

**TOWN OF WARREN  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
JANUARY 22, 2008**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Robin Bennett, Jim Edgcomb, Tara Hamilton, Susan Hemmeter, Damon Reed, Margo Wade, Chair.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** none

**AGENDA:**

- 1) 7:00 PM – Call to Order
- 2) Strategic Planning about current Conservation Commission structure and focus
- 3) Check in with the Selectboard
- 4) Project Updates:
  - Trails Inventory (Jim)
  - Ancient Roads (Susan/Robin)
  - Natural Heritage Assessment (Margo)
  - Aldeborgh/Roe Parcel (Damon)
  - Dump Parcel (Robin)
  - December Task List Items not included above
- 5) Executive Session – discussion of real estate matters
- 6) Other Business:
  - a. Approve Invoices
  - b. Approve meeting minutes
  - c. Items for next meeting
- 7) Adjourn – 10:00 PM

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Margo called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

**II. STRATEGIC PLANNING – CONSERVATION COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND FOCUS**

Each member shared their thoughts about conservation as follows:

Damon

- Conservation/preservation of, especially, natural resources
- Acquisition of land for preservation
- The Commission's job is to advocate for Warren's natural resources

Jim

- Human element
- Work towards solving affordability, energy, populations, and climate change issues
- conserving land is our biggest priority
- Too much CC related email
- More members means we'll be more effective
- suggested meetings should focus on 2 items
- Current projects should have subcommittees rather than just one person

Tara

- Conservation of recreational resources because it has been identified as a top priority for the town
- Protection and stewardship of land

- would like to work on actual conservation of land
- Interested in trails
- feels the need to do less work for the commission
- Without staff how can we be productive

Robin

- Most interested on focusing on conserving land – finding appropriate properties for conservation projects
- The structure of the commission needs to accommodate many projects without “overload” and liked the idea of subcommittees to partner on a project, focus, and move it forward
- Working as a group on conserving land – with each of us focusing on one aspect of the same project
- Heavy email communication and suggested that it is OK if everyone doesn’t respond to every email
- need a system for “must respond” emails within the group
- email should not be the preferred framework for our discussions because it excludes members who cannot respond effectively in this way due to pressures of work, slow typing, etc

The group agreed that we should use the phone more and that we should talk about how to have productive conversations outside of regular meetings without email. They also agreed that we need a moderator to keep time during meetings so that the most important agenda items get the attention they need.

Susan

- Importance of education component of conservation
- Not getting the CFR allocation last year was a vote of non-confidence from the votes
- We need a 2 to 3 year plan
- Meetings should be more formal and we should adopt Roberts Rules of Order structure
- need to have a philosophical discussion about who we are

**MOTION by Susan, seconded by Damon, to continue this discussion to a later date focusing on project assignments, change in our process and governance and include the new member(s). VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

It was suggested that we should have an annual retreat to review – who we are, what we do and why we do it. At our next meeting we should continue this discussion and only have two other items to discuss.

**MOTION by Susan, seconded by Margo, to continue the discussion at our regularly scheduled February meeting. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

### **III. CHECK IN WITH THE SELECTBOARD**

Margo checked in with the Selectboard regarding corrections to the Proposed 2008 CC Budgets. Corrections were made to the Management Plans line item. The corrected <sup>amount</sup> ~~about~~ is \$11,170, which includes the remaining \$3,000 NFA grant from 2007, remaining \$7,170 contracted with RJ Turner,

plus \$1,000 for Belanger survey. It was also clarified that the CC has a total of \$5,647 carry over from 2007 grant money received in 2007 but not spent (NFA \$3000, DHCA \$2,647). The NFA money is designated for the Management Plans project and the DHCA money is designated for the Natural Heritage assessment.

**IV. PROJECT UPDATES:**

Management Plans (Tara)

Tara asked for the CC to take a position of inclusion of designated housing components in the Draft Eaton Management Plan. The plan included identification of two potential areas that may be appropriate for housing. They included an area across School Road from the Town Garage (this site may only be partially located on the Eaton Parcel also with other town lands) and the area of Brooks recreation most recently cleared.

**MOTION by Jim, seconded by Robin, that based on the information gathered, the CC supports the inclusion of two areas in the Draft Eaton Management Plan for potential future housing developments. The two areas include the area most recently cleared off Brooks field and an area across School Road from the existing town garage (see draft plan for clarification) and place a conservation easement on the remainder of the parcel. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

The group also discussed Riverside park and the recently release report by the Friends of the mad River. Specifically the reports recommendation to allow the river its natural processes at the River side Park. It was suggested the allowing changes to take place at the park could be one of the ~~may many~~ "cool" and educational aspects of the public area.

**MOTION by Jim, seconded by Susan, that the CC supports findings of the Friends of the Mad River Report to allow the river to behave naturally, ~~use the~~ use the flood plane as needed and to not continue the practice of human implemented interventions (armoring) at the Riverside Park. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

Tara requested help from CC members at the public forum introducing the draft plans scheduled for February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Trails Inventory (Jim) – to be discussed at the Feb meeting.

Kingsbury Community Farm Project – there will be a public meeting on January 26 from 3 to 6 PM.

Ancient Roads (Susan/Robin) – There will be a public meeting on Feb 13<sup>th</sup> from 7-9PM at the Town Hall.

Natural Heritage Assessment (Margo) – to be discussed at the Feb meeting.

Aldeborgh/Roe Parcel (Damon) – to be discussed at the Feb meeting.

Dump Parcel (Robin) – Robin and Margo would be attending the Feb 11<sup>th</sup> PC meeting where Clair from CVRPC and someone from the State Brownfields program would be discussion the Town Garage and Pump Parcels. Both projects are at similar stages.

**V. EXECUTIVE SESSION – DISCUSSION OF REAL ESTATE MATTERS**

The commission did not discuss real estate matters.

**VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

a) Approval of meeting minutes

**MOTION by Susan, seconded by Robin, to approve the minutes from January 15, 2008 as submitted. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

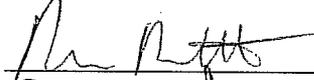
**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

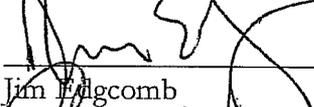
**MOTION by Susan, seconded by Robin, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Margo Wade*

**Conservation Commission**

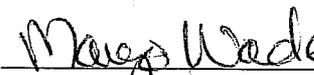
 3/18/08  
Robin Bennett (date)

 3/18/08  
Jim Edgcomb (date)

 03/18/08  
Susan Hemmeter (date)

Tara Hamilton (date)

 3/18/08  
Damon Reed (date)

 3/18/08  
Margo Wade (date)