

DEERFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – January 12, 2015

Members Present Erick Berglund, Deb Campelia, Serita Frey, Wes Golomb, Kate Hartnett, Dave Linden
Members Absent: Jim Deely
Visitors: Hilary Miner, Linda Lee

Chair, Serita Frey **called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM** followed by introductions of the members and visitors.

Visitor Linda Lee was introduced by Kate Hartnett who acknowledged her past work on the Open Space Plan and extended an invitation for future involvement with the DCC. Visitor Hilary Miner expressed an **interest in becoming a volunteer assisting with easement monitoring**, which, in the opinion of Ms. Frey, presented an opportunity for Ms. Miner to apply the skills she had acquired as a former student of Frank Mitchell at UNH. It was explained that the **DCC is charged with annually walking the boundaries of existing conservation easements**, making observations and reporting any activities or conditions not supported by the terms of their easement deeds.

Easement Monitoring: Six Deerfield easements were funded by the State of New Hampshire's *Land Conservation Investment Program (LCIP)*, a condition of which requires the DCC to inspect those parcels and file an annual report of its findings to the *Office of Energy and Planning*. Volunteer Al Jaeger has just **completed the monitoring on five of the six easements**; Pendleton (2), Burbank (2) and Jaeger (1). **Deb Campelia will be meeting with the owner of the sixth**, the Curry easement, which will complete the State reporting requirements for 2014. Ms. Miner was invited to join Ms. Campelia on the walk of that property.

Kate Hartnett read **excerpts from Al Jaeger's 2014 LCIP monitoring reports**, including one in which **an easement violation was reported**, and noted the process by which it was resolved. Ms. Hartnett shared, that aside from fulfilling an annual requirement, easement monitoring could be viewed as an enjoyable undertaking of walking in the woods, resulting in an opportunity to become acquainted with the property, and a chance to meet the abutters. Ms. Hartnett noted that **the questions on the monitoring forms provided a guide for the monitor** which suggest that discussion with the owners could provide insight into their "concerns, interpretations, or violations". Ms. Hartnett also suggested that a camera would facilitate documenting evidence of vehicular activity, abutter encroachments, debris piles or abandoned vehicles. The following is an excerpt from the inspection report:

List man-made alterations and management activities (conducted or planned) noting the extent, location and purpose. Examples: construction, trails, timber harvest, clearing new fields, etc. Note if management activities being conducted are in accordance with a current Stewardship / Forest Management Plan. List natural alterations / occurrences - Examples: erosion, fire, ice, invasive species, flora / fauna, etc. Note locations and attach maps, photos, illustrations, etc.

Kate Hartnett took the opportunity to explain the **significance of the LCIP easements**, an ambitious project five years in the making from 1987 to 1992, in which Deerfield availed itself of a State grant to form **a corridor of linked, private properties**. A total of \$50 million state-wide was made available for projects designed to protect the State's water supplies, of which **Deerfield's Great Brook Corridor was the largest in scope of those undertaken in the State**.

Erick Berglund suggested that a copy of the **completed LCIP monitoring reports be e-mailed to Ms. Miner for her review** when Ms. Frey transmits them to the State. Serita Frey expressed a need to confirm the status of the **Freese Town Forest annual monitoring** with Frank Mitchell, suggesting that Ms. Miner could possibly join him. Ms. Frey also suggested **scheduling the monitoring of the Kay Williams easement** (Merrill property), and will speak with Dana Merrill when she follows up with him on the results his soil analysis. Kate Hartnett **suggested requesting assistance from DCC volunteer Greg Doane**, whose land abuts the Merrill property. Erick Berglund offered to contact Mr. Doane and follow up with Ms. Campelia and Ms. Miner who are willing to accompany Mr. Doane to monitor the easement.

Approval of Minutes: Kate Hartnett moved to **approve the minutes of the December 15th meeting**. A second by Deb Campelia was followed by four votes to approve, with Serita Frey and Dave Linden abstaining due to their absence in December.

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Finance: Erick Berglund reported that the information for December Conservation Fund account activity was still forthcoming. The balance in the **Conservation Fund for November was estimated to be \$198,232.79.**

2014 Year End Review

Kaatz Site Visit: Kate Hartnett reported that she had been **unsuccessful in reaching Mr. Kaatz** to schedule the proposed January 10th site visit to this ecologically significant property on Mt. Delight Rd. Ms. Hartnett **suggested that the DCC continue to monitor developments and pursue any opportunities for conservation that may arise in the future.**

Brown's Mill Road: Kate Hartnett reported that three access roads in the subdivision on Mt. Delight, **Brown's Mill Rd., Corey Rd and Hidden Drive, have been formally accepted as Town roads** by the Select Board.

