

Carlisle Conservation Commission
May 26, 2011

Chair Kelly Guarino called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM. Other commissioners in attendance were Luke Ascolillo, Tom Brownrigg, Peter Burn, and Jenifer Bush.

7:35 p.m. Eagle Scout Project: Hand rails on pathway from Library to Church St.

Eagle Scout candidate Alex Doig of Boy Scout Troop 135 discussed his proposal to replace an existing railing with a new railing. Mr. Doig provided an outline of the project including a computer-generated illustration of the new railing. The old railing is falling apart and is considered a safety hazard by senior citizens living at Carlisle Village Court. The proposed railing would be the same length as the present one, but would use fewer upright posts. The project is within Conservation Commission (ConsCom) jurisdiction because the railing is within ~30 ft. of a wetland. Administrator Sylvia Willard recommended that Mr. Doig use "ACQ"-treated lumber for the in-ground posts since ACQ wood preservative is less toxic than older formulations. After discussion, Burn moved that ConsCom allow the project without Mr. Doig filing of a Request for Determination of Applicability, since it would replace an existing structure. Bush seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

7:45 PM Land Use Permit: Old North Bridge Hounds at Foss Farm

Charles "Chic" Daigle of Old North Bridge Hounds requested a one-year permit to allow their organization to walk their hounds for exercise at Foss Farm. Normally there would be 12 hounds, which would be exercised for 1-1.5 hours every two weeks. Brownrigg asked if the dogs would bark while being exercised. Mr. Daigle said that the dogs do not normally bark "unless they are on a scent", and they would only use scent on a "drag hunt" [scent applied to a non-living object]; a drag hunt would not be conducted at Foss Farm. Burn made a motion to allow the exercising of hounds at Foss Farm. Bush seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

7:55 PM Land Use Permit: Carlisle Trails Committee request to walk the Benfield Conservation Land during Riverfest, June 11. Willard explained that the Trails Committee will sponsor a public walk on the Benfield Land to the new observation platform. Burn moved to issue a permit to the Trails Committee for the Riverfest walk, Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor.

8:00 p.m. DEP 125-0881 (Amended) Request for Plan Change, 142 Bedford Rd.

Builder Walter Erickson was present to discuss two proposed plan changes, one of which is the addition of an 11 ft. x 12 ft. driveway turn-around near Bedford St. The turn-around is a safety feature, and allows the resident to turn a vehicle towards Bedford St. before exiting the driveway. The turn-around has already been installed, and Mr. Erickson apologized for not notifying ConsCom in advance. Willard noted that the turn-around could result in some damage to the pedestrian pathway, and Mr. Erickson suggested maintaining a grassy border several feet wide between the pathway and the turn-around. A second plan change, suggested by the home owner, would make the contours of the post and rail fence more rounded than shown on the plan, without significantly changing the fence location with respect to the bordering vegetated wetlands. Willard noted that a siltation barrier has fallen over, and should be upright. Mr. Erickson agreed to correct the problem. Burn moved to approve the plan changes as discussed, Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor.

8:15 p.m. Mark Duffy: Request for new access to Fisk Meadow.

Carlisle farmer Mark Duffy has a license to grow hay and corn at Fisk Meadow. He is no longer allowed to access this land from Litchfield Drive, since the access crosses private property and he no longer has the land owner's permission. He would like to enter Fisk Meadow directly from Lowell St. Willard provided photographs of the proposed entry area and an Assessor's map showing Fisk Meadow with the entry point marked. Access would require removal of a few small trees and shrubs. Willard stated that there is currently a sand berm along Lowell St. which probably directs stormwater run-off farther downhill, keeping it from discharging into a stream near the site. Willard recommended, and Duffy agreed, that the berm be restored after the entry way is installed. Carlisle Mosquito reporter Sally Zielinski asked Mr. Duffy how far the road to the Fisk Meadow would be and Mr. Duffy estimated about 100 ft. Brownrigg asked Mr. Duffy if he also uses land on the adjacent conservation restriction #13 (CR-13) for growing crops, to which Mr. Duffy replied that he grows crops on part of CR-13, but not on another part. He is currently in discussions regarding possible agricultural use with one of the CR-13 owners. Bush moved to allow Mr. Duffy to access Fisk Meadow from Lowell St. as proposed, Burn seconded, and all voted in favor. Mr. Duffy stayed for a later discussion of the Curve Street Dam; see below.

8:30 – 9:00 p.m. New/Pending Business:

Summer/Fall Meeting schedule. Willard stated that she has not had time to do this.

Riverfest Update. Willard gave a brief update on Riverfest, which will be held June 11-12, and will feature a variety of activities throughout the Sudbury-Assabet-Concord River Valley. In addition to the Carlisle Trails Committee walk at Benfield Land, former commissioner and naturalist Ken Harte will lead a boat trip on the Concord River from the Rt. 225 Bridge to the Rt. 4 Bridge in Billerica. Willard stated that it would be appropriate if at least one ConsCom member attended the Riverfest Awards Ceremony on Friday, June 10, and Burn agreed to attend the ceremony.

Open Space Plan Update. According to Willard, Louise Hara has agreed to chair a committee to revise the Open Space and Recreation plan, due in two years. Others who have volunteered to help are: Mary Zoll, David Freedman, Kevin Smith, Liz Carpenter, and Lynn Knight. The committee will apply for grant money next year, and will need a "local match" for funding from another source, which will likely be from CPA funds.

Fence Rails at Foss Farm. Willard said that 18 rails have been purchased to repair the damaged rails at Foss Farm. The Carlisle DPW will do rail replacement during the first week of June.

Schedule for Trash Hauling. Willard distributed a written Proposed Schedule for Trash Removal for the year, collection to be performed by Carlisle Rubbish Removal. Trash barrels will be provided only at the Cranberry Bog and Foss Farm, but not at Towle and Greenough Lands as in past years. Willard will visit the parking lots at Towle and Greenough periodically to determine whether people have complied with a posted request to remove their own trash.

Mowing Agreements for Benfield and Towle Conservation Lands. Commissioner Bush recused herself from this discussion, since she is related to the applicant, Jack O'Connor. Mr. O'Connor

submitted bids to mow the fields at Benfield and Towle Lands; his was the only bid received. According to Mr. O'Connor, his bid is slightly higher than last year, because of higher costs of fuel and maintenance. Guarino asked O'Connor if he has any particular concerns about mowing these fields. Mr. O'Connor stated that it is difficult for him to mow close to stone walls, and using sheep for grazing might be a solution. Another continuing problem is that both glossy buckthorn and poison ivy have not been well controlled by mowing, and the commission should consider other options. Burn moved to award the mowing agreement to Jack O'Connor, Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor.

Curve Street Dam Update. Regarding the Curve Street Dam, Willard distributed a copy of letter regarding the classification of this dam as having a "Significant Hazard potential" rating. The letter was written by Commissioner Edward M. Lambert, Jr. of DCR to Mark Mitsch, P.E. of Weston & Sampson Engineers, the firm retained by ConsCom for Phase I inspection of the dam. The letter gives Mr. Lambert's reasons for retaining the original hazard status, and not allowing an agricultural exemption. Mr. Lambert's letter states, however, that if the "stop log structures" were removed from the current dam so that it could not impound water, then the dam could be considered "non-jurisdictional". Farmer Mark Duffy, who has a license to grow and harvest cranberries at the bog (and installed the current dam structure), was present for the discussion. Mr. Duffy said that he floods the field near Curve St. three or four times a year as part of the cranberry growing operations. He said that the aluminum flume for water control does a good job, but does probably not meet current [dam engineering] standards. According to Willard, a Phase II inspection, if required for repair, would be very expensive. Guarino suggested that ConsCom contact Town Council with an opinion as to how the town should proceed regarding a Phase II inspection.

Carlisle-Chelmsford Cranberry Bog Committee Update. Guarino stated that David McLachlan, chair of the Chelmsford Conservation Commission, recommended the formation of a committee consisting of several people from the two towns with an interest in the Cranberry Bog. Guarino agreed to be one of the representatives, and it was hoped that another representative would come from the Land Stewardship Committee. Mark Duffy said that he hopes there will be more regular communication between the two towns, and in particular thought that one of his challenges is beaver activity. Willard said that Chelmsford resident Tom Wilson has expressed an interest in serving on the committee.

800 Curve Street. The resident 800 Curve St. has apparently been landscaping an area across Curve St. that is part of the Cranberry Bog land. A Land Stewardship Committee member recently discovered a pile of leaves farther back from the road, and also plastic buckets presumably used for removing manure. Willard spoke with the resident, and agreed to stop dumping leaves, and to contact a neighbor regarding the buckets. He asked Willard what to do about the plantings, and this issue was discussed at the meeting. Jack O'Connor, speaking from the audience, thought that the area should be allowed to return to native plants. Brownrigg suggested asking the owner for a list of plants that he planted. Guarino concluded by saying that Willard should ask for a plant list, and requesting that ConsCom members visit the site at their convenience.

9:00 PM Executive Session. Brownrigg moved to enter into Executive Session in order to discuss potential litigation, and to not return to regular session afterward. ConsCom members voted as follows: Ascolillo, aye; Brownrigg, aye; Burn, aye; Bush, aye; Guarino, aye.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tom Brownrigg.

DOCUMENT REGISTER:

1. Proposed Eagle Scout Project - Photographs and Project Detail Summary
2. Plan Change Request DEP #125-0881 - Summary submitted by Built Best Construction, LLC
3. Request for alternative access to Fisk Meadow – Photographs and Assessors Map – Locus
4. Riverfest 2011 - Announcement
5. Trash Hauling - Proposed schedule submitted by Chris Sireen
6. 2011 Mowing Agreements for Towle Field and Benfield Conservation Land
7. Curve Street Dam Classification - Letter from Edward M. Lambert, Jr./DCR to Mark Mitsch/Weston & Sampson Engineers