



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NL-NH.COM

NEW LONDON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

8:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chair), Ruth White, Michael Gelcius, Mark Vernon, Andrew Deegan, Maggie Ford, Michael Kennedy, Stanley Morono, Tim Paradis

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Laura Alexander

STAFF PRESENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael and Jonathan Doheny

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Roll Call: Chair Brown called the roll. Ruth White will be a voting member in Laura Alexander's absence.

2. **Public Comment** – None

3. **BSA – Eagles Scout Project**

Michael and Jonathan Delvaney attended the meeting to discuss possible Eagle Scout projects. Jonathan is a life scout at troop 71 in New London. They worked with Michael Gelcius last year on the Low Plain trail. He would like to know what types of projects the Conservation Commission has that would be suitable and get ideas for an Eagle Scout project.

For the Low Plain trail, Jonathan was planning to build a small footbridge over the wet area about a foot off the ground and people wouldn't have to worry about getting their feet wet or flooding. He feels this is a medium sized project that could withstand the water and be used for a long time. This would be Jonathan's project but he would be working with the rest of his troop.

Ruth White discussed the Brookside Park nature library in Grantham and asked if this is something the Eagle Scouts could do here? Mr. Gelcius stated that this is something he has the Cub Scouts lined up for that project. Mr. Gelcius does feel that there are areas that need attention and those may be good projects. Mr. Delvaney asked about benches and if there were any other locations that we could build benches for?

The concept for an Eagle Scout project is for planning and organization. It can be done in a weekend or it can take 6 months. The objective is to come to a forum like this, learn about opportunities, then plan and organize it.

Ruth White discussed her experience with the Eagle Scouts and feels the project should be something that they can come back to in twenty years and say they did it. She doesn't feel that building a bridge meets the criteria. She feels the Scouts could build a bridge without it being considered a project.

One idea would be planting trees. There was just a timber cut at Low Plain. Andrew Deegan asked if there would be anything Jonathan could do with regards to habitat management? Mr. Gelcius replied that the plantings are done for this year. Chair Brown stated there were other opportunities to do wildlife plantings in other locations. Mr. Gelcius discussed planting in the Spring and feels it would be something to consider. There is still another segment of the cut area that hasn't been touched. He could bring them there to show them where it is and what has been done already.

Chair Brown asked about the timeframe. When would it start and for how long? Jonathan stated that if he did a bridge that would take about 3-4 weeks. If he planted trees, depending on where and the access, it could take 3 weeks to 2 months.

There are four other life scouts that need projects as well.

Mark Vernon suggested a project related to combatting invasive species. It could be part education and part eradication. Another option is a bridge project on the Kidder Cleveland Clough Trail.

The Conservation Commission will discuss ideas and let Michael and Jonathan know in the next week or two.

4. Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Ruth White) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to approve the minutes of September 20, 2017. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Permit Application/Review Committee

Michael Gelcius reported that a wetlands permit application was submitted for 16-17 Little Sunapee Road. This would be for a U shaped dock. This property has a single dock currently, and they want to add a second with boat lifts. Based on the shore line configuration, it looks straight forward. Mr. Kennedy questioned if it fit within the parameters and it does.

There were also 2 sewage disposal requests.

A site plan review was submitted for Main Street so that isn't anything handle so this must have been misfiled.

Davis Hill Road – there was a request for a cut in January on Davis Hill road but was turned down by the Planning Board because there were eagles nesting on the property where they were doing the cut. They are now requesting it again. Tim Paradis will look into this.

6. NL Planning Board Update

Tim Paradis reported that there were tree cutting applications.

Most of the meetings have been about parking and Master Planning.

An alternative energy subcommittee, part of the Planning board, is looking to clarify solar and wind. There are wind ordinances but not solar to it's confusing to people so work is being done to give parameters about where you can or cannot have it.

7. Master Plan Steering Committee

Mark Vernon attended a Master Plan meeting that discussed a community survey to get input to use in the next version of the Master Plan. In 2011, the survey was 17 pages and took a lot of effort to

complete it. Wilmot recently sent a 6 page survey so we will try to come up with something in the middle. Once the Conservation Commission's strategic plan is done he would like to share it with the Steering Committee.

