

BRENTWOOD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting of August 11, 2010

Present: Rob Wofchuck, Chair; Jody Kaufman, Doug Cowie, and Emily Schmalzer, members; Victor Schmalzer and Reid Bunker, alternates; Len Lord, Rockingham County Conservation District, and Ann Dillon, guests.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM at the Town Office.

Voting rights were unanimously granted to Victor and Reid.

The July minutes were accepted as proposed, also unanimously.

The first order of business was Ann Dillon's presentation. She represented herself, friends and family, who are in mourning for their daughter Brianna, who passed away after a life-long illness last May. She was blind and wheelchair-bound, but very responsive to sound. They would like to establish a little place for the town to enjoy in Brie's memory. Their hope is to find an idyllic spot replete with sounds of nature, especially running water. They would like to build a walkway there that will be wheelchair accessible.

The Dillons have noticed that there is a small parcel of land on the north side of the Exeter River just downstream of the Haigh Road dam, which would be just ideal. Also there is a narrow strip between Haigh Road and the river just upstream of the dam on the east side of the river (where the river turns such that the south side has become east). Both of these pieces belong to Norman Wilson, whose remaining property, with all of his buildings, is across both road and river on the northwest quarter of the intersection. Many people use the downstream spot already for access to the river. The commission members agreed that the Dillon's project would be a lovely asset to the town. We will work on issues of whether this usage is appropriate to the river's official scenic designation, how to design a walkway that would survive occasional flooding, and whether the Wilsons would be amenable to allow whatever arrangement would be necessary for this.

We have contracted with Leonard (Len) Lord of the RCCD to assist us in preparing a grant application for our next project, and he came this evening to show us what he has done so far and to plan for the future. He identifies 3 parts to this project:

1. We would like to improve the storm water drainage that comes south down Haigh Road from the Meadows subdivision, crosses under the road, crosses under Rowell Road at the intersection and enters the river just downstream of the bridge, abreast of the Haigh Road gauge station. The channels are clogged and the culvert entrance is blocked. Grasses will be planted along the treatment swales to help prevent erosion.
2. Rowell Road West continues from the bridge/Haigh Road intersection eastward to where the first houses are located. Being gravel, the road has become over-widened by the spread of paving material with winter plowing. The road runs very close to the river, and native grasses might be planted to protect the buffer between them. During the discussion, Doug Cowie pointed out that the land on the north side of Rowell Road West is part of the conservation area allotted by the Meadows development. It was suggested that one way to avoid further cost to the

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town for gravel and/or paving and reduce the sediment that goes into the river would be to close Rowell Road West completely and use Robinson Drive as the exclusive access to the homes at the end of what is presently Rowell Road West. The closed portion would become a town park and access to the river. Additional projects would include bank restoration where a large pine tree has fallen into the river leaving a large gap, stabilizing an area used as a canoe/kayak launch, repaving the top of the hill and adding storm water drainage to reduce the excessive sediment that travels down the hill from the driveways and road.

3. Conservation easements on a couple parcels to extend protection of the river frontage. We would need an independent appraisal to establish easement values and this would be paid for out of the Conservation Fund. Len would be willing to put out the RFP for this and to supervise its execution.

Len provided us with a spreadsheet showing the various grant programs and their specifications. Rob requested and the committee unanimously granted the proposition that we hold a town public provide funding in the amount of \$1,200 so that Len could coordinate the submission of the DES High Quality Water Grant for the Haigh Road and Rowell Road projects. Rob to work with the highway department on an in-kind donation of labor and materials and to present the idea to the Selectman. We would like the town to commit to matching some of the grant money, if only in terms of labor and equipment use.

The committee voted unanimously to move forward with discussions on purchasing easements on river frontage and to use funds from the Open Space bond as a match.

The Commission agreed to send a letter in support of the Lamprey River to NH Rivers Management and Protection Program.

We voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:40.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Schlazer