



# TOWN OF HUDSON

## Conservation Commission

Jim Battis, Chairman

Nancy Brucker, Selectmen Liaison

12 School Street • Hudson, New Hampshire 03051 • Tel: 603-886-6008 • Fax: 603-816-1291



**DATE: 8 September 2014**

MEETING MINUTES Below is a listing of minutes for the Hudson Conservation Commission. Minutes are not a verbatim record of each meeting, but rather represent a summary of the discussion and actions taken at the meeting. All Conservation Commission meetings are televised live and repeated during the following week on HCTV, cable television channel 22. Official copies of the minutes are available to read and copy at the Town Engineer's Office during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.).

Should you have any questions concerning these minutes or wish to see the original recording, please contact the Town Engineer's Office at 603-886-6008.

A regular meeting of the Hudson Conservation Commission (HCC) was held in the Community Development Conference Room of Town Hall.

**Members of the Commission present:** J. Battis, R. Brownrigg, K. Dickinson

**Members of the Commission excused:** P. Dubay, R. Jurewicz

**Members of the Commission absent:** None

**Member of Town Staff present:** None

**Board of Selectman Representative:** Excused

**Seating of Alternates:** None

Called to Order at 7:13 pm

### I. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mr. James Mills, Proposal to sell development rights: Lot 201-012-000 118 Bush Hill Road

Mr. Mills stated that he presently lives at 120 Bush Hill Road and the abutting lot, 118 Bush Hill Road was originally purchased to supply wood for a firewood business that he operates with various lot line changes resulting from subsequent land purchases and line relocations over time. The land is forested and is a mature red oak forest. It contains the highest point in the

town at 515 ft ASL. Mr. Mills described several potential development concepts for the land but noted that they would prefer to preserve the land but also stated that he could not afford to just gift the land. Mr. Mills stated that, after several thwarted attempts to preserve the property through other means, he is now coming before the Commission to ask the Town to buy the development rights value of his property, placing it in conservation easement, and with stipulation that when he, his wife, and his sister-in-law, who lives with them, pass away, the property would be deeded to the Town of Hudson.

Mr. Battis then stated that there is a procedure that the Commission, if it decided to proceed, would follow. This would first involve a site walk of the property where, individually, the members would evaluate the property based on the Hudson Stewardship Plan. If they Commission then decides to proceed with the process, we would hire an appraiser to evaluate the value of the development rights of the property. At that time there maybe negotiations and then we would need to involve the Board of Selectmen as, while the Commission can advise them on the land purchase, the only agent to purchase real estate in the Town of Hudson is the Board of Selectmen. This is potentially a long process and could take a year or more.

Mr. Brownrigg, Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Miller had a short discussion concerning the relationship of this property to the Hawkview Subdivision. Mr. Miller discussed possible access rights through the Hawkview property to this and abutting lots and several development plans that had previously been developed in the area.

Mr. Brownrigg asked if the property had been appraised. Mr. Miller stated that he had not but that they had walked away from previous offers of \$1.2M and \$1.9 when it was strung together with other property. He did not feel it was worth as much today and as a farm or as raw land, the land is worth anywhere between \$400,000 and \$600,000. Comparable house lots are being sold for \$50,000 per acre but he does not believe it is worth that price. Mr. Miller stated that the total land is about 84.5 acres with 79 acres in the land and 3.5 acres with the house. The house could be pulled back to two acres and the saw mill and barn could be placed in two acres leaving 80 acres for the conservation easement. Mr. Miller suggested that the Conservation Easement should start at the first beaver pond behind the house.

A site walk to view the property was set for 20 September 2014 at 9:00 am by agreement of all Commissioners present.

Mr. Battis noted that while the property cannot be identified on the New Hampshire Fish and Game 2010 Wildlife Action Plan maps, the property is either in the highest ranked habitat in New Hampshire or in the biological region.

