

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

March 13, 2019

PRESENT: Bob Boynton, Chairman, David McTigue, Vice Chairman, Karen Miller, Michael Bara, Matt Oliveira, Kleta Dudley (SoRLAC Rep), Lori Rautiola, Secretary

ABSENT: Jack Messe

The meeting was called to order at the Town Office on March 13, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

The minutes of the February 13, 2019 meeting were reviewed and the following corrections were made: under lands, second paragraph, change the wording to read "Third-party would hold easement." Under water resources change the word chlorophyll to coliform. Last paragraph after expense to homeowner add "to fix problems to be identified." Bob made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections. David seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Bob displayed a map online using the GIS layers showing parcels in town over 25 acres. He noted the Commission should be seeking land to purchase. The current use funds should be used to purchase the land, adding the funds can also be used to protect groundwater. There was discussion on using some of the CU funds to protect the natural resources in town. Kleta recalled the visit from the assessors, Jim Coffey and Jeanne Cunningham and questioned if the Commission would be willing to assist financially with updating the tax maps. Bob noted that may set a bad precedent and it is not a protecting our resources.

Water Resources: There was discussion on whether or not the Commission should test some wells in the Center Village area at the expense of the Commission. Kleta questioned if a homeowner's well was tested and found to be contaminated would the Commission then assist the homeowner with the next steps. Bob responded, that would not be in the Commission's purview, adding the Commission's mission is to protect the town's natural resources including groundwater. Kleta mentioned testing the wells is not protecting the groundwater, it would just make people aware of protecting it. Bob stated the Commission would be protecting it sampling the water and reporting the results back to the Selectmen.

The Commission continued the discussion on testing wells in Center Village. There was mention of a letter and survey that would be sent out to selected residents in Center Village. Matt questioned where the data would be sent and Bob stated the Commission would compile a report showing what was found, adding any recommendations, and bring it forth to the Selectmen. Matt stated testing a couple wells would be a good idea and Bob responded stating they should test more than five. Matt questioned what types of contaminants the Commission would be testing for, adding things such as nitrates or arsenic, uranium should be included in the test. Bob noted fluoride would be something to test for; adding he does not want to cut corners on the testing as it may affect people's health. Matt stated it is not the Commission's purpose to protect the homeowner's health. Bob stated if there is coliform and bacteria in the groundwater and the Commission does not do anything to inform the people and protect it then we are not doing our job. Kleta agreed with Matt and stated it is not the Commission's job to ensure the public's health.

Matt suggested Bob find the square footage of the area to test and Matt will drop a grid, then one can determine which wells to test; adding, testing ten wells would be sufficient but did not think there was a need to test 50 wells. Bob suggested spending a bit more money to have ChemServe design a test. Matt disagreed, stating ChemServe is a lab, not a consultant. Matt stated the Commission should follow the same procedures as they did with the Page Hill dump site. David commented he liked Matt's idea to follow the same process as the dump site and sample wells in the down gradient area. Karen agreed stating it is a good idea to take the same approach.

It was determined the survey from the Page Hill dump will be modified to Center Village. Michael noted to determine a plan for water sampling and make a note on the survey that this is part of a multi-year plan. Bob asked David to make the necessary changes to the Page Hill dump well survey. Kleta noted to add that professionals will be sampling the water. It was determined that the surveys will be sent out in May, 2019 and the Commission is hopeful to test the wells in July. The Commission also discussed publishing their plans and concerns in the newspaper and on the Commission's webpage.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola
Secretary