

Campton Conservation Commission

Minutes of the meeting: December 10, 2008 7 PM at the Town Office

Commissioners present: Jules Doner, Lisa Doner, Jessica Halm, Jane Kellogg

1. Pattee Management Plan

The group reviewed management items to plan for as stated at the public hearing in September. One change from what was presented at the hearing is the selectmen's statement that a community steering committee is not needed and that the commission should manage the property. Lisa suggested creating a timeline for 2009 and placing property goals where we plan to address them. Discussion continued to place the following goals on the timeline. Lisa agreed to compile and create the timeline separately for our Jan. meeting:

- ~Parking lot
- ~Mowing of field
- ~Determine name for property
- ~Make sign for property, erect it on site
- ~Have a clean-up day at the Blanchard House
- ~Continue to discuss Blanchard House potential uses, whether to demolish
- ~Develop trails (in collaboration with state on Blair State Forest trails)
- ~Sell house pending town meeting approval
- ~Conduct a meeting for public input on management of conservation lands(Pattee, BWNA) @ regular meeting on April 13
- ~Continue discussions on uses of field area
- ~Revisit if house does not sell:
 - Need for exterior paint?
 - Other issues entering into 2nd winter

2. Tax Incentive Mailing

As a follow-up to last month's meeting, Jess and Melissa had worked on getting addresses of land owners with land in current use. The goal is to send a letter out to as many people as possible, so they are aware of the recently extended federal tax benefits of placing land under conservation and the 2 year window in which to act. The letter also gives contacts for further information. We had purchased limited postage, and so decided to send the mailing out to those with more than 50 acres of land in current use, approximately 50 landowners. The draft letter written by Melissa was reviewed and small changes were suggested. Jess and Melissa will get the mailing out within the next week.

3. Early Preparation for Town Meeting 09

Town Report: Jess and Melissa will work on a draft report, send it around via email and we will review, edit, and approve at our January meeting.

New Commission Recruitment: with a 6 member commission, 7 are allowed, we discussed continuing to look for new members and to be mindful of this as we meet with, work with others is important. Ideally new appointments are made in April.

Displays for town meeting, voting day: There was discussion about possibilities. Featuring the Pattee Property would be a good idea this year, as well as the property name “contest” (see below)

Pattee Property name contest: At first there was discussion about posting notices, placing newspaper notices, etc. to announce the contest in the coming weeks with a choice being made by Town Meeting. In the interest of getting lots of involvement, it was decided that having people leave ideas when they come to vote in March or at Town Meeting would get more people involved. At Town Meeting, we could encourage submissions and announce the chosen name will be announced on the website a few days later. Jane and Lisa will work on this project.

Town Meeting talking points: The warrant article asking for authorization to sell the Pattee house (being submitted by Selectmen) will come up for discussion. There was consensus that in preparation for the meeting, the commission should schedule to meet with the Select Board to discuss some of the questions that may come up from the floor and thoughts about various mechanisms for sale of the property. Jess will schedule this for hopefully sometime in January.

Next Steps for Budget: Melissa and Jane had presented the proposed CC 09 budget to the Selectmen as determined at the November CC meeting. The Select Board was in support of the budget proposal except for \$650 which are the one time expenses (sign, parking lot, electricity). They felt these costs should be taken from sale of the house. Jules was not in favor of this because he recalled language about conservation trust funds which states use for management as not permitted. During the meeting, we were unable to locate such language in materials brought to the meeting. While in general there was discussion to go along with what was requested by the Select Board, especially given the current financial difficulties communities face; there was consensus that we needed to be sure the funds were being used correctly or to not create an incorrect precedence for use of the funds. Lisa made a motion that: “We provisionally accept the current 09 budget terms as requested by the Selectmen; but that if we find language about use of trust fund money that contradicts use of the fund for property maintenance expenses, then we revert to our original budget request.” Jane seconded. The motion was unanimously accepted. Jules and Lisa will check on trust fund language and report to members by email. If needed, an additional meeting on the budget will attempt to be scheduled with the Select Board later in December.

4. FYI Items:

Pattee House: Jules had gone over to fix the exterior light with a light sensor and had discovered some moisture in the basement from a small leak. Jess followed up and found a valve from, possibly, a gravity fed line coming from east of RT 175 which had not been shut off. Jane, Jess, Jules and Melissa had met there with Lee Kidney (neighbor who knows a lot about the property) and shut off the valve, dried up the water collected under the fuel tank, cleaned off some mold that had collected in the stairway and kitchen. Additionally, it was decided to run the furnace for about 48 hours to dry things out. Jess and Ian had accomplished this. Jules had checked on things just before Thanksgiving and found things to be OK. Jules was unable to get the light sensor on the exterior light to work properly due to the type of fixture. There was discussion about the low importance of this light given the house’s proximity to neighbors taking an interest in the property. It was decided to install a low wattage bulb. There was discussion about whether it might be a good idea to run the furnace occasionally during the winter. It was determined that Jules will stop by every couple of weeks, run the furnace for a day or so if it seems necessary to keep moisture down, and keep members informed by email.

Protected River Signs: Jess reported she heard from Laura Weit from DES (rivers program) that the second set of protected river signs (for Rt. 49 crossing) will be ready soon. The town will be billed for its share by the end of the month. Jess had talked with Ann Marie about this and was assured they would be paid for upon billing. Both sets of signs will be installed by the road agent in spring. A CC member will pick the signs up in Concord when ready.

Groundwater Protection meeting: Jess reported that Tammy had been in touch the folks from Campton Village Precinct and Pierce Rigrod from DES. At the next CVP meeting (Wed., Jan. 21 @ town office) , a portion of the meeting will be devoted to this ongoing topic of discussion started at our September meeting.

New File Cabinet: Jules has purchased a file cabinet, and is giving it a coat of paint. He will bring it to the town office when ready and submit for reimbursement. Hanging files and folders are already on hand so no expenditures need to be made for them.