

**Weathersfield Conservation Commission**  
**Thursday, October 27, 2022, 7 PM**  
**Weathersfield Center Meeting House, Center Rd**

Present: Howard Beach, Cheryl Cox, , Ryan Gumbart, Jeff Pelton, Roy Burton, Ellen Clattenburg

Guest: Michael Stankevich

Minutes: Cheryl Cox moved and Jeff Pelton seconded her motion to accept the minutes as sent. The only comment was how complete the minutes (taken by Heather Shand) were. All voted in favor.

Scheduling: Our next meeting is scheduled for Thanksgiving Day. This meeting will be canceled and replaced with a meeting at the Proctor Library on November 9 at 6:30.

Town Forest:

- Cabin removal: There is ½ day left of cabin removal. Given the time of year and everyone's schedules, it was decided to finish this up next spring.
- Kiosk: Matt Keniston is still interested in helping to build it. It was decided to postpone the construction till next spring. Ryan will let Matt Keniston know and Ellen will let Bibens (Peter Torney) know.
- Ryan clarified the status of the Abbott easement: There was an agreement to forgive the taxes owed the town in exchange for access and parking. This was never finalized. Then there was a decision to put up for tax sale, but the taxes were then paid by an individual. The bottom line is that the town has no access to the Town Forest from the town of Weathersfield. Jeff Pelton pointed out that the Abbots have been generous allowing us to access the forest (for cabin removal) when we ask for this. The Johnson property still cuts off access (beyond the Abbot line) and he believes that the state highway right of way access to get by the Johnson property was a temporary agreement which has expired.

Waterway naming project:

- The WC Commissioners had received a copy of the draft proposal and map supplied by the Regional Planning Office.
- Following the letter to all taxpayers, Ryan had received 8 responses. Michael Stankevich was in attendance on the part of Connie Kincaid-Brown who was concerned about the paucity of Abenaki names and whether more recognition could be given to inhabitants who preceded white settlers. Jeff Pelton described his efforts to give recognition to Abenaki names through his research (Where the Great River Rises) and interview with Donna and John Moody, Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions, Norwich, VT, and has included the Abenaki names they supplied as variant names in the stream names. The WCC will also include a statement in the draft proposal acknowledging clearly that white settlers

followed the original Abenaki people who lived (and still live) in the area. Jeff will edit his list of streams to be sure the Abenaki names that are known are included.

- Mike Stankevich also asked about streams that arise in one town and then enter Weathersfield (or vice versa) and have we been in touch with those towns about the project. Jeff will email those towns to explain the project, get their thoughts.
- All agreed that it will be critical to have specific knowledge of the stream regulations so that when we present to the Select Board (and they ask), we can show that “blue line streams” (that is, streams that appear on the official maps as blue lines) are regulated whether they have a name or not and whether they are permanent or intermittent. Jeff will check with Marie Caduto and Jennifer Runyon, Ellen will check with Hank Ainley.
- Since Plains Brook has given rise to questions, the suggestion was made to get everyone together who has property on Plains Brook to have a discussion, answer questions. Ryan will pull these names and addresses together.

#### Municipal Planning Grant:

- Jason Rasmussen emailed Ryan and others about this grant opportunity. Because of the town plan and the lack of specificity about rural character, forest fragmentation, habitat blocks and wildlife/forest connectors, inventories and maps – all information needed for the Town Plan, he suggested a study related to wildlife and rural character. Ryan passed this by the Planning Commission but they can't get through their agenda as it is so they suggested the WCC apply for a grant. “Rural character,” the primary goal in the town plan, is subjective and hard to define. Perhaps a contractor can help us define what we mean by this. We might be able to include recreational opportunities and access to them as well.
- The purpose of the grant will be to hire a contractor to better inform us. The Regional Planning Office can be the contractor (though they cannot write the grant and be the contractor, so we will develop the proposal.) Once we have a proposal, we will take it to the Selectboard for approval. The grant is due Dec. 1.
- The 10% match could come from the town or the land use budget.
- Since the planning commission will meet on the 14th and 28th, we will have a special meeting on **Nov. 9 at 6:30 at the library** to work on this. We must come up with a very concise goal.

#### ARPA funds:

- Ellen must add more information to the ARPA draft she has submitted to the WCC for discussion.
  - Nancy McNemeny could do the photography. Her fees are \$75/hr for a shoot – and we should aim for 4 seasons.
  - Use metal posts not wood? Ellen will investigate these costs.

- Mike Stankevich explained that Doolittle's can print on adhesive vinyl, apply to a aluminum backing, and cover with a UV-prevention clear laminate on top for a likely 10 years of protection.

Budget:

- Jeff had received \$35.70 from Hodgden Brothers for the copper from the cabin

Updates from other boards:

- Ryan gave a brief land use update, noting the PUD has not changed; what types of use tables have been added (i.e. what uses are permitted)
- Town Plan – needs to be cleaned up (a lot is outdated)
- Town energy section – Jason Rasmussen is tasked to come up with a completed draft based on the discussions

Other:

- A winter talk is still to be determined – everyone is too busy to do it.

Cheryl Cox made a motion to adjourn at 8:53 pm. Seconded and approved. Thanks to Mike Stankevich for attending.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Clattenburg, secretary

Next meeting Nov. 9, 6:30 pm, Proctor Library. The Thanksgiving Day meeting is canceled.