve mentioned that in section 2.1 should read 'wood', and also that there should be a space after his name. With these amendments, all members voted in favor of the Minutes.

2. Guest Speaker

Mark Stevens introduced himself as a long time Canterbury resident living on the corner of Kimball Pond Road and Pickard Road. He explained he had plans to build a retirement home for him and his wife and pass his farm over to his son. He has purchased an 8 acre lot from Dwight Keeler on the corner of Kimball Pond Road and Pickard Road, with long frontage on Kimball Pond Road. Mark pointed out and the Commission members concurred that abundant wildlife use the area and corridor along Burnham Brook.

The lot has enough area to be subdividable. He wondered if the Conservation Commission was interested in working out some way of conserving part of that land. He did not have a precise timeline for this other than to decide about the possible sale the land. They will be building their new house regardless of the conservation outcome.

There was discussion among members with Mark Stevens about the location of the lot and the relative role of conservation easements versus other means of conserving land and precluding development. There was a consensus among members that this was an important parcel of land for wildlife. Conservation would be desirable. Members looked at the Co-Occurrence Map as well as a surveying map online. Mark stated he had not ruled anything in or out at this point, but he was looking for some reimbursement. It was in current use so he would have to pay a penalty for that. He asked that someone from the Commission get back to him to share their thinking about his proposal.

Kelly Short and members thanked Mark Stevens for considering conservation. He left the meeting.

3 Items to review or discuss

(i) Canterbury Conservation Commission Property Priority Process

Draft documents for consideration had been circulated in advance to facilitate the Commission discussing the various criteria to use when evaluating projects to support. The Commission's financial resources are limited and do not stretch far given the cost of land in town.

Members discussed the Scoring Ideas list with its 11 criteria and the Property Evaluation form with its 14 criteria.

All members agreed that Kelly Short's list was a good place to start. Her shorter list would be called the Project Criteria from now on. She wanted to get to a weighted system eventually because the Co-Occurrence map had treated everything equally across town and that did not help in terms of making decisions about what was most important to conserve.

Member discussed some of the criteria listed including: vernal pools, the size of a property, public access and scenic attributes. **Bob Steenson**

80 **offered to share some matrix examples from other industries with**
81 **Kelly Short** so members could see how to set up detailed scoring
82 matrices.

83
84 Kelly Short offered to create a survey for members in which they could
85 weight the existing 14 criteria and see if the responses yielded a
86 Commission consensus on evaluating proposed conservation projects. The
87 goal would be to create a list that could be easily accessible to town
88 residents if a decision needed to be explained to landowners or the public.
89 Members all agreed that the list was a good place to start in creating a way
90 to explain their decision-making in town.

91
92 Kelly Short asked if anyone else had considerations about ranking criteria.
93 She felt 'large un-fragmented land' and 'water resources' were so important
94 that they were at the top. Ken Stern shared that we may want to take into
95 consideration the level of generosity of a landowner, and also the fact that
96 conservation easements still left land owned privately, meaning that timber
97 harvests could be conducted and views changed.

98
99 Ashely Ruprecht asked about the monetary aspects. Were gifts of land
100 given as donations more important than sales of land? Kelly Short
101 responded that the Commission did look favorably on such donations and
102 had tended to work with other institutions such as Five Rivers, the Forest
103 Society or NH Fish and Game for the monitoring and implementing of such
104 easements. There may be IRS implications if there is a donation and the
105 land owner is seeking a tax deduction. **Ken Stern offered to send**
106 **members a copy of the Five Rivers criteria which identify IRS**
107 **considerations as part of their analysis.**

108
109 There was consensus that the Commission needs criteria for evaluation so
110 that the objective value of a project is separate from any other
111 consideration.

112
113 **Kelly will send a survey to everyone to rank the criteria.**

114
115 (ii) Conservation Commission members, new officers

116
117 Linda Fife noted this was not a good time during the pandemic to run into
118 people to talk about joining the Commission.

Ken Stern agreed to remain Chair if Kelly Short continued to assist.

Member appreciation: The Commission reluctantly accepted member Chris Blair's resignation and thanked him for his eight years of service to the town while on the Commission, and for his many thoughtful and constructive contributions to our work.

(iii) Permits

Ken Stern had looked at intent to cut forms. One was in Canterbury Shaker Village. Ken had sent the form to Steve Walker at the State who monitors the easement.

(iv) RSFCA Rock Removal Project

Linda Fife had checked in with Harry Kinter about the pile of rocks in the field. Harry had no specific further information. Linda Fife suggested talking to the old timers in town. Bob Fife noted that fields were named for owners. He would like to contact some of the folks in town in their 90s to interview them. Kelly Short knew that Mark Stevens had already talked to some of them so suggested **Bob Fife check in with Mark Stevens first.**

(v) Glines Conservation Easement project

Ken Stern said there some concerns had come up, nothing was happening soon. They may need to put the check back and then cut a new one. **Kelly will talk to Ken Folsom about that.**

4 OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Kelly Short noted the Carsons had purchased and renamed Morning Dove, now Rolling Ridges LLC. It may come to the CCC in the future as a project.

(ii) Polly Ham forest - Ken Stern noted this 400 acre parcel on the Northfield line was under agreement but to whom is not known.

(iii) Misc. issues: NH Fish and Game created a tool a year ago to help people engaged in trail building. It is now a webinar on their

website, on demand. Kelly Short can mention that in the Town Newsletter for property owners who may be want to use it. Ashely Ruprecht had seen the webinar and thought it was interesting on how to create a trail system and how to take wildlife into consideration.

- (iv) Ashley Ruprecht mentioned the Town Report where her name was spelled wrongly in the first section about the CCC. Linda Fife noted that Faith Berry's name is there incorrectly. Kelly Short said that there were often typo errors in the CCC names.

Kelly Short noted she had items to send to Linda and Ashely.

Next Canterbury Conservation Meeting

Monday, April 12, 7 pm. Kelly Short will get the information about the Town Zoom for that meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Scribner, secretary to CCC.