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MINUTES
June 27, 2022

MEMBER ROLL CALL:

Marcia McKenna, Chair – Excused
Marc Ohlson – Excused
Ralph Lutjen – Present
Noreen Downs - Present
Robert Stone - Excused

Ted Slader – Present
Emily Bass – Present
Mike Mosher - Present

OTHERS PRESENT:

Carol Dandeneau - Madison TV,

MEETING POSTED: June 20, 2022 at Madison Town Hall Upper & Lower, Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices

Mr. Lutjen called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

ELEVATE ALTERNATE: Mr. Lutjen made a **Motion** to elevate alternate Noreen Downs and Ted Slader, seconded by Ms. Bass. All approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment

OLD BUSINESS:

McNair Conservation Easement Amendment – This meeting was called specially to discuss this topic. Mr. Lutjen passed out and reviewed an outline of the topic to provide a framework for discussion this morning.

Current State of Affairs

- o Conservation easement covers an area of about 374 acers
- o The easement area is owned by four owners and covers 6 parcels
- o Recent sale to Fadden
- o Property sold includes wetlands and a pond
- o Conservation Easement terms prohibit clear cutting
- o Fadden has been engaged in logging
- o Communications and meeting have taken place with Fadden employees to encourage a no clearcut practice

Need for Updated Easement

- Amendment requires all owners of the property covered by the easement to approve the amended easement
- The current easement is deficient in not being specific to define forestry practices that are consistent with defined terms that embody responsible resource management practices that are now included in current easement
- The defined best management practices will provide for a buffer area wetlands
- The amended easement provides a long term environmental benefit

Ms. Downs added that there are 3 properties totaling about 904 acres on which these easement parcels are located, and that the co-owner of the Durgin Pond property is named Harold Whittaker.

The MCC is on the agenda for the BOS meeting tomorrow. Mr. Lutjen suggests recommending the draft submitted. He asked for the same font across the entire document. The commission members present discussed the draft of the amendment (compiled by Ms. Downs) that was attached to their meeting announcement. Some areas were duplicated and redundant from elsewhere in the conservation easement, and revisions were made.

Ms. Downs attempted to go thru some of the steps ahead. The MCC provides a draft to go to the BOS. Then it goes to the town attorney for clean-up. MCC needs approval from the owners and they wish to see the draft before giving any idea of their consent. We could ask the draft to go to the owners after the BOS say it is okay. It will finally go to the state attorney general.

Ralph says this is an opportunity for the MCC to clean up the easement and define the best management practices, and getting a better definition of clear cutting and high grading.

Mr. Mosher has a question and concern that the 600' no harvest zone around the pond is too much. Ralph says we are going to get comments and anticipates some comments on the proposed amendment. Ms. Downs pointed out that given a larger buffer will benefit the wetland areas, and provides the reasoning for asking for 600'. Mr. Lutjen has agreed that 600' is excessive and that the reference to "The Bountiful Benefits of Wetlands Buffers" (a Vermont document) be removed from the text to avoid confusion. Remove all of the lead in objectives in the section about buffer management around wet areas. Mr. Mosher and Mr. Lutjen feel the 600' is still excessive and unreasonable. It could be a detriment to interesting the property owners to consider the amendment.

Motion: Mr. Lutjen makes a motion, seconded by Mr. Slader, to reduce the 600' set-back from the pond to 300'. 3 in favor, 2 not in favor.

Ms. Downs will complete the adjustments to the draft and submit to board of selectman for tomorrow's meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Lutjen adjourned the meeting with all in favor at 10:03am.

Submitted by:

Noreen Downs, (note: town administrators were unavailable to take minutes with short notice)