

**Carlisle Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes**  
**September 22, 2011**

Chair Peter Burn opened the meeting at 7:30 PM. In addition to Burn, members Luke Ascolillo, Tom Brown, Tom Brownrigg, Jenifer Bush, Kelly Guarino and Conservation Administrator Sylvia Willard were present. Member Debra Kimbrell-Anderson was absent.

**7:30-7:45 PM - New & pending business**

Minutes - the minutes of 7/21/11 (revised 8/22/11) and 8/18/11 (revised 9/12/11) were approved with minor revisions.

Chelmsford Water District water supply wells and the Cranberry Bog – Willard attended a meeting of the Chelmsford Conservation Commission on Sept. 20 at which the Chelmsford Water District expressed an interest in installing new wells on their property near the Chelmsford Cranberry Bog Reservation near Barnes Terrace. Mark Duffy, who holds the license to grow cranberries at the Carlisle bog, was also at the meeting. Willard had prepared a “previous history” of Chelmsford Water District (CWD) interest in wells at the same location beginning in 1999. According to Willard, CWD stated they were concerned about providing adequate pressure for fire protection to homes along Sleigh Rd.

Burn asked if Carlisle has any legal recourse regarding the proposed wells. Guarino stated that this is an important issue, and thought that Carlisle should get the “right people involved”. She suggested contacting Town Counsel, and that we also consider hiring Attorney Frank DiLuna, recommended by Mark Duffy when this project was previously proposed in 1999. Willard stated that former Conservation Commission member Carolyn Kiely has expressed an interest in helping. Brownrigg requested that further discussion be postponed to the next meeting in order to give members more time to think about the issues. Brown moved that Willard forward her notes regarding the CWD matter to the Board of Selectmen, Guarino seconded, and all voted in favor.

**7:45 - 8:30 PM Lynn Knight: Land Stewardship Pulling Together Initiative and CISMA Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) grant**

**Note: scheduled discussions of an Eagle Scout Trail Project for Chestnut Estates and a Conservation Fund Request were both postponed to another meeting night.**

Lynn Knight of the Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) discussed a proposal (Pulling Together Initiative) for control of invasive species at Foss Farm. Knight prepared a description of the proposed work for four areas designated A-D, as shown on a map of Foss Farm. She described the invasive plants, which include glossy buckthorn, oriental bittersweet, and multiflora rose, and the control methods recommended by invasive plant expert Ted Elliman of New England Wildflower Society. Knight said that the following priorities were determined by the LSC at their Sept. 20 meeting:

1. Area B (west side of main field) – removal of a large buckthorn stand would allow expansion of the existing meadow. Buckthorn could possibly be controlled by mowing.
2. Area D (east of community gardens) – selective removal of invasive plants including bittersweet and multiflora rose to favor existing native trees and shrubs.
3. Area C (bordering Anderegg property) – removal of bittersweet and other invasives with possible planting of native shrubs such as blueberry.
4. Area A (field north of parking lot) – removal of buckthorn along edge of field, with control by mowing

Burn asked how close Area D is to Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (GMNWR), and whether the funding allocated is adequate to treat all four areas. Knight said that the border with Great Meadows is very close; work would have to be coordinated with the refuge. Knight said that establishing priorities is important since it is difficult to predict how difficult and costly some of the invasive removal will be. Bush said that she did not understand how labor costs were covered in the proposal. Knight said that time provided by volunteers and town employees are assigned an hourly rate, and that the granting agency (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation) provides matching grant money. Bush also asked about two other areas covered in the proposal, Ben's Woods and the former O'Rourke Farm, now a part of GMNWR. Knight said that these areas will be covered by separate proposals, and her proposal focuses on Foss Farm. However, she thought that it might be possible to include a small amount of money (~\$300) for an expert to evaluate invasive plant control at Towle Field as part of the Foss Farm grant. Bush asked if the budget includes funds for planting native plants, and Knight said that this was included. Guarino asked if money from the Foss Farm fund might be used to purchase native plants.

There was discussion of how to dispose of the invasive plant cuttings. Willard stated that if the DPW removes the cuttings, they will be chipped and added to the wood chip pile at the DPW transfer station; this would not be appropriate for invasive plants that might have seeds or cuttings that could regenerate around the town. Bush recommended burning the cuttings on the corn field in the winter. John Bakewell, present in the audience, said that buckthorn is soft and could be chipped in-situ and left on the agricultural field. Brownrigg asked whether buckthorn seed being present would be a problem, and Bakewell replied that buckthorn, should it reseed, could be controlled by regular haying, and the fields would always be hayed. Willard said that a burn could be conducted either as an agricultural burn with a permit, or without a permit during the normal town burning period. Bakewell stated that in his experience, the larger the brush pile, the faster it will burn.

There was discussion regarding control methods for invasives. Bakewell said “..hit it [invasives] with your biggest hammer – don't dabble”. He described using a “mower” (not a lawn mower) at the Fohl property to remove large stands of buckthorn and bittersweet. The “mower”, a heavy-duty brush cutter, was subcontracted at the time for \$1500 per day. Burn expressed an interest in seeing a photograph of the device. Bakewell said that buckthorn can be controlled by frequent mowing, thus avoiding herbicides. Brownrigg asked Bakewell whether bittersweet could be controlled by mowing. Bakewell said that bittersweet would leaf out in spring before most grasses, and would require the use of herbicide (as would poison ivy).

