

NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
February 16, 2016
MINUTES

Members present: Kevin Fife, Sterling Blackey, Dave Krause and Charlie Page. Also present: John Viare and George Howe.

Stocking Knowles Pond: John Viare of NH Fish & Game was present to discuss the possibility of stocking Knowles Pond with Rainbow and Brown Trout. He stated that the pond is a great biological fit for trout. He acknowledged the concern of the Commission that stocking trout would create overcrowding of the pond, but as no gasoline motorized boats are allowed crowding should not be an issue. He suggested a small stocking of 500 Rainbow and 250 Brown Trout. Sterling Blackey stated that his biggest concern is the trash and bait cans left behind by fishermen. Mr. Viare agreed this can be an issue and suggested that the stocking could be stopped if there are problems. He added that F&G has signs available relative to misuse of the area, etc. Kevin Fife commented that if it were limited to fly fishing there would be less trash, but people would fish with worms anyway. John Viare noted that the pond is perfect habitat for trout but it won't support trout without stocking, therefore if there are problems with fishermen the state will simply stop stocking. There was further discussion on the impact on loons, the means of informing the public the pond is stocked and the impact on the pond in general. Charlie Page asked about Fish & Game's experience with other similar ponds. Mr. Viare referred to a similar pond in northern NH where there has been a good response. The general consensus of the Commission members was the concern of overuse of the pond and the litter left behind. Mr. Viare stated that it is probably too late to provide fish for the 2016 season so the Commission has time to discuss the issue for the 2017 season.

Lot line adjustment between U7 lot 101 and U7 Lot 101-1: George Howe, owner of Lot 101-1 presented a proposal for a lot line adjustment of about 32 feet along the tree line west of his home from the road to the river. After review of the plan, the required process for moving ahead with the line adjustment was discussed. The area in question does not visually impact the Granite Mills property as it seems to be part of the Howe property already. Dave Krause, who drew up the plan, stated that the Howe's have been using the property since before the town purchased Lot 101. As there was question about the future of a pedestrian bridge and its location, Dave will check with Lisa Martin to determine if the old bridge abutment would be used for a new bridge. If that is the case, Mr. Howe stated he would be ok with angling the lot line to allow access to the abutment, or grant an easement over his property for a bridge. After further discussion, Sterling Blackey moved, seconded by Charlie Page to relate to the Selectmen that the Conservation Commission does not have concerns with the proposed lot line adjustment and that Dave Krause will check on the potential bridge location. As this property was purchased with Conservation Funds, any proceeds from this transaction should be returned to the Conservation fund. Motion passed with 3 yes votes and Dave Krause abstaining.

Further trout stocking discussion: Kevin Fife stated that his biggest concern is the trash left behind by fishermen, noting that the Stewardship Committee had declined stocking several years ago for that reason. Sterling Blackey commented that the pond is already heavily used. Charlie Page acknowledged the concerns about trash and over use but that the upside would be great

fishing. He added that he regularly fishes in Little Diamond Pond and doesn't see trash. He suggested giving it a try and see what happens. If there is too much trash and pressure on the pond then stop stocking. Dave Krause agreed it might be good to try it for one year, but Sterling Blackey was concerned that the overcrowding won't stop once fishermen discover the pond. It was agreed to put trout stocking on the next meeting's agenda.

Knowles Pond dock: Charlie Page informed members that the dock is in bad condition and either needs to be pulled out or repaired before someone gets hurt. He is willing to do the repairs if it is to remain on the pond. He will get an estimate of cost to repair the dock. There are also dead trees around the dock area which should be removed. A spring clean up will be scheduled.

Wood Duck box: Charlie Page reported that he found an appropriate tree to locate a Wood Duck box in the first beaver pond on the Sotir property. Kevin Fife will install the box while there is ice on the pond.

Minutes: Dave Krause moved, seconded by Sterling Blackey to approve the minutes of December 16, 2015 as read. Motion passed.

Oak Hill property: Dave Krause explained the proposed land swap by an abutting property which doesn't give the town any better access. It was agreed that unless an access through the abutting property can be found there would be no advantage to do the land swap and it would be better to sell the whole parcel.

Bobcat season: The Commission has been asked by a resident if it would consider posting the town's Conservation properties if a bobcat season is approved by Fish & Game. Members discussed this and concluded that since a written trapping permit is required they would simply not sign a permit. There was concern that if trapping were allowed on the properties there would be the danger of dogs being trapped.

Correspondence:

- Barry Conservation Camp newsletter
- NHACC dues – Sterling Blackey moved, seconded by Kevin Fife to defer payment of NHACC dues. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliza Conde, Secretary

Minutes approved 03-23-2016