8. Strategic Plan

Maggie Ford requested any final comments on the draft of the New London Conservation Commission Strategic Plan. She will be making an appointment with Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator, sometime after Halloween for review.

Michael Kennedy feels the dog park should not be specifically notated and shouldn't be listed under trails.

Chair Brown would also like a date on the bottom of the draft.

Maggie Ford also wanted to know if an action plan should accompany the strategic plan? This will specify who should take the action to make sure things get done. The Conservation Commission agreed this should be done.

9. Trails & Projects

- Regarding the gates for the Clark Lookout entrance, Chair Brown spoke with Richard Lee again. They were hoping to do it this week and they still may. The stakes are in so they know where the holes should go but they have been very busy. The trail has been completely topped with blue stone.
- Chair Brown will follow up on Trail agreement letters. We will have to work down the list and may have to make phone calls.
- Phillips Memorial Preserve – The Department of Public Works said they will go in and mow the field. May try to do some planting in the Spring. We didn't spend a lot of effort mowing the right of way. It would be helpful to know what is on the 15 acre parcel of property. Stanley Morono and Michael Gelcius will go check it out to see what is there.

10. Pleasant Street East

Chair Brown received the engineering report from Horizon's Engineering but was unable to open the attachment. They were able to send it in a different format and it is being printed. He will distribute copies so everyone can take it to review it after the meeting. The report defines the two parcels and the wet areas and supports the notion that it is not prime property for development.

As far as an easement, there should be something drafted for presentation for the Selectmen. The group supports that there be no construction of buildings or development. It is to be conserved for trails and possibly other outdoor activities. It was suggested to add a provision, at a later date, to have some form of a dog park. A final proposal for that is necessary at this time. Andrew Deegan was recently at a meeting where different Land Trusts were in attendance and he talked with the stewardship and Land protection folks and asked if they've experienced this before. This is becoming a big thing and a lot of land trusts do have dog parks on portions of the land. It has been successful for both conservation and for land trust. It falls under the non-commercial outdoor recreation so it is something that is permissible under the easement. He feels it would be a good idea to have a reserved right for this activity on the property. He will use vague language as he has found if it is too specific it makes things more difficult. Michael Gelcius suggested parking on side streets but Mr. Deegan would like to be parking to be as visible as possible.

Chair Brown wanted to confirm that there were no unforeseeable issues. Mr. Deegan didn't think so and will come back next month with a vote from the board. Chair Brown would like to get this to the Planning Board and the Selectmen.

11. 2019 Budget

Chair Brown submitted a rough draft of the budget which was around \$300 more than last year. There are items in the budget that are put in that are generally not used.

Chair Brown reported that there are a number of projects that the town is not able to fund, and feels we would be hard pressed to get land acquisition funds approved.

12. Other Business

- Chair Brown distributed a flyer about the 2015 Wildlife Action Plan event happening on Thursday, November 16, 2017 at the Wilmot Community Association – Red Barn. He is going to try to attend.
- Mr. Vernon discussed the Master Plan's emphasis on walking communities and feels a good way to do this would be extending the Lyon Brook Trail to the Bog. That would mean crossing county Road through Cricenti's field and Fenwood. Two landowners would be involved but he could write letters to propose it.
- Mr. Vernon also discussed designating some campsites for people to use. He feels camping is an important activity. Mr. Gelcius feels that there are many issues with this including fire, maintenance and trash. He stated that there are many camping areas within an hour drive that are more equipped for this. Chair Brown stated that there is an RSA and camping on town property requires written permission. The concern is fire.

The sites he is proposing are the upper fireplace at the Sanctuary, Otter Pond and the Webb Forest.

Stanley Morono asked if Wadleigh State Park would allow a few sites for this?

- Mr. Vernon feels they need a parking area at Metro Pond Trail. Chair Brown agrees and it would be fairly easy to do.
- The New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commission annual meeting is on Saturday, November 4, 2017 in Pembroke, NH. Mr. Vernon has been to two meetings and has found them to be worthwhile.

Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED (Mark Vernon) AND SECONDED (Michael Kennedy) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at 8:30am.

The meeting adjourned at 10:17am

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London