

ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

May 19, 2015

Present: Phine Ewing (Chair), Clarke Cooper, Paul Schein, Mildred Stafford, Ralph Pope, Noreen Blaiklock, Karen Robbins

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.
2. The minutes of the April 21, 2015 were accepted as amended.
3. It was reported that the 2015/2016 SPO Grant proposal for the "Coastal Stewardship Guide for the Kennebec Estuary" was submitted and received. If the ACC receives the grant, ACC will partner with the Conservation Commissions of Georgetown, Phippsburg and Westport Island and with KELT. In the course of conversations with each of the commissions the urge to continue the dialog even if the project isn't funded was expressed. The proposal recipients will be announced the end of June. If funded the project would begin early summer.
4. Tom Eichler and Wendy Ross, owners of the property known as the Bridge Tenders House approached the Select Board about the idea of the town allowing them to landscape the town property and right-of-way at the end of Preble Point Rd. Phine, Paul and Karen attended the Selectman's meeting on May 11, 2015 during which the owners made their presentation to the Select Board. Phine and Paul attended a follow up site visit with CEO Michael Kreindler and the property owners. The Select Board asked the Conservation Commission for its opinion. At this time the Commission understands that the landscaping Tom and Wendy propose include expanding their driveway, adding a flag stone walkway to their house, cutting and filling of soil adjacent to the shore, removal of the existing fence, and planting of shrubs and perennials. The Commission is of the opinion that if the town property were landscaped to provide a more finished and private area adjacent to Tom and Wendy's property it would be unequitable to other tax payers in town. As proposed, Tom and Wendy will have functionally increased the shore front and of size of their property without paying for it or paying taxes on it going forward at the same time limiting the access of other tax payers to the shore. While Tom and Wendy stated they wouldn't mind if other residents used their landscaped area nor will prohibit others use, the Conservation Commission believes that others will be uncomfortable using the space once it "appears" to be private property. Furthermore, the Conservation Commission believes that the first decision the Town must make collectively is: does the town want to keep the property or give it up? If the town would like to keep it, several ideas for the property were proposed such as an interpretive landscape. If the townspeople want to give up the town's interest in this particular water access point, Tom and Wendy can make an offer to buy. The Town Meeting as a body can accept the offer or not. If accepted, that money could go into the designated Water Access Fund for the future purchase of water access that all residents can enjoy and more shore front would be added to the tax rolls. Additionally, the Conservation Commission believes there is no need to rush to a decision and it is vitally important that all residents and taxpayers be part of the dialog to assure that all concerns are

addressed. The Commission asked Phine as chair to write a letter to the Select Board expressing the Commission's opinion.

5. The alewife monitoring season as begun. The fish appear to have an easier time of passing through the new culvert as demonstrated by more balanced numbers between morning and evening counts and among days. The fish do not need to wait for the high tides of the month as in years past. We are regularly getting many other species such as sunnies, yellow perch and black crappies in the trap. Fish that never made through the old culvert. We have on video, a beaver, elvers and perhaps a snapping turtle (it was in the trap, and hopefully on the video footage to be reviewed) using the culvert.
6. The water quality schedule will be Noreen and Karen June 2nd, Ralph and Karen June 16th.
7. The Sewall Pond clean up schedule will be Millie May 29th, Phine June 6/7th, Ralph June 13/14th.
8. At 7 PM, Scott Hastings of Midcoast Council of Governments conducted a public workshop on Coastal Hazards related to sea level rise, increased storm frequency, and increased storm intensity. He focused on Arrowsic (17 people present) and Georgetown (1 person present) and specifically addressed roads and marsh migration. Midcoast COG used LIDAR data and Google Earth to map the projected changes for an additional 1 foot above highest annual tide (HAT), plus 2 HAT, plus 3 HAT and plus 6 HAT. The model only included wave action around Reid State Park and lower Indian Point. Scott suggested that if a municipality has an infrastructure concern they coordinate with other towns in the region to secure funding and to affect an appropriate response to their challenges. An example would be for Georgetown and Arrowsic to work together to address the access road, State Route 127, crossing of the marsh on the north end of Arrowsic where already the road is under water and or reduced to one lane during storm events and astronomical high tides. Scott finished at 8 PM and offered his contact information shastings@mceddme.org encouraging anyone with questions to contact him.
9. A discussion of the possible Arrowsic focus pages of the Stewardship guide generated many ideas including: Public Access Sites and Responsibilities, Vernal Pools, Private Water Supply Survey, and Potable Water Protection.
10. Natures Notes: Millie described a porcupine that was observed banging into "walls" instead of going into adjacent access points at a couple Spinney Mill residences. This made us "wonder". Paul did a survey of the ephemerals in his neighborhood and reported bluets, trailing arbutus, fringed polygala, wood anemones, star flowers, and apples are in bloom. Millie remarked that all the forsythia are spectacular this year.
11. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM
12. The next meeting is June 16th at 7PM at the Arrowsic Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Robbins, Acting Secretary