## **B. Other Business:**

### **A. Stewardship of Conserved Lands**

Mr. Battis reported that Amy Smagula from DES had conducted a survey of Robinson Pond and Ottarnic Pond on 31 July. She reported no milfoil at Robinson Pond and a small pocket of fanwort near the boat ramp that should be handled by DASH operations. At Ottarnic Pond, the treatment resulted in lesser impact on the invasive plants as expected as we did not treat it last year. There was no fanwort reported but the effect on the milfoil was

uncertain. She saw many stems with green ends that could indicate either it is taking longer to die or some of the stems may regenerate. She stated that there was no reason to run the DASH in Ottarnic Pond. This was also the time that she reported the cyanobacteria in Ottarnic Pond resulting in its temporary closure.

Mr. Dickinson reported that Ottarnic Pond looks better but there was still significant dead matter. He spoke to the Lake Host and was told that the boaters were happy with the results and that the fishing may have improved.

#### B. Ingersoll Stewardship Survey

Mr. Battis stated that the Stewardship Survey for this land needs to be completed before the end of the year. Mr. Brownrigg stated he would assist the survey. It was decided that the Ingersoll Survey would be scheduled for 11 September at noon.

#### C. Musquash Stewardship Survey

Similarly, Musquash Conservation Land also requires a Stewardship Survey and this was scheduled for 4 October at 9:00 am.

Mr. Dickinson proposed a trail work day at the Town Forest on 27 September at 9:00 am. He noted that he would like to schedule one trail work day each month through November. He stated that he had 200 trail markers that could be used to delineate the perimeter trail and some of the new trail needs to be cleared of scrub.

Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Undercoffler, a Hudson resident in attendance, discussed the state of trails in the Musquash Conservation Land.

### C. Financial Status:

#### A. Budget Discussion

Mr. Battis provided the FY13, FY14, and FY15 actual budgets to the commission and the expenditures for calendar 2014. He also provided the proposed budget for FY15 that included a request for \$1500 for Stewardship Activities of the Commission. He noted that the proposed budget was approved by the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee but rejected by the voters resulting in the default budget. He noted that the one large expense in the budget is the invasive plant treatments at Robinson and Ottarnic Ponds. We entered a budget for this item of about \$44,000 with an expected rebate from the State of \$17,000. He noted that the total potential cost was \$49,655. The additional cost resulted from including an unbudgeted treatment at Ottarnic Pond. The state will rebate up to \$19,962 of the total cost leaving a cost to the Town of \$29,793. This was above our projected amount but the Commission had agreed to expend Conservation Fund money to accelerate the Ottarnic Pond treatment.

He noted that next year we should not need a treatment at Robinson Pond, saving \$24,665, the cost of Ottarnic retreatment will be the same, and DASH operations will also be about the same. However, our remediation plan presented to the Board of Selectmen held the

remediation funding constant with and surplus going into the Pond Reclamation Capital Reserve Fund.

Mr. Battis recommended reusing the FY15 proposed budget with adjustments for the reduced cost of pond remediation but moving the anticipated surplus to the Capital Reserve Fund for future treatments. He also recommended requesting the \$1500 Stewardship funding to support stewardship efforts including purchase of supplies and possibly funding a forester to update the forestry plan for the Town Forest.

**Motion to approve and forward the proposed adjusted budget for FY16.**

Motion by: K. Dickinson  
Seconded by: R. Brownrigg

**Vote:** For   3   Opposed   0   Abstain   0  

**D. Correspondence:**

None

**E. Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion to approve the 8 July 2014 minutes as amended.**

Motion by: K. Dickinson  
Seconded by: R. Brownrigg

**Vote:** For   3   Opposed   0   Abstain   0  

**Motion to approve the 11 August 2014 minutes as presented.**

Motion by: K. Dickinson  
Seconded by: R. Brownrigg

**Vote:** For   3   Opposed   0   Abstain   0  

**F. Commissioner's Comments:**

Mr Brownrigg reminded the viewers that tomorrow is primary voting day. Mr. Dickinson stated that he hopes to do some more trail projects this fall. Mr. Battis stated that there were several openings for the Commission and volunteers are welcome to submit their applications to the Board of Selectmen.

**Motion to adjourn.**

Motion by: R. Brownrigg

Seconded by: K. Dickinson

**Vote:** For   3   Opposed   0   Abstain   0  

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 pm.**

  
James Battis, Chairman