

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2013

Note: Minutes are subject to review, correction, and approval by the Commission. Review, correction, and approval of minutes generally occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Conservation Commission was called to order by Chair Robert Goodrich, shortly after 4 p.m. Other Commission Members Present: Gary Coburn, Jane B. Johnson, Michael Morrison, and Stephen Stepenuck.

ABSENT

Deb Crowder, Richard Dell'Urba

1. Keene Airport Runway upgrade project.

Guest: Gregg Cohen, senior environmental analyst, Stantec Consulting, Scarborough, ME

Cohen explained that runway 220 [the main N-S runway] will be dug out, repaved, and brought up to FAA specifications relative to Runway Safety Areas [RSAs] which are required open, flat, and unobstructed areas to each side of the existing runway. The project will extend a 72-inch culvert, affecting approximately 80 ft of stream bank, and impact ca. 5500 ft² of wetlands. Since the impact will be on the South Branch, DES is "holding them to a 'Tier III' permit." Mitigation is required. They would like to see a stream restoration project in Swanzey to meet that obligation. The alternative would be that they contribute approximately \$79000 to the NH ARM fund [which funding might then well not go to any project in Swanzey].

The Conservation Commission's [CC's] plan to control erosion from the Cresson Bridge parking lot and river access area was again described to him, mentioning that we had had public access and NH Fish and Game personnel, plus an engineer who specializes in environment-related projects here in April to view the site. Stepenuck related how that engineer had recommended construction of a rain garden to collect and hold storm water that has been running across that lot for years, and that the CC has sought help from various recommended people, plus the Swanzey DPW, to try to bring the proposal to fruition to stop the siltation of the river.

Earlier that day, Mr. Cohen had been brought to that site, and to the West Swanzey AA site as possible locations for constructive use of the mitigation money. He was very interested in the Cresson Bridge site, and took notes and several pictures.

He said that he would propose such a project to his company, and if approved, to the NH-DES.

2. Minutes of September 9, 2013

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as corrected.

3. Old business.

a. Mt. Caesar logging project stopped.

3. Old business, contd:

a. Mt. Caesar logging, contd

Word had been received that the loggers had clear cut the old landing area that Jeff Taylor had said was the most valuable habitat that we had yet shown him, and should be carefully treated to preserve its "textbook early successional" character. Chair Goodrich went to the site, but was told that a member of the Open Space Committee had complained about the activity in that area, and that the project had been halted. [Later the Commission was told that the logging company said that the cessation was due not to any complaint, but to wet conditions.]

b. Board of selectmen meeting with Conservation Commission, relative to distribution of \$4500 to support the Monadnock Conservancy's proposal to conserve land in the "California Brook forest area."

That meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2013.

c. Cresson bridge rain garden project

Stepenuck reported on a meeting he had had with Shane O'Keefe relative to whose authority was needed in order to hire someone to design and/or construct that project. O'Keefe said that if funding were to come from the Conservation Fund, no separate authorization or bidding was necessary, since management or disbursement of that fund was at the discretion of the CC. Expenditures from the Land Acquisition Fund are the ones that require approval of the BOS, two public hearings, etc.

d. Membership on the Conservation Commission

Questions arose relative to who was a regular member and who an alternate, and the correct term[s] of office for each member, since that information seemed frequently to be in doubt among the members. No one present had seen any openings advertised, though all wanted there to be a full complement of members and alternates. Several names were suggested as possible new members. Concern also arose relative to the appointment of Deb Crowder to a full voting membership without the knowledge of the CC, and since she was physically unable to hold that position.

It was decided to bring up these topics at the meeting of the CC with the BOS.

e. Membership on the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee

Stepenuck needs to send an official resignation letter to the BOS.

4. New business

a. Public Service of NH wants to dig a hole on Flat Roof Mill Rd to set a new pole.

b. DES was involved with a project on Rte 12 [Gunseth].

c. An application for a septic system was submitted for 18 Ridge Rd.

d. Has anyone contacted the NH Association of Conservation Commissions relative to our current membership?

e. Coburn reported that there is logging going on near 830 Old Homestead Highway. Coburn will check at the tax collector's office re whether a permit has been issued.

5. Adjournment occurred by consensus at approximately 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen J. Stepenuck, secretary *pro tempore*, *post factum*.