

Huntington Conservation Commission (HCC) Meeting

March 12, 2009

Minutes approved unanimously April 9, 2009

Meeting began 7:02pm, meeting adjourned 9:13pm

In attendance: Wally Jenkins, Alan Brace, Steve Hagenbuch, Laura Hill Bermingham, Amy Dohner, Tyler Miller, Margaret Fowle, Aaron Worthley

Huntington resident attending: Roman Livak

I. Wayne Curley, newly elected Huntington Selectboard member

- Selectboard revisiting the budget for the year and is asking each committee to examine budget cuts might be made
- Committee members have attended Selectboard meetings in the past to explain the conservation fund
- Selectboard would like to implement committees attending Selectboard meetings to discuss annual priorities, etc.
- The Selectboard will strive to decrease parallels among town committees to get different committees to work together, perhaps bringing committees together in 1 large meeting?
- Aaron described the 10 year Town Forest Management Plan and State of the Forest report, which describes the current state of the town forest
- The Town Forest Management Plan document requires signature of the Selectboard, Aaron will send finalized copy of both documents to Wayne

II. Sugarmakers Openhouse

- Open house is Saturday, March 28, 2009
- Steve Hagenbuch and Margaret Taft have published ads in local papers
- Both stores and library has 250 brochures
- New sugarhouse on the list (Maple Wind Farm)
- Monday prior to openhouse, put up sandwich boards – Wally will take care of doing this
- Last year Tyler passed out brochures to all sugarmakers on the day of, includes a map, etc.
- Laura, Amy, and Margaret will help Steve get the brochures out
- Next meeting: discuss thank you note to send to all sugarmakers

III. Town Forest Management Plan Finalization

- HCC members gave final edits to Margaret Fowle who will give the master document to Heather Pembroke
- Aaron will finalize the maps, format them for a page, and compile all into 1 pdf to go at the end of the State of the Forest report
- Heather should number the maps as Map 1, 2, etc. and pictures as figures throughout document
- Insert maps before the Appendices, after References
- Aaron urges us to continue looking into the findings of the Ancient Roads Committee and using the potential ancient road near the town forest for access
- Steve will finalize Heather's edits on the Town Forest Management Plan and then contact Mike Snyder to finalize the Town Forest Management Plan (by April)

- Plan for a May presentation of final draft of the Town Forest Management Plan to Selectboard for adoption
- Alan has concerns over the wording in the State of the Forest report about accessing the Town Forest and wanted to make sure the is owner-friendly

IV. Town Forest conservation options discussion

- Town forest parcel is owned by the town of Huntington
- There exist some land use restrictions (elevation, etc.)
- One of the goals of the Conservation Fund includes conservation of large blocks of non-fragmented forested land
- Development does not seem to be an imminent threat, although there may be a long-term threat
- The HCC can donate development rights to land trust and the Conservation Fund can be used to pay these costs
- One party holds land, other party holds development rights
- Another option may be the new Farm Bill, which has an acquisition act for town forest, but may not provide funding for land conservation
- Motion by Amy Dohner to Table discussion until the April meeting where we can discuss how to bring up this discussion to the Selectboard
- Seconded by Aaron Worthley
- Motion unanimously approved

V. Trail work

- Tyler got a message from the Trail Grant administrator, but has not talked to her in person
- Tyler will send out an email when he gets word

VI. Mail, Minutes

- Changes made to February minutes
- February minutes unanimously approved
- No mail

VII. HCC Membership

- This is Aaron's last meeting as HCC chair
- A tremendous thanks to Aaron for his 8 years of service on the HCC!
- Roman Livak and Laura Hill Bermingham are both interested in the HCC appointment position
- Both Roman and Laura submitted letters of intent to the Selectboard
- Next Selectboard meetings are on Monday, March 16, 2009 or April 6, 2009 at 7pm
- The process includes the Selectboard making the appointment, but HCC members can make endorsements

VIII. HCC organization/files/questions for departing Chair/roles & responsibilities, etc

- Single chair or co-chair organization is fine
- Aaron suggests that we make it a priority to organize the chair during the next meeting

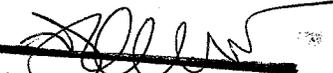
- Aaron emailed Dan Stoddard about updating the website with current members, posting the Conservation Fund application, and eliminating the Conservation Commission link originally designed by Tania O'Neal
- AVCC listserv – HCC members are part of this listserv
- Designate 1 person to as Heidi Racht's main contact – Aaron has received environmental permit applications (especially waste water permits)
- Aaron has a bunch of documents he will sort through and then give to another member
- Contact Ed about getting space for files in the town office
- Aaron will burn a CD with all HCC-related electronic files
- Aaron would like to stay on the HCC listserv
- Aaron would like to see all HCC reports (e.g., scenic inventory, Huntington River corridor plan, etc.) catalogued and stored in the Huntington library instead of in the town office – keep in mind for the future and hopefully this task will be completed

IX. Salamanders

- Steve and Wally will help put up the signs – it would be good to put up in advance to the spring migration so people recognize the signs prior to the crossing
- Signs will go at the base of Sherman Hollow and at Gillette Pond north and south-end
- Amy has the list of people interested in monitoring and will send out the email from last year, including information about monitoring training workshops
- Aaron and Wally have previously recorded salamander data on date/time, place, species counts, alive/dead
- We should post a Front Porch Forum email asking people to slow down and watch for salamander crossings
- Email Heidi and ask her to send email to her list
- Also, possibly an article in the Times Ink

X. Retreat

- April 5th 2009 HCC retreat and appreciation party for Aaron
- 2-4pm meeting, 4pm+ party/potluck dinner to follow? We will finalize the place and time over email
- The retreat time and place will be officially warned

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 DATE 4.10.09