



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

8:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chair), Ruth White, Michael Gelcius, Mark Vernon, Andrew Deegan, Maggie Ford, Michael Kennedy, Laura Alexander

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Stanley Morono, Tim Paradis

STAFF PRESENT: Nicole Gage, Zoning Administrator

OTHERS PRESENT: Jerry Gold

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. He introduced Nicole Gage, the new Zoning Administrator. Ms. Gage stated that she is in the New London office Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays.

Roll Call: Chair Brown called the roll.

2. **Public Comment** – Jerry Gold noted that an examination had been done on the East side of Pleasant Street and he would like to know more about it. Chair Brown replied that a representative from the Engineering Company will be attending the meeting to give an overview of the report this morning.

3. **BSA – Eagles Scout Project**

Chair Brown asked Michael Gelcius if there was an update regarding the Eagle Scout project. Mr. Gelcius stated they will be doing two projects. Jonathan Doheny will be doing planting in the spring at Low Plains. Another scout, Noah Cooper, will be working with Mr. Vernon to build a bridge behind Spring Ledge. As a group, the scout troop will take over maintenance/monitoring of the Kidder Cleveland Clough Trail.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

IT WAS MOVED (Robert Brown) AND SECONDED (Michael Gelcius) to approve the minutes of October 18, 2017 with the amendments discussed. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **Permit Application/Review Committee**

Michael Gelcius reported there is only one sewage disposal application. This is just a notification, no action required.

6. **Strategic Plan**

Maggie Ford met with Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator. The next step is to do an action plan to compliment the Strategic Plan. Chair Brown thanked Ms. Ford for her work on this.

7. Trails & Projects

Clark Lookout – Mr. Gelcius discussed the recent vandalism activity and updated the group on how it is being addressed.

With regards to signage about fire, there is only one sign remaining. He suggested getting another sign posted at the top.

PMP Update – Mr. Gelcius and Stanley Morano did a site visit to this property. A lot of debris had come down with the recent storm. They looked at the abutting property and had no concerns. Chair Brown stated they are contacting the owners and would like to restate our interest in the 15 acre parcel if it ever came up for sale.

Storm Damage – Storm damage on the trails is significant. Kidder Cleveland Clough Trail was greatly affected. A bridge on the trail took a direct hit and the water level is high making it impassible.

Trail Agreements – letters were sent out approximately nine months ago without a great response. Mr. Vernon is unsure how hard to push the issue. Mr. Kennedy feels that we have the land owner's permission to use the property and have done our due diligence by sending the letter. It would seem it should be business as usual with the use of the trail or they would have notified us otherwise.

Mr. Vernon feels we are making headway with the dog waste issue. He thought it could be mentioned in Municipal Matters.

8. Pleasant Street East

Chair Brown introduced Will Davis from Horizon Engineering. The report had been distributed prior to the meeting.

Mr. Davis stated that the first thing they did was to have the wetlands delineated by a certified wetlands scientist. There are substantial wetlands. On the West parcel it is almost entirely wetlands and the East parcel has a large portion. They looked at the topography and the contributing water sheds. The Cottage Lane development discharges directly into the property on the East parcel. A large portion of the downtown area comes to this wetland and flows into Pleasant Lake. In the report it reported that the Cottage Lane was done fairly recently and has most likely has increased the storm water discharge to the parcel. There wasn't any retention or treatment done as part of that project. There is just collection and discharge. The areas that contribute from Colby Sawyer College are coming from a few culverts running under Seaman's Road. It doesn't appear that there is much erosion or sedimentation. The big issue is detention.

This would be a great area for trails and trailhead parking and there would be an opportunity to do some storm water treatment.

Mr. Davis different ways this property could be developed. Zoning would allow many options; however, it wouldn't be a good site for larger scale commercial or residential development. It would be a good property for a conservation easement.

Chair Brown asked that the term jurisdictional wetlands be defined. Mr. Davis explained that the Army Corp of Engineers and the State of New Hampshire has rules that describe how the wetlands are supposed to be delineated. This is based on hydrology, vegetation and soil make up. All three

components need to meet certain criteria to become jurisdictional wetlands. The certified wetlands scientist investigates it and flags it. This designation implies that the state will regulate those waters.

Chair Brown stated that the East parcel is roughly 27 acres. He asked what percentage qualifies as wetlands. Mr. Davis didn't have that number with him but visually looking at the area he felt it was approximately 25-30%. The previous study dating back about 9 years ago reported 20% plus.

Chair Brown reported that on the West side there is a location where the beavers are most active. This has been going on for years and they have been asked to relocate them. When the Beavers are removed it doesn't take long for them to come back. A company put in a device with a culvert so that the beavers think they've built a dam but the culvert is still doing its job.

Jerry Gold wanted clarification on if anything could be done on the East side for recreational park development. The town has an inadequate skating rink and he was wondering if anything could be done to enhance the water control. Mr. Davis stated it's possible on the North side of the wetland to dig into the water table to do a pond but it wouldn't be a storm water device. He doesn't feel there is a good spot on this site to do that.

Easement Draft – Andrew Deegan reported that the board approved the project. He stated that the easement would be tailored to the property. Mr. Deegan went through the proposed easement. It needs to state why we are doing the easement and what the purpose is, which is to protect land.

The use limitations - Commercial activities are not allowed, unless it is agriculture or forestry. The property can't be subdivided. Cannot mine or dump on the property. No advertising or billboards on the property. It cannot be used to satisfy density. You cannot post the property against public access.

We have a right to monitor the property. We can mark the boundaries and put a sign stating it is conservation land.

Any notices have to be sent via certified mail.

In New Hampshire, any amendments to the easement have to go through the Attorney General. This is a layer of protection.

The next step would be to review a draft and Mr. Deegan will have it ready for the next meeting.

9. 2019 Budget

The budget hearings are currently under way.

10. Land Acquisition Funding

Chair Brown stated that land acquisition funding had come up again and discussed whether they should go to the town to ask for money to put in Capital Reserve. His feeling is that it is not the time. There is a need to put some money in there but with what it going on with the budget, there are more pressing issues. It's important to know that in the Haddad fund there is \$500,000 and in the land acquisition reserve fund there is \$216,000.

Mr. Kennedy feels although it may not be this year, they should be reminded in writing that it is a need for us and we will be coming to them in the future.

11. Solid Waste Committee

There is a solid waste management committee that has been working for about three years on a zero sort study. Single stream sorting didn't make sense cost wise. Many were looking at the environmental impact. The solid waste management group had an engineering study done. Looked at what can be done to put a band aid on the existing system. You need at least 10 acres and there is currently 5 acres. We are recycling at four different locations. They also wanted to look at what it would take to build a brand new building on 10-15 acres and found this would be very costly.

12. Other

Mark Vernon updated the group on the Association of Conservation Commission meeting and said he continues to find these meetings helpful. They are held once a year and are well attended. This year they addressed partnerships with land trust alliances and conservation commissions. The take away was the need to do more public outreach.

Wildlife Action Plan – Chair Brown reminded the group that this meeting is taking place this week.

Tim Fluery asked for help on a project to go town by town to determine open space lands that are ten acres or larger. They also want history on how the town acquired the land. Mr. Deegan volunteered to help with this.

Mr. Vernon addressed the camping proposal he spoke about at the last meeting. He distributed a handout with more information for review.

Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED (Maggie Ford) 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, December 20, 2017 at 8:30am.

The meeting adjourned at 10:42am

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London