

OLD ORCHARD BEACH CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes for January 14, 2013

Members present: Ginger McMullin, John Bird, Pat Holland

We were joined by a new member (to be confirmed January 15), Kimbark Smith, and are pleased to welcome him to the Conservation Commission.

Ginger McMullin nominated John Bird as Chair of the CC for 2013. John Bird nominated Pat Holland as Vice-Chair. Mark Koenigs was also nominated to continue as Secretary, pending his acceptance, as he was not able to be present. The slate of officers was elected unanimously.

Ginger McMullin and John Bird met with David Parker, Forester, on January 12 at Guild Park in Ocean Park, as this is the one forested area of OOB with which he was not already familiar, and wanted to visit before joining us at this meeting to discuss forest / woodland management.

Mr. Parker had looked into possible grant monies from the Maine Forestry Service that might be used to develop a management plan for the town's wooded areas. The grants are distributed under the "Project Canopy" program, which we have received money from in the past for plantings. In order to apply for a grant, a "Project Canopy trained" person would need to be involved in the process, and Mr. Parker has that qualification. An accompanying plan of green areas / trails benefitting the community would also be a plus for the grant application. Mr. Parker also gave us some thoughts on how we might start looking at better managing our wooded areas:

- 3-5 acres is about the minimum size to reasonably manage as forest product / wildlife habitat / natural areas. Our major areas would include the land adjacent to the Ballpark, the 50 acre parcel on Portland Road that was deeded to the town for conservation, and Guild Park.
- Mr. Parker could produce a management plan for the town for \$2,550.00. This would include an inventory of stands considering safety, forest health, etc.
- He generally recommends harvesting once every 10 years or so as part of a management plan. If cutting was done, Mr. Parker feels that there would probably be no cost to the town for it because a contract could be put out for the stumpage rights. It is even possible that some money could be made on cutting. In particular, the area near the Ballpark and the animal shelter property may produce some money from cutting, if that was desired.
- His observation is that older tree stands in town (e.g. Guild Park) do have some "dangerous trees" that might be removed. These would be areas used by the public or adjacent to roadways where trees have a high likelihood of breaking from the top or limbs that may be in

danger of falling.

- Mr. Parker has not seen any major disease or insect problems in the cursory observations he has made.

The Commission agreed that we should contact Project Canopy to inquire about grant money and think about putting something in our upcoming budget to start to work on a management plan. This would be a good addition to the wetlands inventory that will be completed this year.

Ginger reported that the Trails subcommittee has not met recently but that she would like to start things up again soon, especially considering that CMP will be working on the School St. extension.

John reported on the ongoing wetlands inventory, being done on our behalf by New Earth Ecological Consulting. Stacie Grove, the principal, has sent information on progress and a Google Earth file for viewing (not yet ready for public). John has asked for further interpretation of the information. Stacie is concerned about access to some properties that they need to review, especially in the north central part of town. John reiterated that the purpose of the inventory is to catalog wetland areas and increase our awareness of areas that need to be protected.

Pat gave an update on the Memorial Park subcommittee. There is concern that there has been no clearing of snow by the dog park gates, and that the latch is broken on the large dog area. The subcommittee will be meeting on January 23 at the high school at 6 PM. They will be working on a park management plan and the budget.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is presenting new flood maps for southern Maine on January 22 in Kennebunk. John Bird and Jeffrey Hinderliter will be going to that presentation. Old Orchard Beach is on the agenda for 1-2 PM.

Minutes for December, 2012 were approved, and the meeting was adjourned.

Secretary Note: The minutes above were taken by outgoing Chair and Member Ginger McMullin and approved on 3/11/13 as submitted.

Mark Koenigs

Mark Koenigs, Secretary
(Approved on 3/11/13)