

CAMDEN CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

April 25, 2012, 7 p.m.

Washington Street Conf. Room

Present: Bob Gassett, chair; John Evrard; Carla Ferguson; David Kern; Robin Kern, treasurer; Nancy Caudle Johnson, Tree City USA and Arbor Day Coordinator

Excused: Secretary Douglas N. Johnson, Barbara Melchiskey

Chair Bob Gassett called the meeting to order 7:05.

1) Secretary Doug Johnson was absent. At his request, Nancy Caudle-Johnson read minutes for March 28, 2012. Minutes were approved with corrections.

2) Treasurer Robin Kern reported on Camden Conservation Commission funds. She contacted town finance director Carol Sue Greenleaf. The amount budgeted for the CCC for the current year (June 2011 to June 2012) was \$218, less an expenditure of \$195, leaving a balance of \$23.

Bob Gassett contacted Karin Rector. When Randy Stearns was a CCC member and also an MBNA employee, he designated the Commission to receive annual MBNA charitable contributions - which may amount to \$2,000 to \$3,000. Commission members want to follow up on this. Robin Kern will do the follow up.

3) Bob Gassett reported on the mail:

- a) There will be a presentation on the Camden Downtown Plan on May 15, 6 p.m. at the WSCR.
- b) The Natural Resources Council of Maine sent out a press release urging Maine citizens to get involved in addressing community environmental concerns by supporting and joining their local Conservation Commissions to mark Earth Day. In 1975, there were about 208 Conservation Commissions in Maine; today there are approximately 80 Conservation Commissions statewide.
- c) A walkability workshop with Dan Burden of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, sponsored by Friends of Midcoast Maine, will be held in Camden on May 22, 9-3, at the WSCR and is free to Camden residents.

4) Bob Gassett reported that the Maine Land Conservation 2012 Conference will be held in Topsham on April 27 and 28. Bob sent in information about the Camden Conservation Commission which will be included in the conference brochure.

5) Bob Gassett reported on developments at Shirttail Point and Megunticook Riverwalk:

- a) Bob met with Camden development director Brian Hodges and Camden-Rockport Pathways Committee chair Geoff Scott related to a grant application to the Maine DOT Quality Community Program to develop a path by Duck Pond.
- b) Bob reported that Camden code enforcement officer Steve Wilson will get

approval of owners along the Megunticook River to flag Riverwalk path extension.

- 6) There was a long discussion about the Megunticook Riverwalk initiated by John Evrard. Who actually owns it? Who controls it? What are the details of the easement with Coastal Mountains Land Trust? Etc. Copies of the easement will be made for CCC members at next meeting.
- 7) Members discussed the Camden Conservation Commission work party held at the Megunticook Riverwalk (the former Tannery property) on Earth Day - Sunday, April 22. Bob Gassett, John Evrard, Robin Kern, and David Kern made up the work group who spent several hours picking up and removing trash from the site, including old rusty pieces of metal, etc. Robin wondered if it would have been more effective to have the Parks and Recreation Department do the clean up, suggesting the CCC might use its energies for projects other than picking up trash. Should Parks and Rec be taking responsibility for taking care of the site? John Evrard voiced similar thoughts. Bob Gassett disagreed and felt that the project was exactly what the CCC should be doing.

Nancy Caudle-Johnson suggested writing a letter to the town and perhaps a press release about the work party and what was accomplished. Robin, David, and John concurred. Bob argued that it was not necessary because he talked to people (Morgan Laidlaw, the CCC's select board liaison, and other town officials) all the time, and it was a bad idea to write it up.

There was no resolution.

- 8) Bob Gassett reported that the Megunticook Riverwalk Coalition is, at his urging, holding a meeting on May 8 at the Bagel Cafe, to presumably reactivate after a year's hiatus. Bob will attend as the CCC representative, and Nancy Caudle-Johnson representing Citizens for Megunticook Riverwalk.
 - 9) Bob Gassett reported on the Vernal Pool Workshop held in Lincolnville on Thursday, April 20. About twelve people attended, including CCC members Barbara Melchiskey and Bob, and Camden's code officer Steve Wilson. The next vernal pool workshop will be on April 28 at Merryspring.
- Bob discussed the process of mapping the midcoast vernal pools. This will be an expensive process and funding needs to be found.
- 10) Nancy Caudle-Johnson, Camden's Tree City USA and Arbor Day coordinator, reported on upcoming events in May:
 - a) Tree City USA is a national program sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation and administered in Maine by Project Canopy. She outlined the requirements for a community to qualify: a tree ordinance, a tree board, an Arbor Day proclamation by the community's governing body, an Arbor Day celebration, and an expenditure of two dollars per capita on the community's tree program. She initiated the program in 1995. Camden was first named a Tree City USA in 1996, and has requalified every year since. In Camden, the Camden Conservation Commission

serves as the tree board. She passed around several copies of the 2011 Tree City USA certification application and report, which she submitted.

On May 22, she and Doug Johnson will travel to Portland to accept Camden's 17th consecutive Tree City USA award from Maine Conservation Commissioner Beardsley.

John Evrard suggested finding out if the Library could keep a copy of the annual Tree City USA report on file.

- b) Nancy reported that this year's Arbor Day celebration will be Sunday, May 20, at the Bok Amphitheater. Town manager Pat Finnegan will read the official proclamation, Camden Library Parks manager Dave Jackson will speak about the history of the historic Bok Amphitheater and Harbor Park, and Doug Johnson will point out significant trees of interest in the parks. She will arrange for the Arbor Day proclamation to be placed on the upcoming Select board agenda.

John suggested contacting the local school about the Arbor Day celebration. He will follow up on this.

11) Nancy Caudle-Johnson mentioned that a student, Peyton Feener, who attended several of the Megunticook Riverwalk work parties, said a group of young people she meets with at Lincoln Street Center in Rockland would be interested in participating in a CCC work party. They would need at least a month's notice; she estimated up to fifteen volunteers. No decision was made on this.

12) There was a discussion about knotweed eradication at the Megunticook Riverwalk site. Knotweed is growing down the bank and into the river, as well as in the middle of the river. Bob Gassett met with Ian Steward at Coastal Mountains Land Trust about eradication with out poisons. John Evrard has a source for lots of old carpet which he proposed using to cover the knotweed. Nancy Caudle-Johnson expressed concern about toxic backing - di-isocyanate. David Kern said old carpet should no longer be out gassing. It was agreed that Coastal Mountains Land Trust approval would be needed for whatever method was proposed.

13) Individual reports:

- a) Bob Gassett looked into streetlights - regarding installing energy saving lightbulbs.
- b) John Evrard reported that he spoke to Marsha Smith, a founder of Citizens for a Green Camden. They would be interested in attending a CCC meeting. John thinks their group and the CCC might liaison together on some issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

The next meeting is Wednesday, May 30, 2012.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Caudle-Johnson, substituting for CCC secretary Doug Johnson.