Knight said that she would return with more information, including a budget, at the next ConsCom meeting on Oct. 13. The commission thanked Knight for her work.

### **8:30 – 8:45 PM Sandy Nash: Conservation Land Use Permit for Fox Hill by Carlisle Public School Cross Country Team**

Sandy Nash requested a permit for the Carlisle School cross country team to run along the perimeter of Fox Hill fields during the cross country season, from September until the end of October. The team (approximately 100 students) would use Fox Hill only for training, and not for meets (these are held at Great Brook Farm State Park). They are also using a new trail established as an Eagle Scout project that begins near Green Cemetery and leads to the Banta-Davis fields. A trail from Spaulding Field over a boardwalk crossing a stream is considered unsafe. Speaking from the audience, Lynn Knight said that it is great that the school finally has a “real” cross country course that keeps runners off of roads.

Brown moved to issue a permit for use of Fox Hill by the Carlisle School Cross Country team, Ascolillo seconded, and all voted in favor.

### **8:45 – 9:15 PM - New & pending business, continued**

800 Curve St. – Willard stated that she has received no response to her letter from the property owner, who planted shrubs opposite his house on Cranberry Bog property.

Meeting Schedule, November/December – Meetings are scheduled for Nov. 17, Dec. 1, and Dec. 15.

New Vernal Pool Certifications – Brownrigg reported that two vernal pools have been recently certified, one at Great Brook Farm State Park along the Woodchuck trail and another north of the Conant Land on land used by Carlisle DPW.

Cranberry Bog benches, LSC recommendations – Janet Lovejoy has offered to donate three granite benches for placement at the Cranberry Bog. Debbie Geltner and Tim Donohue of the LSC recommended in a memorandum to ConsCom that ConsCom accept the offer of the benches; a map showing the possible locations was included in the memo. Mark Duffy has said that the benches should not present a problem with agricultural operations. Guarino moved that the commission accept Ms. Lovejoy’s offer of three granite benches with our deepest gratitude. Bush seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Budget – Brown distributed a draft time sheet for Willard to use to keep track of hours. Guarino stated that this is a good start toward getting data on how the Administrator spends her time. Guarino suggested that each filing have a separate time sheet. Brown recommended that Willard also include “ponder time”, i.e. time spent thinking about how to approach a task.

Hutchins & Robbins Fields agricultural request – Steve Spang of Fiske St. sent Mark Duffy (with a copy to Willard) an email on Sept. 21 requesting that part of the Hutchins field be left as a hay field, and not planted in corn. Spang noted that people in the neighborhood enjoy using a part of

the field for walking dogs, cross-country skiing and other activities. Guarino noted that some non-agricultural activities might harm the field, and that including non-agricultural activities should be included in the license agreement. Willard noted that a trail easement around the edge of the field is a reserved right of the Agricultural Preservation Restriction, but has not been established. Willard said that a trail would require the approval of the Department of Agricultural Resources. However, the Trails Committee has indicated that they do not want to mow this trail. According to Willard, Mark Duffy has indicated that he does not plan to plant corn in the area near Fiske St. where it is presently grass.

Carlisle/Chelmsford Cranberry Bog group report – members of the group from Carlisle are Warren Lyman (LSC), Guarino, and Willard. Chelmsford members are Meredith (name?), an abutter to the Chelmsford Cranberry Bog reservation and a Chelmsford ConsCom member (name?). David McLaughlan, chair of the Chelmsford ConsCom also attended but is not a member. The Chelmsford representatives apparently believe that Carlisle regards the bog as a commercial property, whereas Chelmsford values it as a nature preserve. At the next meeting, scheduled for January, Lyman will discuss water use at the bog. Carlisle is expected to have developed a OPMD (other-powered mobility device) policy by that time, and Chelmsford has expressed an interest. According to Willard, Chelmsford has a town leash law for dogs and is aware that snowmobiles use the area during the winter.

Pathways Committee request for input for link to Rail Trail – According to Willard, a group is looking into the possibility of a pathway connection to the Rail Trail. The pathway would possibly lead from the town center to Towle Land, then from the Hanover Hill pathway to Curve St., and then past the Sorli property to Westford. Willard asked if a ConsCom member was interested in providing input, and Guarino expressed an interest.

### **9:15 – 9:30 PM - Executive Session**

At 9:15 PM, Guarino moved to enter Executive Session in order to discuss the Executive Session minutes of July 21. Brown seconded, and members voted as follows: Ascolillo, aye; Brown, aye; Brownrigg, aye; Burn, aye; Bush, aye; Guarino, yes.

The commission resumed the regular session meeting at 9:30 PM, at which time Brown moved to adjourn the meeting, Ascolillo seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

### **Document register**

1. Time sheet for Administrator Willard to use for tracking time
2. Proposed Invasive Species Control Project at Foss Farm
3. Barnes Terrace Well field, Chelmsford (proposed): 1999-2000 history
4. Notes from 9/20/2011 Chelmsford ConsCom meeting with Chelmsford Water District.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tom Brownrigg.

Minutes approved 10/13/11