

**Foster Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 15, 2008
Ben Eddy Building, 6 South Killingly Road, 7:00 p.m.**

A. Call to Order/ Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present (5): Lucy Minturn, Chair; Scott Ulricksen, Vice Chair; Sisan Smallman, Secretary; Chris Iozzi; Kathryn Zuromski.

Excused (1): Mike Wood.

B. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the meeting of July 21, 2008 were briefly discussed and approved. Kathryn noted that she had not been aware of who was to contact Sejal Harde concerning a composting presentation, as noted in the minutes.

MOTION: Scott made a motion to approve the minutes; motion seconded by Chris. Vote called; all votes in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: Kathryn will follow up contact with Sejal.

C. Reports

- **Budget Committee.** Lucy reported the following:
 - The Commission's budget for FY 2009 is \$3500.
 - Certain items we had thought were being covered by FY 2008 monies (rain garden ad, Old Home Days reimbursement, Trash Rat) have come out of that total, leaving \$3088.

ACTION: Lucy will inquire at Town Hall why these expenses did not come out of last year's budget as expected.

- **By-Laws Committee.** Sisan reported the following:
 - There has been no word from Ann-Marie Ignasher or Town Attorney Joe Bevilacqua as to review of the draft By-Laws.

ACTION: Sisan will follow up to determine the status of the By-Laws.

- **Environmental Inventory.** Kathryn reported the following:
 - Kathryn led a discussion on potential formats and data for an environmental inventory specific to Foster. Among the ideas are to identify the *types* of features that the Commission believes to be of value (e.g., old stone walls, old building foundations, open meadows, wetlands, wildlife habitats, etc.). Scott suggested that the Comprehensive Plan contains this type of information.

ACTION: All members can email Kathryn with specific features to add to the list.

- In addition, Kathryn will be checking with her contacts at DEM concerning development of a CD with the statewide data for Foster. Long-term, we may be able to overlay specific site data to provide detail for certain sites.
- Site walks, which we are regularly being notified to join, are an important function of the Commission. All members agree that it would help to have lists of general features to look for. Kathryn also suggested that with the compilation of the state data for Foster, it might also be possible in preparation for a site walk to pull up the specific plot of land and determine such features as soil types, location of preserved lands, wetlands, and so forth.

ACTION: Kathryn will obtain the guide used by Planning and forward it to Lucy. Lucy will work on development of a compatible form to be used by Commission members as an aide in reviewing site plans.

ACTION: All members who participate in site walks should commit to timely completion of a write-up to be forwarded to the rest of the members and to Planning immediately following the site visit.

- **Planning Board (Liaison).** Kathryn reported the following:
 - The Planning Board has been discussing potential changes to zoning and to the Comprehensive Plan, including conservation development (cluster development with shared open space). The environmental inventory would be highly useful as part of considering conservation of local features. A public hearing would precede any changes.
- **Land Trust (Liaison).** Lucy reported the following:
 - The recent meeting included discussion of management of existing LT properties and allocation of resources for stewardship. In addition, a potential new acquisition is under review.
- **DPW (Liaison).** Scott reported the following:
 - "Rhino Snot" – the experimental road surface – has been laid on North Road, but there was considerable wash-off in the heavy rains that followed application. It is not clear if the application was successful or not.

ACTION: Scott will attempt to learn more about the appropriateness of this product for wetlands application, the permitting process and the status of the road.

D. Old Business

- Review of Old Home Days. All members (including email comments from Mike) agreed that the Commission's display and book raffle went well.

- Site Walks. Members are pleased to be contacted by Planning to participate. Members are strongly encouraged to attend whenever possible.
- "Trash Rat" – Chris was commended on the excellent job he does on this feature, which receives a lot of attention in the FHJ. His idea for the next edition is to highlight e-waste collection dates, possibly with a footnote reference to a website where readers can get more information on the dangers of e-waste.

E. Review of Current Incoming Correspondence.

- As suggested during the meeting and in comments forwarded by Mike, information on the Asian Long-Horned Beetle is important to disseminate.

ACTION: Chris will contact the FHJ regarding carrying an informational article on the beetle infestation.

F. New Business

- Commission Goals + Member Participation/ Commitment. Lucy led a discussion identifying our primary goals for the coming months:
 - Move forward on the environmental inventory.
 - Complete by-laws approval.
 - Develop more of a web presence.

ACTION: Lucy will follow up with John Lewis to check on the status of additional information that was sent to him for the Commission web page.

- Continuation of the "Trash Rat" series.
- Working to provide 3 or more public education events between now and the end of the FY.
- Enhanced site walk participation.
- Ensuring participation with the Planning Board (preferably with an alternate if Kathryn cannot attend).

ACTION: Lucy will check with Ann-Marie Ignasher as to the status of the Technical Review Committee function.

- Composting Presentation. As indicated, Kathryn will contact Sejal Harde.
- Membership Expiration. Scott's membership is due to expire at the end of this calendar year. He is interested in being reappointed. We also still have a vacancy.

ACTION: Scott will send a letter to the Town Council indicating his desire to be reappointed to the Commission, and also reminding the Council that there is a vacancy should another individual seek appointment.

- Other Issues. All members had read and noted the detailed email from Mike, who was unable to be present.

G. Future Agenda Items.

- **Web Page**

H. Adjournment.

MOTION: Chris made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Scott. Vote called; all those voting in favor; none opposed; no abstentions. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sisan Smallman, Secretary

NEXT MEETING:

***Foster Conservation Commission
Monday, October 20, 2008
7:00 p.m.***

***Ben Eddy Building
Foster, RI***