

Minutes of meeting, February 9, 2012

The Cumberland Conservation Commission (CCC) met on February 9 at 6:30pm at the Arnold Mills Community House, 75 Hillside Rd., Cumberland with George Gettinger presiding. In attendance were Julie Guerin, Julie Medeiros, Mike Scalzi, Greg Myers, and Dick Morrissey. Guests were Mayor Dan McKee and Christopher V. Carcifero, Neighborhood Development Planner.

Minutes: Minutes from the January meeting were approved.

Treasurer's report: Dr. Gettinger reported that no expenses have been incurred for the current fiscal year.

Old Business

Sixth/Education Village Proposal – Mayor McKee presented the background and status of the project. Discussion to date has been conceptual, and the CCC will be included going forward during the vetting process of all properties and proposals being considered. A feasibility study is to be conducted and will include potential environmental impacts. Members participated in a question and answer session following the presentation. Ms Guerin and Dr. Gettinger will conduct further research into the purchase of the Monastery property in three sections, as the Management Plan refers to only two purchases.

Monastery trails – Dr. Gettinger offered to contact a representative of the National Park Service who may be able to assist efforts in developing trails. Mr. Morrissey reported that he is working on signage for the trails. He found that any proposal must be approved by the Town Council, but doesn't require approval by the Planning or Legal Depts. He also reported that the head of the RI Surveyor's Association will help with GPS/GIS mapping of the trails at no charge.

Photo contest – plans will be finalized in the March meeting with news releases created.

Franklin Farm – Ms Guerin reported that elections for officers and directors were held at the recent association meeting. Mr. Frank Geary is coordinating a project to reshingle the barn with students from the Woonsocket Vocational/Technical School. Dr. Gettinger read a letter from Mr. Geary requesting a donation from the CCC to be designated toward the barn restoration. Members voted unanimously to donate \$500.

CCC Term Reappointments – Three members were reappointed for 3-year terms and one member for a 2-year term at the Town Council meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 1. This will bring the Commission into compliance with the By-laws, which state that no more than three members should have terms expiring in the same year.

New Business

Diamond Hill Park Proposed Improvements – Mayor McKee addressed questions on this project as well. The goal is to bring arts into the area, but not to become a large venue such as Great Woods in MA. A grant application has been submitted with matching funds to be applied from a voter-approved recreational bond. The dollars have not been designated for a specific purpose yet. As with the Sixth Village, the project is in the conceptual stages. The CCC will be included going forward in further discussions.

EPA Urban Waters Grant – Mr. Carcifero presented the project and timeline which will be supported by the federal Urban Waters Grant. It will address monitoring of water quality in the lower Blackstone River and focus on educating students in lower income/minority households over a two year period being in August, 2012. Members unanimously voted to sponsor the project with volunteer time as needed. The following is an excerpt from the project plan:

“Green/open space will be reclaimed and restored within the John H. Chafee BRVNHC along with the expansion of green space and the creation of a new river/water front and an expansion of the existing bike path all for public use. Restoration of the river bank along with riparian zones to regenerate wildlife populations will be implemented to assist in the environmental management of the Lower Blackstone River area. Trainings and workshops will be designed to assist and educate homeowners and businesses in environmental issues and

their impact on the environment.”

Program for Canada Goose Management – Dr. Gettinger read a letter from the Eastern RI Conservation District, who will be holding workshops during the month of February in humanely managing the goose population.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie M. Guerin

Secretary