2014 Annual Report: Serita Frey inquired if there were any further additions to the DCC's annual report to the Town before the submission deadline of January 23rd. **A discussion of whether mention of an upcoming award to the DCC should be included in the report followed.** It was argued that news of the recognition would bring with it **increased understanding of the significance of having permanently protected Deerfield's seven Town Forests through the creation of the 2014 Easement Deed.** The consensus of the members was that it would be more appropriate to wait until the award had actually been presented, after which it could be reported in the *Forum* and scheduled for inclusion in the February *Communicator*. **The Union Leader and Concord Monitor could also be notified.** Serita Frey noted that *The Forest Society* would be **high-lighting the formation of the conservation easement in its upcoming edition of Forest Notes**, which is a statewide publication. **Chair Frey will contact Nik Coates at the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions to inform him that the template for the easement was available for use by other Conservation Commissions. A motion by Erick Berglund with a second by Wes Golomb to accept the 2014 Annual Report as written was unanimously approved.**

Phragmites: Serita Frey will compose a **letter informing a resident on Mountain View Road that a non-native invasive plant, Phragmites, has become established in the wetland on their property.** Ms. Frey will also extend an invitation to the February 9th meeting to discuss ways of controlling the spread of this plant. Kate Hartnett will follow up with a phone call.

O'Neal Land-Map 415 Lot 42: DCC was informed by Dave Linden of an **offer to donate Map 415 Lot 42 consisting of 5.1 Acres of land abutting the ~68 acre, Town-owned Lindsay-Flanders Conservation Area, Map 415 Lot 30.** The parcel is largely wetland with no access and also abuts 10 acres of privately conserved land on Map 414 Lot 3. The resulting **total contiguous conserved acreage would be ~83 acres.** Additionally, **the acquisition would result in the conservation of the wetland area in its entirety across the three parcels.** Members questioned both the **process of accepting a gift of land on behalf of the Town as well as the costs involved.** It was suggested that DCC could collaborate with the BOS, having the Town pick up the costs of acquisition, after which it could be included in the Lindsay-Flanders Conservation Area. Kate Hartnett felt that Mr. O'Neal should **personally approach the BOS and offer the parcel to the Town.** In September 2013, DCC contracted with the Town's forester to develop a management plan for Lindsay-Flanders, which could be amended to include the additional acreage. **Serita Frey will contact Town Attorney Jim Raymond to determine the appropriate procedure.**

Easement Violations: Dave Linden will speak with Conservation Officer Mike Matson of *New Hampshire Fish and Game* regarding **reported use of motorized vehicles on both the Freese Town Forest and the Lindsay-Flanders Conservation Area.**

Trails: Serita Frey reported that she had received an invitation to link on to a **Facebook page created for the Trails Club** which included posts from hikers using the trails. Erick Berglund suggested that Jim Deely keep the DCC up-dated, and reminded the members that in addition to the BOS being notified of the formation of the Trails Club, **the MBC had approved the allocation of \$200 for use by the sub-committee in the DCC budget.** DCC is not aware of the occurrence of any of the planned events, previously proposed by Mr. Deely. **Mr. Deely will be invited to the February**

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9th meeting to update the members on the status of the Trails Committee and his plans for 2015. At that time DCC members could offer their encouragement and willingness to help. Deb Campelia and Dave Linden restated their desire to participate and collaborate with other Trail Club members and volunteers, and Ms. Campelia will invite Denise Greig who has expressed her interest in the Trails Club.

Merrill Tree Farm: Serita Frey reviewed the **results of the soil and nutrient analyses recently performed on the proposed tree farm site** by her students from UNH. Although the pasture area was composed of good agricultural Paxton soils, costly rock removal and soil amendment would be needed to improve the forested and hayfield areas.

New Business: Wes Golomb informed members that he has **panoramic photos of Great Brook, Lindsay-Flanders and the Linden easement**. He has spoken with Kelly Roberts in the Town Clerk's Office about erecting a display in the hallway outside their office. The objective of the exhibit would be to high-light conservation and to provide a **visual means of increasing understanding by displaying the photos in conjunction with conservation maps** (possibly Bear-Paw's Conservation Plan area maps) and **stringing together the greenways**. It was suggested that the display could become a component of DCC's participation in the Sestercentennial celebration. **Mr. Golomb agreed to take the lead on the display project and Kate Hartnett volunteered to compose an accompanying explanatory text.**

Announcements: Serita Frey informed members of the **Bear-Paw Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 24th from 9 AM to 3:30 PM at the Hooksett Public Library**. The meeting will include a review of Bear-Paw's recent and upcoming projects, a presentation by author Ben Kilham and a pot-luck lunch followed by a snowshoe hike in the Clay Pond-Hinman Pond conservation area in the afternoon. Ms. Frey will e-mail details to the members.

Kate Hartnett shared a document from DCC's past with the members; a list of Deerfield landowners compiled by Joe Sears, as part of a **1990 pilot project to encourage the donation of conservation easements**. Deerfield was one of eleven participating towns providing **promotional information "kits" to landowners**. Serita Frey will scan and e-mail the document.

Erick Berglund moved and Dave Linden seconded a **motion to adjourn at 9:05 PM**.

The Next Meeting is Scheduled for Monday, February 9th

(Please check the website for scheduling changes)
townofdeerfieldnh.com

The draft minutes were prepared and submitted by Judy Marshall. Final revisions to these minutes will be contained in the minutes of the following meeting, after approval by the Deerfield Conservation Commission