

TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, October 21, 2009

Members Attending: Andrea Berlin, Linda Jenkins, Ginger McMullin, John Bird, Mark Koenigs, Pierre Bouthiller

Pierre gave an update to the Commission on the current status of the grant process for wind turbines

Steve Perry brought a proposal for the operation of a go-cart track on the "50 Acre Wood" property to the Commission. Mr. Perry distributed a handout explaining the proposal, along with a photo of the track that previously existed in the proposed location. In response to a question, Mr. Perry indicated that his investment, should the use be allowed, would be for fencing, general "sprucing up", and additional pavement. The go-cart track would be fully insured.

Gary Curtis, a resident of the Dunegrass subdivision, wondered about rumored snowmobile races at the site. He expressed concern about increased traffic and noise. Mr. Perry indicated that the season he would be interested in operating would be April - October, and not necessarily every week.

It was noted that this proposal would need to go through the Town Council and Planning Board.

The concern of the Ballpark subcommittee is noise, emissions and competition with other uses at the ballpark (compatibility with a possible community garden and other "green" uses).

The Commission noted that the planning process for the property is still ongoing, so it is hard to say how this fits in right now. It might be premature considering the status of the planning process. There was concern that no one can at this time guarantee that this type of use would be compatible with the final plan for the property.

Discussion of the status of boardwalks in the dune areas was tabled until member Randy Sears was able to be present.

Jean LeClerc discussed the status of application for a grant to place an anemometer to assess the feasibility of wind turbines in town. He estimated that in the area considered for the anemometer, it was estimated that at 80 meters height, a wind speed of about 6 meters/second is probable. This would be enough to encourage going ahead with the application. CMP has been contacted, and maps of high voltage lines and substations should be provided within the next week. The application is started and needs to be signed by an elected official. The Planning Board has a preliminary ordinance to review. There is a letter from the OOB Planning Dept. stating Town Council and RSU support for the project. It may be necessary to call a special Town Council meeting in order to meet deadlines for the application. The subgroup will meet this Saturday at 10:30 AM at the OOB Police Substation to work on the application.

John Bird raised the question of whether the recent erection of post and rope fences on the sand dunes should have come before the Conservation Commission, since the commission has jurisdiction of town "park" land. The commission agreed that it should, and that proposed boardwalk details and any related DEP application should be coordinated with the Conservation Commission.

It was noted that there is not an updated Comprehensive Plan for OOB, and that the 50 Acre Wood planning process needs to get underway. (A meeting is planned for the latter on Nov. 14 at 9 AM in council chambers. Start will be to review previous information). A strategy meeting will be held on Nov. 7 at 8:00.

A meeting for cataloging the town's natural resources and open space will be held on November 9 at 7:30. Ginger McMullin will contact John Glass to have it announced on Channel 3, and will reserve the space.

The Commission's next meeting will be devoted to discussion of sand dunes and shoreland zoning.