

Town of Andover Conservation Commission

July 28, 2020

ZOOM Meeting

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p by Chairman Michael Palazzi.

Commission Members present: Mike Palazzi, Hank Gruner, Maryann Gile, Carrie Crompton, Gary Gile. Alternates Gary Gile and Carrie Crompton were seated as members.

Public Present: Tom Talbot, Joan Foran

2. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

MOTION: made by Carrie Crompton to accept the minutes of July 3 special meeting.

SECOND: Gary Gile

VOTE: Motion passed 5/0/0.

MOTION: made and seconded to accept the minutes of the June 24 meeting.

VOTE: Motion passed 5/0/0.

3. Public Speak

Tom Talbot addressed the question of whether the Northern CT Land Trust is the deed-holder for both of two parcels of land that are being considered for acquisition as open space by the Town of Andover. The parcel in question is a narrow 1.16-acre strip of land formerly owned by F. William Finely and Ruth F. Bell that abuts both town-owned land and the Talbot property. Don Smith, chairman of the NCLT, has expressed doubt that they own this lot. Tom Talbot assured the Conservation Commission that his 49-page booklet on the "Wildcat Lot" dated August 28, 2000, provides firm evidence that the NCLT did receive title to the Finley-Bell lot as part of the transfer of the larger 26-acre gift of land of 04/17/2000.

Changes to the Agenda

Hank Gruner suggested that we move items 5 d and e (discussion of the question of the NCLT gift and our next move for acceptance of the parcels of land) to the front of the meeting, so that Tom Talbot would not have to sit through the whole meeting before giving his presentation.

Discussion continued: Michael Palazzi has already talked with the town assessor's office, which has a record of the deed showing that NCLT owns the 1.6-acre parcel in question. Michael Palazzi will send a copy of the deed to Don Smith at NCLT.

Tom Talbot has waived his former conditions for the gift of his 8-acre property: (1) that the town accept the NCLT properties first; and that (2) the town pay the attorney fees for the transfer of the Talbot property.

Next step for the Conservation Commission: Hank will add a sentence to the cover letter prepared in June recommending that the town accept both NCLT parcels and the Talbot property. If the NCLT has not agreed by September 1, 2020, to donate the 1.16-acre lot, this lot will be dropped from the proposal.

Public Speak, continued

Joan Foran spoke on the need for the town to adopt best land management practices for its fields and parks. "We should all be on the same page of conservation of water and resources."

3. Old Business:

a) C.A.R.T. Update

Mike Palazzi provided the commission with an update of the program. The three groups currently participating are the Boy Scouts, C.E.R.T, and the Food Pantry. The Cub Scouts have resigned for lack of enough people to do the job. The sorting is still getting done.

b) New Member Update

There have been no inquiries about the two existing vacancies on the Conservation Commission.

c) Gravel Extraction Update

Hank Gruner reports that gravel extraction next to Andover Auto Parts has resumed. The owners have fallen behind on the original proposed schedule; it appears that they are extracting the gravel as they sell it, rather than all in one operation. He will try to get a better idea of their proposed schedule going forward.

4. New Business

a) IWWC and P&Z Applications

Hank Gruner reported on two new applications for developments on Hendee Road and Webster Road. He has given expert advice already to the IWWC and P&Z regarding the conservation of floodplain habitat as it relates to these applications. Hank will attend the August IWWC meeting.

Hank also reported that the town has a new Wetlands Agent, Joe Wagner, who is working 10 hours/week.

b) Review of the Whole Corridor including ERT Report

Hank is looking into the possibility of working with a student intern from ECSU to create map overlays that will help the Commission to identify other properties of interest in the Western Conservation Corridor, so that the Commission will be able to contribute well-researched recommendations for the next Plan of Conservation and Development.

c) **Mowing on Town-Owned Land**

Carrie Crompton has prepared a set of mowing and flailing guidelines for the town with a focus on conservation of pollinator habitat. She sent the document to the Commission members prior to the meeting.

MOTION: Hank Gruner moved that we accept these guidelines and present them to the BOS at their August 10 meeting, with additional language regarding modifications to the guidelines based on outcomes. Carrie agreed to write the additional language and send it to Michael Palazzi.

SECOND: Maryanne Gile

VOTE: Motion passed 5/0/0.

5. Meeting Adjourned

MOTION: Carrie Crompton motioned to adjourn,

SECOND: Hank Gruner.

VOTE: Motion passed 5/0/0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

These meeting minutes are subject to approval by the Town of Andover Conservation Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Crompton