Orford Conservation Commission

Minutes of November 20, 2014 Meeting

Commissioners Present: Harry Pease, Carl Schmidt, Tom Bubolz, Jeff MacQueen, and Carl Cassel; Alternates Present: Emily Bryant and Fran Plaisted; Guest: Jeanie McIntyre, President, Upper Valley Land Trust

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Alternates Emily Bryant and Fran Plaisted were designated as voting members for the meeting.

Minutes of the October, 16, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved after a motion by Carl Schmidt and a second by Tom.

Old Business:

Conservation of Bischoff Property in Quinttown: Some Commissioners received a history, maps of the land, and toured the land courtesy of David Bischoff on November 1 and 15. Jeanie McIntyre from UVLT said they are in the same position as they were in October. They have applied for and are awaiting a decision regarding a Moose Plate grant. They are working on a contract between UVLT and David and John Bischoff to purchase the land, but it will be contingent upon raising the necessary funds. David Bischoff is interested in retaining life use of the property, which will have to be worked out in the contract. Once the property is under contract both parties are more secure and it is easier to raise the funds. The next step would be having the property appraised. Jeanie anticipates the contract being completed during the next few weeks, but raising funds will take until next summer. The Commissioners discussed making a donation from our Conservation Fund, but did not vote on it yet. A question was raised about the town and UVLT co-owning the land. Jeanie said UVLT will not co-own the land in part because management of the land would be difficult. UVLT can negotiate an agreement so that if they were ever to sell the land, Orford would have right of first refusal. UVLT would like to improve access to Mason Pond by making and maintaining a trail there across the property. There was a general discussion of fundraising potential and the possibility of a local fundraising campaign. UVLT will assist with any local fundraising effort. Carl Cassel recommended that we start developing a fund raising plan. UVLT plans to apply for LCHIP funding and Jeanie will find out the date an application is due and the expected date of the LCHIP decision. The Conservation Commission supports this project and we will provide assistance to UVLT. Carl Schmidt recommended that preservation of the barn be included in the contract and easement if possible.

Solarize Orford Update: There was a meeting with the installation contractor last night November 19. Four people have signed up for solar installations so far power and several others have had a site visit. Interested parties have until the end of January to sign a contract for installation in the spring.

Orford Conservation Land Project Planning: Jeff and Craig volunteered to help Harry coordinate the project with Tullando Farm and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. We intend to make this a Community and School event through outreach. We will be looking for ideas to get people involved and provide educational opportunities for the spring and summer of 2015.

Conservation Fund and Budget: There were no changes since last month. We are still waiting for the $29,500 in current use change fees for the land purchased by the Fishers across from the State Highway Garage.

Tom made a motion that we adjourn, Carl Cassel seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Plaisted