

Hopkinton Conservation Commission
December 16, 2014 Meeting
Held at Town Hall - 7:00PM

Approved Minutes

Present: Lee Wilder, Ron Klemarczyk, Rob Knight, Erick Leadbeater, Cleve Kapala, Jed Merrow, and Doug Giles.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Chairperson Lee Wilder.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Emerald Ash Borer update from Tim Fleury and Amy Papineau from the Merrimack County Extension Service and Molly Heuss from NH Forests and Land. They have found a few infestations in Hopkinton, and are continuing to monitor for other infestations.
There are three options for trees on roadsides or landscaped areas: ignore the infestations; treat trees indefinitely; or treat just some of the trees each year. Treatment by injection costs about \$10 - \$18 per inch of trunk diameter and lasts for a couple of years. No treatment eventually incurs the cost of tree removal. Infested trees will die unless treated, and it is better to remove infested ash trees early. It is more expensive and dangerous to do it later after they have died.
The extension service will work on publicity: post information at Town Hall and Library; have a display at the town meeting; link their website to the HCC web page.
HCC approved monitoring and parasitic wasp release on town lands. However no trees should be cut without prior HCC approval, so HCC can inform abutters and hikers.
2. Patti Tompkin of Apple Tree Lane was introduced. She is interested in the work of the HCC.
3. Minutes from November 18 meeting were approved.
4. Treasurer's report through 11/30/14 was accepted.
5. Payments approved:
Chuck Rose \$1,850 as previously approved for drainage work.
Five Rivers \$17,611.94 for legal expenses, stewardship, and operating support in connection with the Dustin conservation easement. Rob Knight spoke on behalf of Five Rivers and abstained from the vote.
Five Rivers \$1,319.55 for legal expenses incurred in conjunction with the Bohanan Outlot. Rob Knight spoke on behalf of Five Rivers and explained the town's title to the property is clouded, so it is unlikely Five Rivers can move ahead with a conservation easement. However legal expenses were incurred by Five Rivers and the HCC had committed to paying up to \$10,000 transaction costs. Rob Knight reclused himself from the discussion. **The HCC agreed to pay** the legal expenses and to cancel the \$10,000 check to Five Rivers earlier approved for the Bohanan Outlot.
6. Bohanan Outlot: Authorized Rob Knight and Ron Klemarczyk to approach persons with ownership interests in the lot to discuss acquisition of the interests by the HCC.
7. Brockway Nature Preserve:
 - A. Lee Wilder reported that the beavers are gone and the water level has gone down to the bottom of the culvert. Lee will send NH Audubon copies of the communications from LCHIP and DES and the Hopkinton Highway Dept. regarding the problems with the dam and flooding.

- B. Beyer Lot conservation easement: NH Audubon has not responded to inquiries as to the status.
- C. Audubon communication: A representative from NH Audubon will attend the HCC January 2015 meeting. **If it can be found**, the HCC should review the Brockway MOU prior to the meeting. NH Audubon will be requested to bring a copy of the Osborne instructions to the meeting.
8. Trails Committee Report: Cleve Kapala reported that “No Trespassing” signs were posted along the First Parsonage Road by an abutter.
 9. Kimball Lake Cabins: The OSC suggested the HCC directly approach the abutter regarding purchase of the strip of land with the well. Lee Wilder and Cleve Kapala will meet with the abutter.
 10. Monitoring Murphy/Rose and Janeway #1 properties for SPNHF: Lee Wilder reported that **the SPNHF currently does not want** to assume monitoring responsibility. Rob Knight will look at the conservation easement to ascertain the original agreement.
 11. “Wash-outs” on Old Stagecoach Road: Rob Knight passed HCC concerns along to Neal Cass.
 12. Change of Use Tax: Cleve Kapala presented summaries of income and expenses for the period 2010 to 2014. After discussion **the HCC** agreed that it makes sense to ask for an increase in the change of use tax percentage that the HCC gets, but the request should be put off until the 2016 town meeting.
 13. Continuing stewardship and maintenance of town conservation and forest lands: Agreed that land ownership entails costs. Much of the work is currently done by volunteers, but someday it may be necessary to pay for maintenance. The HCC should plan for the future. To be discussed further at the next meeting.
 14. Rachel Johnson lot encroachment: Lee Wilder reported that the abutter removed the brush piled on town property. **In a voice mail left with the abutter**, Lee offered to move the HCC property signs to the sides of trees, rather than facing the abutter’s property.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Rice lot use: HCC received a request from a mountain bike group to extend mountain bike trails from flood control land to the Rice lot. **After discussion of the various uses each conservation lot is best suited for, it was** agreed that the Rice lot should be left in a natural and unimproved state, without trails.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Minutes submitted by Rob Knight, Secretary

Next HCC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 20 at 7 PM at Town Hall.

Lee is the host.