

# Camden Conservation Commission Meeting minutes, 08/22/12

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## CAMDEN CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes of meeting held August 22, 2012, 7-8:45 PM

PRESENT: members of the Camden Conservation Commission (the Commission) - Doug Johnson, Carla Ferguson, Robin Kern, Roger Rittmaster

Excused members: David Kern, Barbara Melchiskey, John Evrard

Non-members - Nancy Caudle-Johnson (Tree City USA and Arbor Day coordinator)

Guest: Jeff Kuller – Director, Parks and Recreation/Snow Bowl

The meeting, chaired by Doug Johnson, was as follows:

The Commission's new member – Roger Rittmaster – was welcomed.

The minutes of the July 11th meeting were approved unanimously.

Jeff Kuller requested that he be provided with the Commission's agendas, which will be done. In the same manner, Jeff will provide the Commission with Parks and Recreation's agendas.

Robin Kern described a letter she had drafted, to be sent to Patricia Finnigan and Carol Sue Greenleaf, in which the Commission requests that an annual report be provided to the Commission, reporting on the state of the Commission's finances, thus eliminating the chance that such information will be left to Commission members' memories. This letter was approved by the Commission and will be sent by Robin.

The ongoing project to create an application for Camden heritage trees was discussed. Nancy Caudle-Johnson provided to all members and to Jeff a copy of the Camden Community Forest Management Plan, 1994-1995, prepared by Johnson's Arboriculture, which contains a provision entitled "Establish a 'Camden Register of Landmark and Big Trees'". It was felt that this provision is the strong foundation needed for a Camden heritage tree provision. Robin and Nancy will draft application forms for heritage trees, in time for the next meeting.

The preservation of Rokes Fields and Spear Fields by Maine Farmland Trust was discussed. Nancy suggested that the Commission could sponsor a public tour of the properties led by Maine Farmland Trust. Jeff suggested a morning walk combined with a pancake breakfast at the Snow Bowl on a Sunday in October.

In continuation of the discussion at the last meeting of Central Maine Power's (CMP) planned pruning program for Camden, Doug stated that he had indeed met with Town Manager Patricia Finnigan and had described his thoughts on developing a program for dealing with CMP's pruning in the hope that such a

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program would preclude the problems that developed in Rockland in 2010-2011. In Rockland, the City Attorney developed a detailed Agreement, "Pruning Practiced in the City of Rockland", signed by CMP, in which CMP agreed to follow the "Utility Tree Pruning Specifications" written for Rockland by TreeKeepers LLC. Ms. Finnigan was receptive to developing such a program and Doug will continue to work with her on this issue. Doug has also provided her with a memo on this issue dated August 1, 2012.

Jeff reported that there are more culverts being placed on the new trail at the Snow Bowl, due to standing water.

The final item of old business: Doug, Robin, Carla and Barbara Melchiskey did attend the Town Select Board meeting workshop on July 17<sup>th</sup>.

Jeff reported that Parks and Recreation has created a map of Camden's parks and natural areas, which it is hoped will be done by early November.

Doug presented six Commission goals, which he felt were in harmony with the Select Board's list of goals. These Commission goals are as follows:

supporting the Select Board's goal of preserving "what makes Camden Camden" through assistance with the Downtown Business Plan Implementation in our capacity as a research, advisory and advocacy group for conservation and environmental issues; further, for example

providing assistance in the ongoing attempt to make downtown Camden greener, and, specifically, dealing with the possibility that the public parking area could be developed as a park,

supporting Maine Farmland Trust and the Rokes endeavor,

developing the Camden heritage tree program,

continuing support of Tree City, USA, and

assisting the Planning Board with its comprehensive plan revision.

There was a sense of general agreement with these goals.

The last two items are more mundane:

1) dues of \$195.00 must be paid for continued membership in the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions. Robin will contact Carol Sue Greenleaf about this;

2) Jeff suggested that the Commission request that someone in the Town Office act as liaison between the Commission and the Town, a practice that he said exists with other committees. Steve Wilson was mentioned as a possibility. Robin will look into this.

A book "Best Nature Sites in Mid-Coast Maine" will be given to former chair Bob Gassett in appreciation for his many contributions. It was inscribed by the Commission members and John Evrard will personally take it to Bob.

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The next meeting of the commission will take place on September 19th.

These minutes are submitted by Robin Kern, secretary, as an accurate representation of the major topics discussed and agreed upon at this meeting.

# MEMO

August 1, 2012

**TO:** Pat Finnegan, Town Manager  
TOWN OF CAMDEN

**FROM:** Douglas N. Johnson, Chair *Doug Johnson*  
CAMDEN CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**SUBJECT:** Upcoming CMP Line Clearance Pruning in Town of Camden

On July 11, 2012 at the regular meeting of the Camden Conservation Commission, Nancy Caudle-Johnson, Camden's Tree City USA and Arbor Day Coordinator, introduced an agenda item regarding Central Maine Power's plans for line clearance pruning in the Town of Camden (she referenced ads placed by CMP in local newspapers indicating Camden was on their list for 2012 pruning).

The consensus of the Commission was for Chairman Douglas Johnson to meet with the Town Manager regarding this issue.

## Timeline and Contacts

On July 23, I contacted Kris Spiegel, CMP arborist supervising the Rockland-Belfast area, to ascertain the potential dates for the start-up of utility pruning in Camden. He indicated that the current plan is to begin approximately January 2013. However, CMP work in Camden could commence as early as late fall 2012 if their subcontractor finishes their current workload ahead of schedule.

The CMP people with oversight of the utility pruning in Camden are: Kris Spiegel (458-7374), CMP's Maine Vegetation Manager Jim Irwin, and the company's multi-state Vegetation Manager and overall supervisor for utility pruning Wes Davis.

## Utility Pruning in City of Rockland (as an example)

CMP undertook utility pruning in the City of Rockland in 2010-2011. Major problems developed as a result of pruning practices that had been mandated by CMP but were unacceptable to the City.

The City of Rockland (primarily City Attorney Kevin Beal and former town manager Rosemary Kulow with the support of the City Council), and with technical assistance, consultation, and written specifications provided by TREEKEEPERS LLC, negotiated a contract with alternative specifications for utility pruning required for work in the City of Rockland .

Steps taken in Rockland included:

- 1) The City issued a "Stop Work" order while new specifications were written and a contract was negotiated and signed by CMP.
- 2) A contract entitled "Pruning Practices in the City of Rockland" was drafted by the City of Rockland attorney and signed by Central Maine Power
- 3) "Utility Pruning Specifications for the City of Rockland" were prepared by TREEKEEPERS LLC, which included:
  - a) Pruning practices CMP had used that were unacceptable.
  - b) Proper specifications.
  - c) Reference standards (ANSI Standards for Utility Pruning and Standard Pruning, as well as other standards).
- 4) Arborist Douglas Johnson installed as the Rockland City Arborist.
  - a) Met with CMP arborists and subcontractors to review the required specifications - in advance of the restart of work.
  - b) Met weekly with CMP arborist to monitor pruning, worked out special issues, and reported to the City Manager.
  - c) Dealt with and resolved citizen complaints and reported to the City Manager.
  - d) Ensured compliance of CMP with pruning standards and corrective work, as needed.