

Lebanon Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting, 5/11/09
Minutes

Call to order, 4:30 p.m.

Members present: Keith Laporte, Marc Lang, Alton Blodgett, Jan Fitter, Howard Wayland, Emery Gluck (4:45), Jon Slate, Toni Willard (4:50)

Member absent: David Scata

Also present: Phil Chester, Town Planner; Tom Connelly, Public Works Foreman; Wayne Budney, President, New London County Farm Bureau

Marc appointed Jon Slate as acting alternate.

Tom Connelly explained patterns of heavy littering and difficulties preventing and enforcing. Even if a name is found and the matter turned over to the police, guilty parties have moved or shift the blame. No solutions found to date. Card Street has been a bad site. North Street has been quiet for a few years but now is particularly bad because of large objects (a car body, a load of pallets) being thrown into the brook. Discussion of erecting obstacles. Discussion of proposing a town ordinance with fines to show the town is serious. Phil will look into it.

Wayne Budney, as private citizen, showed the plaque he has been working on for donation to Town Hall to recognize those who have preserved their land. The plaque that the supplier created did not come out as indicated by the proof – it is difficult to make out the image. Solutions were discussed, short of the expense of starting over. Wayne will work on it. The commission appreciates his effort on a really good and generous idea.

Wayne, as Farm Bureau representative, distributed a proposed local Right-to-Farm Ordinance. People are drawn to Lebanon because of agriculture. It creates an attractive landscape, and the farmer is the landscaper on a large scale. The Town recognizes the economic, social, and environmental value of farming and has a policy to preserve and promote farming. Residents and potential residents should know that Lebanon is a farm-friendly town and should expect conditions associated with farming. Town officials and employees should know that this is Town policy. An ordinance would reinforce right-to-farm as Town policy and give state statutes local exposure. Delay could undermine farm preservation efforts because circumstances are changing.

Discussion of Conservation Commission proposing the right-to-farm ordinance to Selectment and Town Meeting. Consensus that the commission should do so. Action tabled until June meeting, to which members should bring their ideas about wording of the ordinance in preparation for a motion. AFT's "Planning for Agriculture" includes good discussion and examples of ordinances.

Motion to approve minutes of 4/6/09 regular meeting and 4/23/09 special meeting seconded and passed unanimously.

Property 09-1: Consensus that the commission does not want to pursue purchase and that, should the property change hands, the commission should consider approaching the new owner about donation of a conservation easement to help protect Lake Williams, the Airline Trail, and the property itself.

Phil distributed descriptions of delinquent properties coming up for foreclosure from Joyce Hoffman. Consensus that none are suitable for preservation efforts.

The owners of natural resource property 09-2 will meet with Phil and Marc on Friday, 5/15, to discuss the possible donation of a conservation easement. Rating tabled until next month; consensus that this property will rate very high. Motion to recommend that open space fund money be used for appraisal and survey, if the owners commit to an easement; seconded and passed unanimously.

The owner of agricultural property 09-C is applying to the state PDR program. Jay Dipple would like the town to cover appraisal and survey costs. The property was rated; score is 18. Motion to hold a site walk May 20, 4:30 p.m.; seconded and passed unanimously.

Letters of support for Mindel, Cyr, and Slate USDA grant applications were read. Motion to submit these letters of support for inclusion with the grant applications; seconded and passed unanimously.

Phil handed out Lebanon land cover map; discussion.

Motion to adjourn at 5:52 pm; seconded and passed unanimously.