

Swanzy Open Space Committee Minutes for Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Submitted by Katherine Feist

Attending: Bruce Tatro, Deb Crowder, Dan Zeh, Theresa DiLuzio, Jeanne Thieme, Katherine Feist, Sara Carbonneau, Jen Gordon

Ryan Owens from Monadnock Conservancy(MC) spoke with the OSC:

To Update on Domina project / Tippin' Rock Farm and LCHIP application:

Ryan's Update on **Domina conservation opportunity** – Bob and Lois easement (Hewes Hill)

- Bob & Lois want to conserve an extra piece of land- 64 acre MC to try to close it by the end of the year. Ryan asks if the project could be supported by town funding.
- We are proposing to ask the ConCom to fund this project for expediency to be able to do it by the end of the year.
- Ryan's recommendation would be to make the contribution of town funds without the town retaining an interest – per RSA 36-A:4-a,l(b) (authorizing the Conservation Commission to expend funds for contributions to 'qualified organizations' for the purpose of property interests, or facilitating transactions related thereto, where the property interest is to be held by the qualified organization and the Town will retain no interest in the property).
- OSC – discussed and voted to ask Conservation Commission to commit to funds.
 - \$7,500.
 - MC staff time: \$2,000
 - Environmental Hazard Assessment: \$200
 - MC Legal Expenses: \$1,500
 - Recording Fees: \$200
 - Easement Stewardship Fund payment: \$3,500
 - TOTAL ESTIMATE: \$7,400

***Motion by DiLuzio to ask the ConCom to fund the Hewes Hill project (property owned individually by Bob and Lois Domina), 2nd, by Theime - Unanimous vote.

OSC - Formally voted on our support of the Domina project

****Motion to support the Tippin' Rock Farm Project and support letter to LCHIP– Theime 2nd by Feist - Unanimous approval

Richards easement-

- Ryan had a meeting with Cynthia Brown and Barbara Brown and the Nature Conservancy the NC is interested in the flood plain land and the MC is interested in the rest of the land (Hiepatica Farm). Cynthia is looking out for her future and doesn't want to tie up everything. The family has some very good questions. Everyone needs more information about the value of the whole package. An appraiser needs to be approached. It will need to be a purchase easement. John Newcomb may come in to help with preliminary appraisal. (\$800)
- One possible way is to take the money out of the Land Acquisition Fund- which means a public meeting etc.
- Funding ideas were discussed- LCHIP, ARM, (state \$- opening next year) & Farm & Ranch Protection Program, New England Forestry Foundation.

Motion by Feist to cover the cost of a preliminary appraisal- approx \$800- Out of the OSC budget or the Land Acquisition Fund . - 2nd by Zeh - Unanimous approval.

- – Approval/corrections to September minutes (copy attached to end of this note).
*****Motion to approve September 09 minutes by Theime 2nd Crowder Unanimous approval
- Request for appropriation to the Capital Reserve Land Acquisition Account for budget year 2010.
- We have to ask for money for 2010 for Land Acquisition.
Discussion about projected projects (Domina- Richards.)
 - Theime to write a letter to the BOS (to be ready for Oct 21st) to ask them to appropriate the \$50,000 for next year. (Pointing out the percentage of protected land)
- ****Motion (Zeh)to request from the BOS -\$50,000.00 to go to the Capital Reserve Land Acquisition Account. 2nd by DiLuzio – Vote: all in favor- Tatro abstained.
- - Yale University – visit to OSC and Conservation Commission likely in November.
 - Carbonneau is looking to schedule a meeting for November.

Discussion of 2010 budget

- Last year the budget was \$6950 then reduced by 5%
- As of today the remaining balance is \$2783.06, the Johnson postcard will cost approx \$1200, \$150 for the moving picture frame for the lobby.
- Promoting Yale and Richards and Domina public relations easement may necessitate spending more money.

***Motion to ask for \$6950 for our operating budget (same as last year) by By DiLuzio 2nd Zeh Unanimous approval . Tatro abstained

Discussion of new OSC members

- Jen Gordon may be interested in becoming an OSC member (Jeanne).
- Theime & DiLuzio will check in with John Snow and Robin and double check with Jen.

*** motion to adjourn: Tatro motion to adjourn Zeh 2nd Unanimous approval.

Meeting with ConCom

Discussion Points

Carbonneau reviewed the work of the Planning Board Workgroup to date. She noted that the ideas that have been generated are not set in stone. The master planning discussions for the northerly part of the Route 10 corridor are a work in process. Additional input from property owners and other interested parties will be solicited in the up-coming months.

