

**Harpswell Conservation Commission
Minutes
November 2, 2016**

Opened Meeting: 2:04 PM.

Roll Call: Mary Ann Nahf, Deirdre Strachan, Paul Ciesielski, Wendy Batson, Ann Nemrow, Burr Taylor, Mark Eyerman, Planner. Absent: Sue Vachon.

Approval of 10/19/2016 Minutes: The minutes were approved unanimously, as presented.

Announcements:

Brown Tail Moth:

A state alert by the Maine Forest Service announced that defoliation due to the Browntail moth is affecting towns in Sagadahoc and Cumberland Counties. Clarlene Donahue, forest entomologist; State health officer, and Jeff Gillis, arborist, discussed control measures recently at the Curtis Library, especially emphasizing mechanical removal of webs to reduce next year's infestations. School District SAD 75 is concerned about students getting rashes in the heavily infested areas of Topsham, Brunswick and Harpswell, and is beginning to plan for next year's management. Harpswell has spotty concentrations have been noticed in Gurnet, Skolfield and Basin Cove areas.

Handouts for November 8 Election Day:

Town Permission has been granted for HCC to dispense bookmarks advertising *Climate Resiliency Preparedness, Brown Tail Moth Control and Initiative to Reduce Pesticides* at each of the three voting sites. Names, addresses and concerns are to be added to a list for future referral, since discussion of the subjects are not specifically political.

Updates:

Wetlands OSP Overview: (Refer to 10/19/2016 minutes P. 2)

Discussion and questions by M. Eyerman included the following points:

- Wetlands in Resource Protection are currently protected by a 250' upland buffer, as defined by the State for high to moderate wildlife values. Yet most contaminants have proven to be effectively removed at 80' - 100' buffers.
- If an inland wetland is under single ownership, is it better to incur the anger of an owner by tying up 250' of land for wetland protection and curtailing ownership rights to such an extent, or rely on owners' intentions to practice conservation measures?
- An alternative to zoning upland buffers of wetlands might entail a more proactive approach. First, by surveying the existing habitat for potential problems. If there are none, then the single ownership provides a measure of protection. Defining owners' intentions might be a first step, but what happens if the single lot is broken up? What are the alternatives/protections? HHLT involvement?
- There are no dimensional buffer setbacks required for a subdivision development. Unlike shoreland wetlands where buffers remain intact with 250' of existing non-sod vegetation, Resource Protection for inland areas have no zoning provisions for buffers

as defined by the State. For small inland wetlands, if water quality issues may be more important than wildlife habitation issues, then 100' buffers might suffice.

The Status of Three Wetlands under Review:

Recommendations by M. Eyerman.

1. Wetland # 29 - Does HHLT have jurisdiction over the Skolfield wetlands as well as the rest of the preserve? If so, there is no need to place under RP.

Followup: D.Strachan will pursue the extent of HHLT' control of the wetland.

2. Wetland # 19 - Lot 70 on Map 2 is a large parcel on Harpswell Cove owned by the Barron family since 1994. There is a single house on the site. (Note: The HHLT acquired land for their headquarters from the Barrons') Does HHLT have any interest in conserving the wetland?

Followup: D. Strachan will confer with HHLT to determine the existing fragility of the wetland and the degree of interest in preserving it by the owners. (Note: The DEP, under the Natural Resource Protection Act has jurisdiction for wetlands under 4,300 ft. in size.

3. Wetland # 6 - Located west side of Cundy's Harbor Rd. on the Cranberryhorn Hill area. The parcel is steep, drains into Brickyard Cove and is owned by one owner. This should be looked into further.

Review Appendix 22 OSP Continued: (Refer to 10/19/2016 for previous discussion.)

M. Eyerman suggests Appendix 22 is not very useful because it does not provide tools to act on if land within a focus area is threatened. He suggests that HCC and PB get together to first define the issues. Then work out setback requirements, buffer sizes, natural features and water bodies for protection, flexible lot sizes, grandfathered lots and wildlife corridors. Once the tools regarding the focus areas have been defined, the answer to "So what!" can be answered.

D. Strachan reminded the group that in order for the OSP to be town approved in 2009, regulating the focus areas was not deemed part of our mission.

Selectmen's Workshop Program: Deferred from 10/19/2016 meeting

- Plan for the half hour workshop prior to January 17, 2017 Selectmen's general meeting.
- Be succinct, objective and focused about Selectmen involvement.
- Background information on importance of keeping roads open when inundated. What measures could be taken?
- Consider SLR when doing Town Capital maintenance projects, including culverts and infrastructural designs.
- Be aware of migrating wetlands along the coastline.

Crustacean Farming by Aquaculture:

D. Strachan noted that, in view of the recent proliferation of oyster farming in Harpswell, regulations might be put in place. Presently the state regulates likening in sub tidal waters and there are no existing guidelines regarding locations of oyster pot locations in the intertidal zone governed by the Town.

Adjourned: 3:55 PM.

Meeting: 11/16/2016 at 3:00 PM.

Scribe: Ann Nemrow