Draft Minutes

Exeter Conservation Commission **April 9, 2013**

Call to Order

Chairman Russell Kaphan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Nowak Room in the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were: Peter Richardson, Kristen Murphy, Town Natural Resource Planner, BOS Representative Don Clement, Don Briselden, and Carlos Guindon. Kevin Keaveney arrived at 7:10, Mike and Cynthia Field arrived at 7:15, and Allison Eberhardt arrived at 7:40.

There was no public comment.

Action Items

1. Proposal to Exchange Tax Map 39-4 South of Route 101, for Tax Map 44-2 North of Brentwood Road (Intro Kristen, Proposal Bob Webb). Kristen Murphy explained that Mr. Webb has been coming into the Assessors and Planning Departments looking to log a piece of property that was tax deeded to him 1980. Mr. Webb presented a proposal to log this piece of land [tax map 39-4 south of Route 101] and then swap it for a piece of land the town owns [tax map 44-2 north of Brentwood Road]. Mr. Webb said the property was deeded to him in 1980 and he has been paying taxes for a long time. He comes to the Commission looking for support in trading tax map 39-4 for tax map 44-2. Kristen Murphy showed a map explaining the parcel of land being discussed. She said she has explained to Mr. Webb that this parcel is within what the Commission considers Town Forest. The Town did do some research and essentially the deed history for who ownes this parcel is cloudy. Mr. Webb said that Mr. Divitori [Assessor] has proven to himself that he owns it because he bumped his taxes up.

Bob Webb went on to say he simply wants to do a trade because this lands he wants is next to his land in Brentwood.

Don Clement explained the Conservation Commission cannot make a decision on property. He said it's the Board of Selectmen's decision. However, the Conservation Commission can make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

Don Briselden asked how Bob Webb proposed to get access to log this land. Bob Webb explained in 1962 or '64 he approached from the north when he logged it. Don Briselden asked if he anticipates doing it the same way he did then. Bob Webb answered he would like to go through conservation land instead of the highway to get to the land. He said he would do the least amount of damage possible to do so.

Russ Kaphan asked Mr. Webb what he would do with this land [north of Brentwood Rd]. He answered he would graze cows and such and stated he would not be building any houses or anything of that matter. Mr. Kaphan asked if there were any more questions for Mr. Webb. Mr. Clement said I think we have all the information that Mr. Webb has provided. The group thanked Mr. Webb.

2. Term Expirations and Officer Positions

Kristen Murphy said Ginny Raub agreed to serve as Secretary and Treasurer. Chair and Vice Chair are still remaining open positions. Russ Kaphan stated he is interested in serving as Chair for a full term and asked if anyone is interested in the Vice Chair position. Carlos Guindos said he is interested in the Vice Chair position. Carlos Guindos asked for clarification as to whether an alternate can be Vice-Chair. Don Clement explained yes that was acceptable.

A Motion was made by Peter Richardson and seconded by Cynthia Field to appoint Russ Kaphan as Chair and Carlos Guindos as Vice Chair. Motion carried – all in favor.

3. Amendment to Easement for South East Land Trust Beech Hill Rd Parcel (Webb)

Kristen Murphy explained where the parcel of land is on the map provided. She explained that when the land transferred from the Nature Conservancy to the Southeast Land Trust the earlier drafts allowed for snowmobiles on the land. This was erroneously cut out and the final deed no longer permitted snowmobiles. She explained that the reason the town is involved is because they have an executive interest in the property. The amendment is a long process and ultimately requires the Attorney General to sign off on the amendment. Southeast Land Trust wants to know if the Conservation Commission is supportive of recommending the amendment to the easement to allow snowmobiles. The Commission said they would recommend approval to the Board of Selectmen.

Russ Kaphan asked if anyone was opposed to the amendment. Don Briselden stated not to his knowledge.

A Motion was made by Peter Richardson and seconded by Mike Fields for the Conservation Commission to recommend the Board of Selectmen accept this amendment to easement. Motion carried – all in favor.

Don Clement stated he will make sure this gets on the agenda at the next Selectmen meeting to approve the Conservation Commission's recommendation.

4. Task Group Updates

A. **Trails.** Russ Kaphan said that Jay Gregoire, being absent, would have informed the Commission of the next Trail Commission meeting on April 18 at 7:00 pm. Kristen Murphy said that the Comcast Cares event is April 27 and if anyone is interested in volunteering they are more than happy to accept more leaders.

B. **Monitoring.** Mike Fields said he and Cynthia Fields have been monitoring. He said they have no report on the property they were given but they are working to learn the process. He informed the Commission that it pays to study the plan of the property given to become familiar with markers, etc. He

also said it is helpful to ask property owners about pins and markers and was excited to report that the young children of an abutter were able to take them right to the property pins. Carlos Guindon said he attended the Saving Special Places conference. He said there was one session on monitoring which was well attended. He gave an explanation of the session, saying there was good feedback on the use of volunteers. He said there was a surveyor there and that he had some good suggestions. One suggestion was using flagging tape that is wider and stands out better.