- OSC talked about the 1700 acres that Yale owns in town. Planning Board was asked to help protect the Yale land- they said they would also like to look at commercial industrial property along route 10. (some see the potential for economic development- others to protect the forested property) After many months of work they came up with the Forest Conservation District. (see attached)

- They also came up with permitted uses in the district- and uses permitted by special exceptions. This is one prong of the proposal- another prong is looking at rezoning other properties on Rt 10. Forest district encompasses a lot of land. Also, taking the "Golden Triangle" (Between Matthews Rd and Rt 10- to be industrial Park Zoning. It has ready access to public water and sewer. The stretch of RT 10 that is zoned commercial now would need private water and sewer.
- Also- if the undeveloped land to the river fits with the Wildlife Action Plan- and connects with the greenway connecting Pisgah etc.
- Sara met with Steve Roberge about it- he thought it was great. Comments and concerns were the campgrounds (should they be a special exception) and the equestrian uses on the property.
- Need to add protection of water resources to the plan. The dimension requirements for the Forest Conservation District: PB workgroup- said a 15 acre lot for building would be required. It could potentially allow permitted use with 10 acres for conservation. Yale is not the only landowner affected- but the primary land owner. It is important to be a good neighbor with Yale. They will come sometime in November to hear our proposal – give their comments.
- It is possible to bring it to vote in March, but it seems to need more time for the public to ask their questions, etc. So it may go to March 2011 warrant article.
- Questions??? Do we want to put some restrictions in to protect the aquifer?
- The plan does not allow any single family homes-

Next meeting for the planning board is 4 p.m., Tuesday, October 20th. Please come with your questions.

Discussion about Tippin' Rock Farm easement-

- OSC asking the CC for \$7500 to fund the easement. It would show town support – boosting the LCHIP grant. They want to take advantage of tax breaks and get it done by next year.

***** make sure the BOS start the process to appropriate money for Land Acquisition Fund.

Copy of OSC letter of support for LCHIP application:

Deborah Turcott Young, Executive Director
LCHIP
13 West Street, Suite 3
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Monadnock Conservancy's LCHIP Grant Application -
Tippin' Rock Farm, Swanzey, NH

Dear Ms. Turcott Young:

The Swanzey Open Space Committee offers its enthusiastic support to the Monadnock Conservancy's application for an LCHIP grant to purchase a conservation easement on Tippin' Rock Farm, one of the most beautiful and historically valuable properties in Swanzey. We have expressed our desire to cooperate with the Domina family and the Monadnock Conservancy, as well as to coordinate actions with the Swanzey Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen to assist in the process of establishing permanent protection for this special parcel of land.

Members of the Swanzey OSC walked the property with the Conservancy's Ryan Owens and the Domina family last summer, so we have had the pleasure of observing the many unique and diverse features of this significant area of our town. We were impressed by the variety of habitats, the historical aspects, and the fact that the land has been well-managed by the Domina family for generations. Tippin' Rock Farm has been owned by the Domina Family since 1804--it is a special piece of land, with active farmland and hayfields, riparian habitat by Perry Brook, and a well-managed forest on Hewes Hill.

The family has maintained portions of their land for agricultural purposes throughout the farm's long history, and Tippin' Rock Farm's cornfield has provided Swanzey residents for decades with fresh sweet corn, vegetables, and flowers at the popular roadside farmstand.

Another interesting feature is the farm's namesake, The "Tippin' Rock", a 40 ton glacial erratic boulder, which perches on a summit near a popular hiking trail on Hewes Hill, accessed from the Warmac Road. It is possible to push against the rock's face and cause it to slightly move, or "tip". Swanzey historical sources have photographs of 19th century visitors posing by this rock.

Hewes Hill is well-known among area rock-climbers for its sheer cliff faces. The popular hiking trail winds through a sustainably harvested forest, and there is also a small woodland pond on the top of the hill. The views from the overlooks are stunning, with scarcely any human encroachments within the beautiful scene of hillsides and forests.

We strongly support the interest and actions of the Monadnock Conservancy as they counsel and assist the Domina family, encouraging their strong desire to conserve their land. The Swanzey Open Space Committee stands ready to continue to cooperate with these efforts and to contribute however we are able. We are very committed to assisting to ensure that this effort succeeds.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Dan Zeh, Chair
Swanzey Open Space Committee