

PEPPERELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes – December 14, 2009

The Pepperell Conservation Commission (PCC) held a special joint meeting with the Planning Board. The meeting was held in the Library at 7:00 p.m.

Conservation Commission Members present: Elliott, Masterson, Steeves, and Sauer; members absent: Moody, Rice, and Rand.

Planning Board Members present: Cate presiding, Kane, McHugh, Marston, and Themelis. Sue Snyder, Mark Richardson, Matt Walsh, Bob Lee, and Ellen Fisher were also present.

The purpose of the meeting was for the Conservation Commission to participate in a Roundtable Discussion of a possible WRPOD Zoning Bylaw Amendment with the Planning Board and other Town Officials.

After a discussion of snowplowing on Julia Lane and Beaver Creek Circle which did not involve the Conservation Commission, Cate began a discussion about possible changes to the Zoning By-Law covering the Water Resources Protection Overlay District (WRPOD). Snyder reviewed the history of the creation of the WRPOD, which was based on recommendations in a hydrogeologic report done for the Town by SEA in 1985. The SEA report said that the purpose of the WRPOD would be to protect existing wells and other aquifers that could be needed in the future. There were various adjustments to the WRPOD language over the years. In 2003 the Annual Town Meeting passed a change to the WRPOD which defined the extent of the district as DEP's Municipal Well Zones 1, 2 & 3. This represented a significant retraction of the protected area, especially in the Gulf Brook watershed upstream from the Bemis Road well, where there is no Zone 3. Bob Lee said that when he re-drew the map of the WRPOD at that time, he retained the protected areas beyond the DEP Zones 1-3 because he was sure that was what had been intended. His re-drawn map was subsequently verified by the Attorney General's office. In the past year the discrepancy between the re-drawn official map and the language of the By-Law, as amended in 2003, had become clear. The Planning Board wanted to clear this up, one way or another.

After a discussion of the SEA report, in which Masterson said that SEA's methods of analysis in the 1980's are still considered valid today, there was general agreement among all present that the full area within the SEA-recommended boundaries should be protected. Acknowledging that this would require considerable work, the Planning Board agreed that a written description of those WRPOD boundaries should be developed and taken to Town Meeting in order to fix the discrepancy.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen L. Fisher