C. **Raynes Farm.** Kristen Murphy said there were a couple things to talk about. She reported that the warrant article was not approved for funding repairs/replacements to Raynes Farm roof. She said the good thing about the vote was that the number of "yes" votes versus "no" votes were very close so support has grown. Kristen Murphy reminded the Commission about Exeter Arts Committee Painting and Photography Day on April 20-21. Don Clement said the Art Committee is very excited for this event. He said it is a great way to promote Raynes Farm and the barn.
Kristen Murphy told the Commission about the Woodcock Walk that Carlos Guindos hosted the prior Saturday. Carlos talked about the event. He talked about what the Woodcock bird is and does and how they saw them. He said Stratham Hill Park is also a great place to see the birds.
Don Briselden asked if anyone was scheduling a Raynes Farm Committee. Kristen Murphy stated that Kathy Norton was back and one is needed but there is no date yet. Don Briselden said the Raynes Farm Committee will need to explore ways to fundraise for the roof, which needs to be replaced. Don Clement commented that the longer they wait to get the roof fixed the worse it's going to get.

D. **Outreach.** Kristen Murphy said there were two things for Outreach to discuss. She talked about National Trails Day on June 1, 2013. She said Ginny had suggested the McDonald conservation property. Don Clement asked to specification on which easements, stating that the whole area is a real diverse piece of conservation property. Kristen Murphy talked about making a trail map brochure and Alyson Eberhardt said she would help.

E. Habitat/Wildlife, Invasives. Carlos Guindos said he had bad news. The invasive insect Emerald Ash Borer have been found in Concord and they could be heading this way. There was a discussion about the insects effects on the trees. They are ruining many ash trees. Kristen Murphy said she put info on the website to inform residents to keep their eyes out for them and tell them what they look like, what an ash tree looks like, etc.
Alyson Eberhardt told the Commission about a program she wants to develop through her work. She called it a Volunteer Phenology Monitoring Program. The idea is to look for seasonal changes of plants and animals. She is selecting species to watch and wants to collect data every two weeks. These species will be frequently seen species that local people can locate and report the data back to her. Don Clement asked if this would interact with the Climate Adaptation Program that is going on. Alyson replied yes she was having conversations with that Program. Alyson went on to say the

protocol is the same for all plants and animals. She said any data collected will feed into the national network. Kristen Murphy said it would be a good weekend training session. Russ Kaphan commented it would be good to open to the community. Alyson talked about the training for this program, saying it would not take more than two hours. Alyson said it would be easier to gather data when things are in bloom so May, June, or July would be best to do this.

F. Water Resources. Kristen Murphy told the Commission about Climate Adaptation Plan for Exeter (CAPE) on April 10 at 6:00 pm at Exeter High School. Kristen said a group of UNH researchers have paired with Exeter. Discussions start at 6:30 pm.
Kristen Murphy said the VRAP sampling starts in June and goes every two weeks testing water quality and data collection. There will be a group training session in early May. She will send out an email to that effect. Don Clement said the training session is May 25 from 9-11:30 am and if interested, to respond by May 15.
Peter Richardson said between now and end of June there will be a public meeting to discuss future of the great dam.

Regular Business

1. Treasurer's Report
Kristen Murphy spoke in Ginny Raub's absence. She said report were being done quarterly. Kristen attempted to plug in info in a spreadsheet Ginny provided but was not able to discuss the report with Ginny prior to the meeting. She went on to say that if you include everything voted on for expenditures there is $9,300. She told the Commission that there is $28,700 in the People's account much of which has restrictions on it and $9,200 in the Citizen's account.

2. Approval of Minutes: March 12, 2013
Cynthia Field mentioned a typo correcting "is" to "it" on page 1. A motion was made by Kevin Keavenly and seconded by Peter Richardson to accept the minutes of the March 12, 2013 meeting as so amended. Motion carried – all in favor.

3. Natural Resources Planner's Reports and Correspondence
Kristen Murphy told the Commission about the Technical Review Committee meeting on April 12 at 10 am. She explained they would be meeting with Waldron Associates to discuss the proposal for development of property on Holland Way, stating this is sensitive area as it is close to Dearborn brook. Kristen said the plans for this are in her office and anyone is welcome to come take a look at them.

4. Other Business

Carlos Guindos talked about the idea of using wildlife cameras to gather data to see what wildlife is present on properties. There was a discussion about what kind of

camera to use and places they could be set up. Russ Kaphan asked what the data would be used for. Carlos said it could be used to determine if wildlife use the two town forests as a connected piece. Carlos said he would like to purchase one and set it up. Russ Kaphan asked Carlos to come to the next meeting with a proposal.

5. Next Meeting - Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.
A motion was made by Don Clement and seconded by Peter Richardson to adjourn the public meeting and go to a work session at 8:27 p.m. Motion carried – all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole McCormack
Recording Secretary