

Swanzey Conservation Commission
Draft Minutes
7:00p.m., February 9, 2010
Town Hall

Swanзей Conservation Commission members present: Stephen Stepenuck, vice-chair; Debbra Crowder, Robert Goodrich, Gary Coburn.

I. Guest Rod Richmond was informed by Steve that the commission had received a complaint about some of the volunteer work he had done on town land, in particular that he had:

Placed trail signs on town land without permission;

Constructed trails on town land without permission;

Used an ATV on the Mount Caesar trail without permission;

Stocked fish in the beaver-dammed pond on the Swanзей Lake feeder stream;

Fed Deer;

Provided access to a heron rookery by constructing and marking a trail to it.

Deb remarked that the issue was to determine what is allowed on town-owned property and what the protocol is for doing activities.

Rod Richmond explained that he had placed yellow arrows on trees so that people could see what was available between Mt Caesar and The Beaver Pond. He had used stainless steel screws so that they could be removed. The trail was also to provide access to the area.

Rod had placed fish [shiners] from Swanзей Lake in the beaver pond to provide forage for the herons in the heronry. Their numbers had increased from three nests to nine nests.

He had fed deer in January with a mix of molasses and grain after the ground had frozen at four day intervals consistent with a practice his father has done for years along Rocky Brook in Marlborough. It was his concern that deer were stressed by weather and coyotes. Gary Coburn explained that the practice of feeding deer is discouraged by the department of Fish and Game and should it be started it would have to be maintained. Gary explained that in mild open winters such as this one there was even less need for the practice and that Ted Walski NH Fish and Game Biologist had explained that the practice was detrimental to deer. Rod explained that Ted knew of his father's practice of feeding deer and approved of it.

Fish and Game law enforcement officer Tim Acerno had taken a picture of the heronry and won first place in an Audubon photography competition. Rod shared that picture with the commission.

Steve mentioned that The Friends of Mount Caesar have complained about the use of ATVs on Mount Caesar. Rod explained that the lack of water bars and erosion had done damage to the trail. His use of the ATV was for transporting tools and elderly citizens that would be unable to see the area otherwise. It was thought by several members that ATVs should be permitted with appropriate permission.

Deb complimented Rod on his public-spirited projects, but wanted to make sure that permission was sought and obtained for the projects. She suggested that Rod be a steward with exception to use an ATV for transporting the elderly and disabled, as well as tools. The suggestion was made that permission be sought and received for the projects. Deb made the suggestion that we could use Rod's help on the Mount Cresson trail. He indicated interest and wondered about ATV access. Steve explained that there were some sections of old road but the trail would have to be looked at, since much of it is not owned by the town. Rod expressed interest in constructing Osprey nesting platforms similar to a project being done in Ontario. He agreed to show up at the March meeting with a proposal and diagram.

2. In the ARLAC report by Steve he informed us of his willingness to email the annual presentation that he had given on January 19 before the ARLAC Committee to interested members of the Swanzey Conservation Commission. He also agreed to arrange a joint meeting of the Conservation Commission, Selectmen, and the Sewer Commission.

The Open Space Committee report by Deb explained that

- Ryan Owens from the Monadnock Conservancy had reported on the status of the Domina Easement and that perhaps 15,000 dollars would be sought from the Conservation Commission to secure the easement. \$50,000 will be perhaps be needed later from the land acquisition fund to complete the easement.

- Sara is in the process of setting a meeting date with Yale University concerning the Yale Forest.

- Conservation Commission members will be contacted concerning the Johnson Easement Party to be held April 20th at the Keene State Camp on Wilson Pond.

Unfortunately Buck may have to be euthanized because of illness.

SWRPC Natural Resources Committee report by Mike Morrison referred to email sent to members.

3. The date for the Swanzey Roadside Cleanup was set for April 24th, with a motion to work with Litter Free New Hampshire through Lee

Dunham, and accept the elm tree seedlings in a motion by Deb and seconded by Bob. The vote was 5-0-0-3.

Publicity will be done by Paul.

Cub scouts will be contacted and Deb will contact the Interact Club at Monadnock Regional High School.

4. Deb agreed to send a revised letter to the Board of Selectmen explaining that the Conservation Commission met with Rod Richmond and that he has agreed to get permission from the town before undertaking projects on town property. Gary corrected the original letter in which portable tree stands were referred to as being permanent.

5. Steve has written the Natural Resources Conservation Service regarding the Ash Brook bank cutting, with copy to the Keene Conservation Commission. No response yet. Michael Day has contacted them [KCC]. We will wait until next month to determine what he has found out.

6. The Felton Toyota dealership addition proposal appears not to involve environmental issues.

7. There should be an advertisement for a secretary for the Conservation Commission and for a 9th member for the Commission.

8. Alternatives to the Barry Conservation Camp will be investigated by Mike M.

The possibility of having the canoe trip on the last Saturday in August will be considered next month.

Steve handed out information sheets and identification cards for Asian longhorn beetles and for Emerald Ash Borer and for controlling their spread through the transport of fire wood. He left information and Pest Alert posters in the town hall.

8. Minutes were approved with Paul's reference to uses on town land and Steve's retention of WWTF to refer to the waste water treatment plant.

Deb made a motion to accept, with a second by Bob. The vote was 5-0-0-3.

Adjourned at 9:14 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Mike Morrison and Steve Stepenuck