

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING  
February 13, 2019

PRESENT: Bob Boynton, Chairman, David McTigue, Vice Chairman, Karen Miller, Lori Rautiola, Secretary and Alternate

ABSENT: Jack Messe, Matt Oliveira, Michael Bara, Kleta Dudley (SoRLAC Rep),

The meeting was called to order at the Town Office on February 9, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

The minutes of the January 9 meeting were reviewed. Bob made a motion to approve the minutes as written. David seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The December 12, 2018 meeting minutes were reviewed. Bob made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Karen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Committee Reports:**

**Signs:** David noted the Nussdorfer sign is ready to hang up. Bob noted it will look nice near the parking area. Bob noted if time allows, a sign for the Johnson Property should be next on the list.

**Lands:** The land criteria worksheet was brought up and Bob stated he felt the Commission was wasting time on this worksheet due to the fact there is not a lot of land in Town that is not already protected by Zoning. Bob continued stating it would be more beneficial to protect some land by putting an easement on it and it would more cost effective.

The Commission discussed the future of land protection. Bob gave some examples of different types of land protection. 1) Purchase- third party easement holder. 2) Third party would hold the easement. 3) gifts 4) donations (in town only).

Mansfield Meadow, the Williston parcel, the Mansfield-Tuttle and Hampshire Country School were the most recent purchases that were put into protection. Between these four properties the Commission has spent about \$400,000. Bob noted one solution to protecting land at a reasonable cost would be to find private easements. Bob suggested members look for land worth protecting and then send out a formal letter to the owner to find out if they would have interest in putting their land into an easement. David noted it was a good strategy. Bob stated there are many benefits for the landowner when putting a Conservation easement on a property, a significant tax break would be just one benefit. Karen asked if it would be worthwhile to have someone come in and give a demonstration to explain to residents what the benefits would be and Bob noted it depends how many people would be interested.

**Water Resources:** Bob gave a demonstration with the GIS layers showing the downtown area. He noted in 1997 a warrant article was passed to spend \$750 on a groundwater survey of the downtown area. This area is under a lot of stress and remains under stress today. Twelve tests found coliform present in water and the water was classified as undrinkable. Bob stated the Town did not do anything further. There was discussion on this issue. Karen mentioned inquiring with DES and have another survey done. Bob stated he has already inquired with DES and that is an option to use them, but the Commission should seek an alternative lab, such as ChemServe because the cost is usually less. David noted ChemServe comes out and takes the sampling versus doing it yourself. Bob questioned if members felt this would be a worthwhile project. Karen stated if it is affecting the groundwater, it is important. David agreed; however he questioned what the consequences will be because this would be a huge expense to the homeowner to fix problems to be identified. Bob asked members if they would be willing to spend \$5k to test some

wells in the downtown area. Karen stated there should be more research done first but would mostly likely agree to spend that and see how many wells we could test for that amount.

Bob made a motion

The meeting at adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola  
Secretary