



SHARON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION



2006 Members

Liz LaRose (Chair), Ken Callahan, Karen DeBonis, Don Hart, John MacEachran.

2006 Activities

Land Protection

Dugdale: We are happy to report that we finalized a conservation easement on Richard and Ann Dugdale's Jarmany Hill Road property. Out of their 150 acre parcel, Mr. & Mrs. Dugdale **donated** an easement of 136 acres and set 11 acres aside for their homestead. The property abuts the town forest on three sides and is an active tree farm. In addition, there are open fields and wetlands created by former beaver dams. The Monadnock Conservancy holds the easement and the Town of Sharon holds the executory (backup) interest in the easement. A total of \$8,975 from Sharon's Conservation Fund* was used to offset the Dugdale's costs in donating the easement, such as title searches, surveys, deed registrations and legal fees. By donating a conservation easement, the Dugdale's retain ownership of their property while permanently restricting its use to certain conservation purposes, such as their active tree farm.

THANK YOU Dick and Ann for your wonderful donation! Because of your generosity the residents (and wildlife) of Sharon will enjoy the benefits of your pristine property forever.

Matthews: We began working with Mr. Bruce Matthews of Cross Road to place a conservation easement on his property. Like the Dugdales, Mr. Matthews is **donating** an easement of approximately 100 acres and will reserve about six acres for his homestead. This easement is very special because it will connect to several protected properties and will create a permanently protected "corridor" of land for wildlife and people to enjoy. The Matthews' land abuts the Newton easement on Spring Hill Rd. and the town forest on three sides, including a portion of "Barnes Meadow" – a beautiful old beaver pond on Meadow Brook. Funds from Sharon's Conservation Fund will be used to offset Mr. Matthew's costs in donating the easement.

Important Easement News

On August 17, 2006, the president signed into law a federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations. The new law raises the deduction a landowner can take for donating a conservation easement from 30% of their income in any year to 50% for easements donated in 2006 and 2007. For more information, visit the Land Trust Alliance at www.lta.org/publicpolicy/tax_incentives_updates.htm.

Landowners in Sharon interested in learning more about easements are welcome to contact any member of the commission or attend a meeting. Inquiries are kept confidential and there is never an obligation or pressure to place an easement on property.

Town Forest

The final year of logging on the 3-year logging project of white pine in the Town Forest was completed early in 2006. The conservation commission walked the property with forester, Swift Corwin and observed new tree growth and signs of wildlife activity.

Water/Water Quality/Wetlands

Conducted water quality testing on the Gridley River, for the sixth year in a row. This work was performed through the NH Volunteer River Assessment Program. At key points throughout the summer members of the Conservation Commission collected water samples at four sites on the Gridley River. The official Department of Environmental Services report on our water quality has been published. Please feel free to contact the Conservation Commission for a photocopy.

Conservation of “Place” & Sharon Culture

Coordinated Earth Day Town Clean Up with a focus on Route 123. Volunteers collected 55 bags of garbage on the road. Thanks go out to everyone who volunteered a Saturday morning to help and to everyone who picked up trash on their own streets. It's because of you that our town stays beautiful!

ZBA Guidance

Provided guidance to a landowner and the Zoning Board of Adjustment on a special exception for building a sugar house within the wetlands conservation district. A formal letter of support with several restrictions on the use and construction of the building was sent to the ZBA and used in their final decision.

Membership

The conservation commission is chartered for seven members. We currently have two open seats. If you are interested in joining or want to learn more about the town committee that has the most fun, please contact the Liz LaRose, conservation commission chair, at 924-9614.

Issues and Projects in 2007

Land Protection

Action: Continue to work with Mr. Matthews and the Monadnock Conservancy to complete a conservation easement on his property.

Action: Participate in the protection of Temple Mountain. The state is currently considering passing a bill to purchase the old ski area and create a state forest that will be managed for water, wildlife and recreation.

Action: Educate and encourage Sharon landowners to permanently conserve their land via conservation easements or donations to land protection organizations.

Town Forest

Action: Update the town forest management plan

Action: Cut a new trail in the town forest from Jarmany Hill Road that will access the existing trails

Action: Maintain and re-mark hiking trails.

Water/Water Quality/Wetlands

Action: Work with Fish and Game to see if we can encourage the native wild brook trout population on Meadow Brook in the Town Forest.

Action: Establish process for monitoring timber cuts to ensure proper wetland crossings.

Action: Conduct the seventh year of water quality monitoring of the Gridley River.

Action: Continue to learn about aquifer and surface water protection.

Conservation of “Place” & Sharon Culture

Action: Coordinate the 2007 Earth Day Town Cleanup, planned for Saturday, April 29. Rain Date: Saturday, May 5. This year, we will coordinate a group to clean up Route 124. Please sign up to help at Town Meeting.

** The Conservation Fund was established by citizen vote in 1994 for land acquisition and offsetting costs of land conservation. The fund receives 100% of the revenues collected via current use change tax. In 2005, a grant from the Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation added \$25,000 to the Conservation Fund.*

**The Sharon Conservation Commission meets on the second Monday
of each month at 7:00 p.m. in The Meetinghouse.**



**More information about conservation issues and activities are on the
Town of Sharon Web Site: www.sharonnh.org**