

**MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
March 14, 2012**

The March meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Members present were: Paul Pinkham, Carol Lyman, Rob Adair, and Linda Kearney. Larry Huemmler joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes 2/8/12 Comment was made by Ms. Kearney that the subject matter should be made clear, for instance, someone who had not been present at the meeting should be able to read the Minutes and understand what is being discussed. Mr. Adair made note also that the date of the meeting in the heading read January 11th and should have been February 8, 2012. **Motion was made by Mr. Adair, seconded by Ms. Kearney and carried, that the Minutes of the Feb. 8th meeting be approved as clarified.**

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Reports:

a. Don Johnson- Mr. Johnson could not be present, no report was provided.

b. Wink Lees – TNC – Not present. Mr. Adair noted Wink Lees has written a letter apologizing for not being present more often. Mr. Pinkham stated he had received a call from TNC's Jeff Lougee who is in the process of negotiating with a property owner at Green Hills which he thought CCC might be interested in. He will be seeking financial support from the Commission.

Mr. Pinkham noted a letter had been received indicating someone wanted to buy some land along the North/South Road from the State. We have to either purchase it, or tell them we are not interested, or let them know of someone who *does* want it. The price is \$50,000. Mr. Adair noted it is an 11 acre parcel on North/South Road on the back side of Sunset Hill. There is a tennis court on the property. He felt that as conservation land it probably does not have a lot of value; it would be a key piece as recreation land, which would be his only interest in it.

Mr. Adair questioned whether the lot is presently in current use, noting it is more than 10 acres. He questioned what the tax value is as it sits and, if it is developed, whether they have to pay a current use penalty. He noted also that David Weathers had expressed concern that more and more land goes off the tax rolls. Mr. Pinkham said it is not being taxed, the State owns it. It was the general consensus that there is some aesthetic value to it along the North/South Road, it has value as a recreation trail. Mr. Pinkham felt it will depend on what the Selectmen decide. It is in relatively natural, undisturbed condition. We have until April 3rd to respond.

Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Mr. Huemmler, that the Commission recommend to the Board of Selectmen that we look at this. It follows points of our

conservation land acquisition criteria, it is recreation land, has scenic value, it is within sight of the roadway, it is a wildlife migration route – it meets three of the acquisition criteria.

Mr. Pinkham noted that Don Johnson viewed it and deemed as a timber resource it is very modest. It was noted it has visibility by the public from roadways, is of sufficient size, significant features are likely to remain intact, it is a wildlife migration route, and it is a key component to the recreation trail. **Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Upper Saco Valley Land Trust Strategic Conservation Plan, Phase I presentation – Mr. Pinkham reported there is interest on the part of USVLT to go over with us the result of their first phase of work. While the work is specific to conservation land identification, it is useful also for master plans, planning and zoning. They would like to make a power point presentation at the April meeting. Mr. Pinkham said the intent would be to see if we could get Selectmen, zoning, planning representatives to attend as they should be privy to this overview. Mr. Adair said he agrees that a week night might not be the best choice and suggested checking to see how long the presentation is, and whether there possibly is a better venue and a better time for more people to attend.

Mr. Pinkham reported he received a letter of introduction from Will Abbott who is the new Executive Director of USVLT.

Member Roundtable – Mr. Huemmler reported the Saco River Committee did not meet this past month. They are trying to get the Town Manager to set up another meeting to discuss the canoe launching situation at First Bridge.

Mr. Adair said it is too early for trail assessments, but Hurricane Irene did do some water damage on the Red Tail Trail, so they will be looking at a couple of reroutes up there this summer.

c. Treasurer's Report - Mr. Pinkham requested a year end report of expenditures for 2011. Ms. Lyman will request that information from the Town Office.

Ms. Kearney said each year there is money in the budget dedicated to Whitaker Woods, we have done a lot of work in there over the years and she questions why not use some of that money for the Smith Eastman Canoe Launch which needs to be repaired. Mr. Pinkham advised the canoe launch is maintained by Recreation Dept. money. Ms. Kearney noted Walker's Pond Trail signs, etc. need attention. Mr. Pinkham noted it is the same situation with the Abenaki site – the intent is to have it as a walk-through site, including photos, etc., and the cabins are going to be preserved – we need to put some effort into it and budget for it. It was suggested Ms. Kearney look into the Walker's Pond rehab project and report at the next meeting.

d. Selectmen's Report – None – Mr. Weathers was not present.

Adjourn: Motion was made by Mr. Adair, seconded by Ms. Kearney and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary**