

Carlisle Conservation Commission

Minutes
3/08/12
revised 5/10/12

Chair Peter Burn opened the meeting at 7:33 PM. In addition to Burn, members Luke Ascolillo, Tom Brown, Tom Brownrigg (arrived at 7:35 PM), Jenifer Bush, Kelly Guarino, Lee Tatistcheff and Conservation Administrator Sylvia Willard were present.

7:33 – 8:00 PM General Agenda Items, New/Pending Business

MACC Annual Environmental Conference - Burn and Willard attended the conference on March 3 and gave a brief report to the commission. Willard said that the presentations will be available on the MACC website.

Land Use Permit: CCF Annual Meeting – CCF would like to host their Annual Meeting on May 6 in the screening room of the Cranberry Bog house, which was recently renovated. After discussion Guarino moved to issue a permit, Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor.

OPDMD Rules & Regulations – Bush, a member of the group that drafted the document, said that it has been reviewed twice by each of the land use boards and once by Town Counsel and that it was ready for ConsCom to vote on adopting it. Willard asked if the vote could be postponed pending a public announcement. Guarino and Bush noted that since discussion of the document was listed on the agenda, it could be voted upon. Since there were no further comments, Guarino moved to accept the document as written, Ascolillo seconded and all voted in favor.

CPC report – Ascolillo, also the chair of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), reported that there are two applications for CPC funds: the Elliott Preserve and a request from the Housing Authority (HA) to study possible housing on town-owned lands. The town-owned lands are Conant Land, Cranberry Bog, and Town Forest. The latter two properties are under the care and management of the Conservation Commission and are therefore protected by Article 97 of the state constitution. The CPC voted unanimously to approve funds for the Elliott Reserve. The vote on the HA request was split, with two members opposed. Ascolillo subsequently contacted Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition regarding the HA request. Saginor recommended that ConsCom vote whether or not to approve the funding request. Saginor said that use of CPA funds to put affordable housing on conservation land was a “no net gain” approach for meeting CPA goals, and he knew of no other town that had done this. Willard noted that if land is taken out of conservation use for other purposes, the town may be ineligible for state reimbursements for future conservation land purchases until the outstanding change in use issues were resolved to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth .

Brown moved that the proposed use of CPC funds to study affordable housing on the Town Forest and Cranberry Bog would not be appropriate in view of Article 97. Guarino seconded, and all voted in favor.

8:00 – 8:15 PM Notice of Intent, Continued Hearing. Applicant: Romie Taylor; Project Location: 125 Bellows Hill Rd.; Project Description: replacement of a failed soil absorption system with work within the 100 ft. Buffer Zone of a Bordering Vegetated Wetland.

Willard stated that the Board of Health approved the application, but that she had concerns regarding the plan. She suggested that a construction entrance to the site be added, and that the siltation barrier be extended closer to the septic leaching field to the edge of the 100-foot Buffer Zone. She also stated that she had relayed her concerns via email to the applicant's representative and that he was fine with making the appropriate changes if they were included in the Order of Conditions. Guarino asked if there had been any substantive discussion at the Feb. 23 meeting which she missed. Willard said that there was no discussion. Guarino moved to issue a standard order of Conditions with the two special conditions recommended by Willard. Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor except Tatistsheff, who abstained.

8:15 – 8:30 PM Dick Shohet: Proposed haying of Towle Field

Dick Shohet and Kevin Brown were present to discuss the proposal. Shohet raises beef cattle and has been using hay from Clark Farm. However, the owners of Clark Farm have leased the farm to a farmer who will have use of the fields, so Shohet has had to find other fields. Shohet requested that he be allowed to mow a portion of Towle Field, and in exchange he would close-mow this area four times during the growing season with a "finish mower" with the goal of eradicating poison ivy. Jack O'Connor, who currently mows Towle Field twice a year, suggested that Shohet use the east side of the main field since this area has the best quality hay. Willard suggested that since O'Connor generally mows twice a year, he could mow other areas of Towle more often to compensate for acreage lost to Shohet.

After discussion, the commission seemed to agree that this was a good proposal, provided that the historic bobolink nesting area was not disturbed. Shohet requested that Brownrigg meet with Shohet and Brown at Towle to stake out a mowing area, and it was agreed to do this on March 9. Shohet will prepare a more detailed proposal prior to issuance of a license agreement.

8:30 – PM General Agenda Items, New/Pending Business, continued

Foss Farm Community Gardens update – Jack O'Connor, Garden Manager, reported that a new well was installed at Foss Farm today. The well can produce about 20 gallons per minute. Willard said that a lottery for distributing unclaimed garden plots will be held at Town Hall and will be announced ahead of time so that public can be present if they so choose.

Warren Lyman: Cranberry Bog House update – Lyman distributed a memorandum summarizing the status of the Cranberry Bog House restoration/repairs. Most of the contracted work is complete (99.5%), with some additional electrical work expected to be completed March 9. There is additional work related to fire safety, as required by the Fire Chief, is expected to cost approximately \$12,000. The fire safety expenses should be covered by the original CPA fund allocation (\$165,000) voted by Town Meeting as it is consistent with preservation of an

historical structure. Burn thanked Lyman for his hard work and careful supervision of contractors during this lengthy process.

Dogs on Conservation Land – Debby Geltner, Co-chair of the Land Stewardship Committee, was present to discuss a proposed sign regarding dogs for posting at the Cranberry Bog. Guarino said that the sign could be useful for other conservation lands as well, and that it should be made more general. Guarino also suggested that the various items on the sign have bullets for emphasis. Burn suggested that LSC review these comments, and then proceed with having signs made for placement at the Cranberry Bog. Brown moved to accept the use of the sign, Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor.

Elliott Preserve update – Willard reported that Town Counsel is working on the Warrant Articles for the Elliott Preserve, but has not completed them. The Warrant closes March 13.

Abutter Notification – Willard has been contacting other towns regarding abutter notification for wetlands hearings. She has received documents from several other towns and will distribute her findings at the next meeting.

Cranberry Bog Well Field, Chelmsford – Willard reported that according to Thad Soulet, Chelmsford Conservation Administrator, the Chelmsford Water District appears to be planning to proceed with their plan to site test wells near the Chelmsford Cranberry Bog Reservation. Guarino said that Carlisle needs to set forth its deeded water rights. Guarino will contact Selectman John Gorecki to follow up on Carlisle's response to this proposal.

At 9:30 PM, Brownrigg moved to adjourn the meeting, Brown seconded, and all voted in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tom Brownrigg.

Minutes approved 5/10/12