

**ELMS PROPERTY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
10:30 A.M. JANUARY 10, 2008
Minutes**

Members present were Denis Canavan, Brad Clements, Marianne Chapman, Sandi Patty on behalf of Pete Dunbar, Phil Rollins, Bryan King, Cindi Thomas on behalf of Steve Riley, and David Gailey.

Members absent were Dr. Robert Paul and Steve Riley.

Others present were Margarita Rochow, Elms Environmental Center; Tracy Lumpkins, SMCPs; Kurt Reitz, SMCPs Elms; Charles Sauter, DNR; and Gayle Moreland, PPAD.

Mr. Canavan called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and asked for additions or amendments to the agenda. Mr. Rollins asked that a second bullet be added under III.b for update on beach park-elms. It was the consensus of the committee to allow the addition.

I. Approval of Minutes – 10/11/07

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of 10/11/07 as amended. The motion passed without opposition.

II. Unfinished Business

a. Security Issues

- **Update on Issues:** Ms. Rochow stated there has been a decrease in vandalism however the trespassing has stayed the same or increased. Ms. Rochow stated there was an incident where a hunter crossed onto the elms property in possession of a rifle. Ms. Rochow stated when the hunter encountered an employee on the property he did not reposition the weapon which was pointed in the employee's direction. Ms. Rochow stated this frightened the employee. Ms. Rochow stated the hunter was not cited however several other citations were given out in conjunction. Ms. Rochow stated this is why the December 20, 2007 meeting was held with Mr. Canavan, Ms. Rochow, Mr. Reitz, Mr. Clements, and Mr. Rollins.

Mr. Clements stated the lease line needs to be better defined by changing or removing the old line. Mr. Canavan asked if the employee felt endangered. Ms. Rochow stated, yes. Ms. Thomas explained this hunter did nothing wrong stating this is going to happen from time to time as people get lost or just turned around on the property. Ms. Thomas stated the DNR side of the property will not just have hunting. Ms. Thomas stated hunters need to retrieve their kill which may wonder onto the Elms property prior to dying. Ms. Thomas stated there was only one citation given out that day and it was given due to hunter safety law and an oversight on the licensing authority.

Mr. Clements stated the meeting on the 20th was mostly about the confusion of the lines and how to make them more visible. Ms. Thomas stated DNR needs to be more active in managing the property. Ms. Thomas stated this is state property, but the access is through the leased area. Ms. Thomas stated she and her husband would like to bush hog the fields but she needs access permission from the elms school. Ms. Thomas stated this would help improve access to the site. Mr. Canavan stated this is a free service Ms. Thomas is offering. Mr. Canavan stated we can work out the details. Mr. Clements stated he would keep in touch with Ms. Thomas regarding this.

- b. **Joint Use:** Mr. Canavan asked about the public accessing the property. Mr. Clements stated in October we discussed trails, signage, etc. Mr. Rollins stated we would like to make the trails available to the public and are taking the lead at developing ideas.
- c. **Well Status:** Mr. Clements stated the well is done and the bill has been sent to PPRP. Mr. Clements stated the well is now located between the shore side of the house and the parking lot.

III. New Business

a. Endangered Species Study

- **List of Species:** Ms. Chapman stated there is an initial list in the PPRP report. Ms. Patty stated this is a list of possible and expected species on the property however a study was probably never done. It was decided to speak with Dr. Paul at the next meeting in regards to this issue. Ms. Chapman stated Kyle Rambo also has a list. Mr. Canavan stated he would like copies of the lists in existence as a starting point.
- **Expense:** This was not discussed in length.

b. Board of Education and Parks & Recreation

- **Connecting Path Locations:** Mr. Clements submitted the attached map which shows proposed path locations. Ms. Rochow stated Use Area A the Vernal Pool Study Area path is being constructed now and will be the first trail. Mr. Clements showed on the map the grey area which is the 150 foot safety zone and stated it should be referred to as a buffer area. Mr. Clements stated in this buffer area is where a proposed perimeter trail would be located. Ms. Thomas stated this is all marsh land with spiders and snakes. Ms. Thomas stated there are plenty of existing trails; they just need to be maintained.
- **Update Beach Park-Elms:** Mr. Rollins stated Parks & Recreation received a grant for \$10,000 for waterway improvement. Mr. Rollins stated using this grant money they plan to replace the pier on Biscoe Pond with a floating pier sometime this Spring.

c. Signage

- **Location:** Mr. King recommended removing the Safety Zone signs and replacing with No Hunting, Authorized Personnel Only, Weapons Prohibited, etc about 100 yards apart along the "Buffer Area." Mr. King stated he would like to have these signs posted prior to the spring turkey season. Mr. King stated the signs would be made out of card stock paper and laminated. Discussion continued regarding the location of proper signage on the outer and inner boundaries of the safety zone.

Ms. Chapman made a motion to remove the promised 13.44 acres from DNR to be released back to the environmental center. With no second, the motion failed.

Ms. Thomas recommended taking the 13.44 acres before the Commissioners prior to marking. Mr. Canavan stated he wants the Commissioners to have a clear understanding as to where the hunting will be taking place and what signage will be put into place. Mr. Canavan asked what signage we want on the internal line of the 13 acres. It was the consensus of the committee to place "No Weapons Beyond this Point" and "No Unauthorized Individuals Beyond This Point."

Mr. Rollins made a motion to draft an MOU with Wildlife Management that would enable hunting on the County lease area in Area 2 of the attached map which

contains 13.44 acres and that the signage on the internal line of the safety zone will be "No Weapons Beyond This Point" and "Authorized Personnel Only St. Mary's County Public Schools and Parks" and Mr. Clements seconded. The motion passed by a 6-1-1 vote with Ms. Thomas opposed on behalf of Mr. Riley and Ms. Patty abstained on behalf of Mr. Dunbar. Ms. Chapman objected to Ms. Thomas voting on behalf of Mr. Riley for the record.

Mr. Canavan asked if the committee would be opposed to allowing Mr. King to place the signs except for the 13.44 acres that needs approval of the County Commissioners. Ms. Thomas strongly disagreed, just in case the Commissioners disagree with the committees recommendations. It was the consensus of the committee to wait for commissioner approval.

- **Type, Size, Etc.:** As discussed above.

IV. Next Steps

Ms. Chapman asked if discussion could be held at the next meeting regarding the formation of the board members and the possible addition of two citizen members.

The next meeting will be held on April 17, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Elms Environmental Education Center.

Mr. Canavan stated the Kiosk should be discussed at the next meeting.

V. Adjournment & Lunch

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.