

Town of Pownal Conservation Commission (PCC) Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday December 19, 2023
6:30 pm, Mallett Hall

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm and the following were in attendance: Matt Welch, Dick Hogue, Wellens King, Kathy Elders and Alan Stearns.

Conservation Easement RRCT: Alan Stearns was present on behalf of Royal River Conservation Trust (RRCT). Discussion was held about the town's Special Meeting, specifically regarding the presentation on the PCC's work with the RRCT on conservation easements. It was noted that Bob Humphries was at the meeting as a representative of RRCT, and as a citizen of Pownal. It was stated that the overall mood felt positive regarding the topic and there were a lot of good questions from community members, as well as from Selectboard member, Andy O'Brien. Alan raised the question; "Where do we go from here?". Matt stated that the selectboard will need to see a final draft of the easement before any talks of moving ahead. Alan stated that we should have a document to present to the selectboard by the end of January. Matt questioned whether or not the easement document is fairly standard? Alan's response was that the document basically consisted of 3 major parts: 1) no development, 2) recreation, 3) good forestry. Matt questioned whether or not the town should get an updated forestry plan? Alan stated that because the town is giving the easement to RRCT- the terms can be negotiated, and that if we aren't planning to harvest in the next 5-10 years, we probably don't need to. Alan noted that the question was raised by the road commissioner at the town meeting as to whether or not the Elmwood lot could be used for clean fill. Alan stated that the language would have to be changed, and specific rules regarding this matter would need to be negotiated. Discussion was held regarding RRCT's right to build trails on the Sweetser Rd. Lot. Matt suggested that perhaps we could restrict RRCT to a single trail vs a large network of trails.

Alan stressed that he doesn't want there to be any miscommunication on the part of RRCT, and will be in touch when his attorney finishes the draft of the easement. He thinks we can write the easement without a formal survey of the Sweetser Rd. property, but that if the town and RRCT decide that one is needed, he will most likely be able to find funding to cover the cost. Alan will be going to the Casco Bay Estuary Project, and needs to be able to state that the PCC supports the easement. All present on the PCC voiced their support for the conservation easements. Matt thanked Alan for attending, he left the meeting at this juncture.

New Business

Real Estate Request: Map 2, Lot 32, Matt states that he has not seen a formal request come through. Dick will ask Becky about this.

Browntail Moth Mitigation: Wellens spoke with Top Leaf Tree, they have a contract with the state to spray at Bradbury. The following areas in town were proposed by the group that would make the most sense to address: Town Hall, Cemetery, school. Discussion was held

on how to decide to distribute the funds? Browntail moth lottery was one suggestion that came up. Dick will contact the Cemetery Commission, Wellens will reach out to RSU5.

Next Meeting: January 23, 2024 6:30pm