

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
September 9, 2009**

A meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Present were: Paul Pinkham, David Weathers, Rob Adair, Carol Lyman, and Alternate, Linda Kearney. Also present was Forester, Don Johnson.

The Chair declared Ms. Kearney a full voting member.

**1. Approval of Minutes: 8/12/09** – The following correction was noted: Pg. 2, Item 4,a, *Mr. Pinkham* suggested Karla Allen be contacted to help with a plan for Walker Pond. **Motion by Mr. Adair, second by Mr. Weathers, that the Minutes of the Aug. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting be accepted as corrected. Carried by unanimous vote.**

**2. Public Comment:** None.

**3. Reports:**

**a. Don Johnson** – Mr. Johnson reported he had met with Mr. Pinkham at the Abenaki site to discuss the trees surrounding the buildings there, noting it has deteriorated more since the last time he had viewed it. He referred to a letter from Protection of NH Forests dated October 2005 advising they hold an easement from 1917 on the Abenaki property.

The issue of liability of the town due to the condition of the buildings there was pointed out and Mr. Johnson conceded they are in very rough shape. He noted that there are at least 6 to 8 trees in the vicinity which he considers high risk and feels the CCC would want to take them out to protect the buildings. He advised; however, it would be expensive to do because it would require climbing the trees and taking them down piece by piece. He felt the gift shop building is not too threatened, except for some big pines which could be easily taken care of – all the trees on the lot are completely mature – there are some which are valuable, some are a liability.

When asked for his recommendation, Mr. Johnson suggested as regards the trees, the next time we do something on Hubbard-Davis we could do some harvesting there, but would have to climb those trees with the buildings there. Mr. Weathers said the State was interested in either resolution or preservation. The town is planning to go in and try to make the buildings vandal-proof so that people at least cannot enter them. Mr. Pinkham said the State's Historical Commission is interested, but does not have the money to help with this. They are interested in pursuing financial aid that would allow securing the buildings so they do not deteriorate any further and would allow them to be declared an historic site. Mr. Johnson stated whoever is going to restore the buildings should allow for \$4,000 to \$5,000 to remove the trees.

Mr. Pinkham said we have been to the site three times shoring up the buildings, and there are things there that need to be catalogued. He noted the Abenaki have the responsibility for

doing any maintenance, but have not fulfilled the requirements of the deed; as a result the town could take it over. Mr. Weathers cautioned as to the ramification of doing that. Mr. Pinkham said some of the family would like to come here periodically and use the gift shop for a residence. He said it has some genuine historic significance; however, there has been no progress report from the State. He questioned Mr. Johnson as to the wisest thing to do. Mr. Weathers questioned whether there is anything we can do without climbing the trees that would be beneficial and whether it is Mr. Johnson's recommendation to selectively remove just the dangerous trees, or preserve some to have a canopy effect. Mr. Johnson said they would have to be very careful, that in this instance, if they went in and thinned it with silviculture in mind, might be opening them up to a more quick demise. Mr. Weathers questioned whether they can go in and take out the dangerous trees and have anything left. Mr. Johnson said if there were 6 or 8 taken out just around the cabins it would open it up. Mr. Weathers suggested he get in touch with an arborist for an estimate. Mr. Johnson stated a gentleman he has worked with who is a climber estimated about \$4,000 to \$5,000 to get the trees safely down – it would have to be done all by rope. He offered to take him to the site to see it first hand.

Mr. Weathers said CCC could probably put it in the budget for next year. Mr. Pinkham said we could go to the town for budget purposes, or go into our own budget to at least make the place safe until we understand what the State is going to be able to do. He stated we have some responsibility to take some action soon. We sent a letter from the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests to Selectmen in June – they complained about a snowboard ramp placed there, deterioration of walls, and missing windows. Mr. Weathers will approach Mr. Sires as to when that work is going to be done. Mr. Adair said he is not sure this is a good use for what limited funds we have, noting we are talking about old buildings that have no value. Mr. Pinkham pointed out that if kids can get in there we have some liability – we have no alternative but to make them secure. Mr. Adair said the historical significance is that this native American had a gift shop there, it was an Abenaki campground in the early years. Mr. Weathers said he could inquire of the Selectmen whether they want to remove those trees or just try to secure the site for the liability. Mr. Pinkham said we need to secure the buildings, secondly we need to discuss doing something with the trees - CCC is responsible for the forestry maintenance there; however, we do not want to do a lot to the forest until we understand the significance of the buildings. When asked if there is any revenue to be realized from taking out the trees, Mr. Johnson noted there is the possibility of potential revenue of \$3,000 to \$4,000.

Poison Ivy/Shedd Woods – Mr. Pinkham reported that some work is planned for the Audubon Society land on Rt. 16 - vegetation control dealing with knot weed, and suggested that whoever is doing that might be contacted to take care of the poison ivy problem at Shedd Woods, noting that presently that land is not usable by anyone due to the extensive growth of poison ivy. He has contacted Mr. Sires about the poison ivy, but has not had a response. It was noted there was an estimate that \$1500 would take care of it, or we could budget for it next year. Mr. Weathers' recommendation to the Board of Selectmen would be to include it in the town budget for next year. Mr. Pinkham noted there is also the question of the public's anxiety with regard to spraying pesticides.

Upcoming Budget – Mr. Johnson said he will prepare a forestry budget for next year for presentation at the next meeting, and will also provide a proposal for trail work in Whitaker Woods.

**b. Jeff Lougee** - Mr. Lougee was not present.

**c. Treasurer’s Report** – Provided 8/12/09

**d. Selectmen’s Report** – Mr. Weathers reported a meeting was held on Tuesday to discuss the bike/multi-use path along Kearsarge Road. There has been proposal to apply for a grant to complete the multi-use lane; however, the town would have to come up with matching funds if the grant is approved.

**e. Member Roundtable** - Outstanding Bill – Mr. Pinkham has received a bill from NHDOT in the amount of \$50 for the railroad crossing that we maintain in Whitaker Woods.

**4. Other Business:**

**Information Boards** – Ms. Lyman will contact Nature Conservancy to place the boards after the Rules and Regulations have been laminated.

**5. Next Meeting** – October 14, 2009.

**6. Adjourn:** Motion was made by Mr. Weathers, seconded by Mr. Adair and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary