CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: April 12, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brett St. Clair, Darlene Jarvis, George Holt, Ron Jarvis, Stan Sowle
Alternates Present: Matt Lavey, Margaret Watkins
MEMBERS ABSENT: Drew Groves
Alternates Absent: None

MINUTES: Minutes from March were accepted

OLD BUSINESS:

Botnick application update

Brett St. Clair attended the Zoning Board’s last meeting and reported that the Board had approved the family’s revised application.

Kimball Pond Conservation Area

Wildlife habitat potential (recently timbered area)

Stan Sowle walked the area with Matt Tarr who was impressed with the “field” because he believes it will provide good wildlife habitat. Matt feels that nothing needs to be done to the area for a few years though some trees will begin to grow too large eventually and need to be cut or removed. Stan suggested that the Commission consider putting in some young trees and agreed to find out if the state nursery still has any packages available. Stan credited Ed White for the terrific timber harvest.

Remedial work at dam/boat access

George Holt reported that the after-the-fact application has been accepted. Jeff Crosby will be doing the work with the Fish and Game Department paying for materials.

Pages and Hadley mill site

Lee Martel met with the Commission to determine a date/time to clear the brush from the mill site on Black Brook immediately below the dam. Brett St. Clair will notify residents that are on the Commission’s email list to ask those who are available to help. (See upcoming events)
NEW BUSINESS:

Possible workforce housing project

Ian McSweeney from the Russell Farm and Conservation Foundation met with the Commission to talk about the possible purchase of the land now farmed by immigrants and refugees. The tract situated off of Route 13 and Story Road consists of 56.8 acres, over 7 of which are in field. Mr. McSweeney is working to help the Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success (ORIS), a non-profit farm incubator program, to purchase the parcel and to continue to farm the fields. Plans for the tract of land would likely include protection for some of the wet and forested land in the form of an easement. ORIS also hopes to build 5 units of workforce housing to provide shelter for some of the families working the farm. Lee Martel asked if the families in the workforce housing would pay taxes to the town. Mr. McSweeney said he did not know if they would have to or not.

Stone Farm trail

Judy Stone, Nick Holmes, Mike Shearin, Patti Shearin, and Addison Chase met with the Commission to discuss where a pedestrian trail should be located on the Stone easement. Everyone favors running the trail by the historical features on the property. Nick Holmes suggested the trail be a loop trail that incorporates the snowmobile trail. He stressed the importance of a kiosk. Nick also said he would like to see the trail connect with other trails in town in the future. Nick agreed to flag a possible route for the trail.

Conservation Commission Roundtable

Matt Lavey attended the roundtable sponsored by Five Rivers Conservation Trust. Commission members were asked to describe the work their Commission is doing. Matt felt our Commission is accomplishing a lot compared to a number of others which are understaffed, etc.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

May 6, 2017 (Saturday) – Mill site clearing, meet at Kimball Pond boat access at 9:00 AM, please come prepared to cut brush (bring tool(s), bug spray, etc.)

NEXT MEETING: May 10, 2016, 7:30 PM

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED: Darlene M. Jarvis