



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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DRAFT Minutes of the December 16, 2015 Conservation Commission Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chair), Laura Alexander (Vice-Chair), Jane McMurrich, Mark Vernon, Michael Gelcius, Andrew Deegan, Dan Allan, Ruth White, Tim Paradis

STAFF PRESENT: Lucy St. John (Planning & Zoning Admin.), Norm Bernaiche (Town Assessor)

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Grigsby (Pellettieri Associates, Inc.), Pierre Bedard (Bedard & Assoc. Land Surveyor), Pam Perkins (Big Hilltop representative)

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

Roll Call: Chair Brown called the roll. The meeting had been properly noticed.

Solar Energy Exemption - Norm Bernaiche, Chief Assessor of New London, Newbury and Sunapee

- Property assessment Tax status RSA 72:61, 62, 64. An exemption of the value of a solar system.

Mr. Bernaiche went over his report he handed out to the board members. Currently, Newbury and Sunapee have the optional alternative energy exemption; a local level decision. The State created an enabling legislation that allow the communities, on their own to develop a tax policy on wind, solar and wood. Years back, New London considered this, however, it was not passed. At that time, only a few people were receiving this exemption. Not many people could afford to have solar added to their homes. Now, with the credits and incentives available more people are able to. Today, absent of a formal policy, we don't add value to a home. We do not have sufficient evidence as to how much value it adds. While in the field assessing properties, each panel is inventoried at approximately \$600 a panel, without knowing installation date. Generally they are approximately \$1000 - \$1200 a panel, installed, without credits coming back. Isolating the value of solar on a home vs a non-solar, everything being equal, has been ongoing by inventorying the amount of panels, cost them out and then zero the value out, per the internal policy. There has been no effect on the homeowner's assessment and no effect to the town's tax base. In Newbury they give a \$5000 exemption, whether it's a \$10,000 or 50,000 system.

In Sunapee, they are exempted so there is net zero change. This system of adding then deducting would takes a lot of administrative work. Mr. Bernaiche suggested that if the board considers moving it forward to bring it to a warrant article and the Town accepts it, to add language including 'not to pick it up'.

Chair asked whether Newbury, is actually getting a tax credit. And if he is calculating the value of the solar system? Mr. Bernaiche said yes there is a credit, but they are not calculating it. Assessors are regulated by the Department of Revenue, he and Kris are both certified appraisers/supervisors at the State. They submit an appraisal report that goes to the State every time they do a revaluation. They could lose their certification if they are not documenting what they are doing and following the ethical and practical guideline of assessment practice, therefore, they inventory the panels. The Department will eventually force their hands to pick up requested items and decide whether they are properly valuing items held accountable for reporting. Absent any type of local legislation, a value will have to be added for certain property items.

Mr. Vernon asked if solar panels are relatively easy to see and how does geothermal and efficient wood stoves get handled? Also, why are we focusing just on solar panels and not on a broader alternative options?

Mr. Bernaiche said he didn't think they are. The solar panels are just the most popular. Geothermal is a newer concept and item that is added to the property card. Whether it's electric heat or base board heat or hot air heat, a point base system is used, Geothermal has a lot of other features different than a home considered to be speculative housing, and therefore it is rated higher. Wood and wind have the same language and process.

Chair noted that solar panels degrade with time and asked if that was being going to be figured in. Mr. Bernaiche said they are inventorying them to keep track of the approximate date noted to try and value them. Every five years a reevaluation is done. With the enhancement of the data base, within the last ten years, tracking history has greatly improved.

Chair agreed to support and encourage people to install these systems as a co-sponsor with the Energy Committee. He asked if there were any other questions from the board.

Mr. Bernaiche said from the stand point of process it makes sense to have both committees support one another in front of the Selectmen.

The board agreed to further the discussion with the Energy Committee and the Selectmen.

Approval of Minutes:

IT WAS MOVED (Chair Brown) AND SECONDED (Laura Alexander) to approve the minutes of November 18, 2015, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Planning & Zoning Administrator's Report – Lucy St. John

Ms. St. John gave a brief over view of the Planning Board's meeting last night. Most of the people in attendance supported the agriculture. Concerns were raised about the agriculture operations. Comment were raised regarding mapping issues. One issue is that streams are not being noted on all of the maps. The notice will be posted. The public hearing was continued to the next meeting on January 14th.

There are four tree-cutting applications being submitted.

- ✓ The Breed application will be going back to the PB to get approval for access to the waterfront buffer.
- ✓ The Pike application will also be going back to the PB.
- ✓ The Dorr Family Farm on Morgan Hill Rd. and Little Sunapee Rd. has a site plan application. A site walk is scheduled for Friday at 8:30 am and is open for the public.
- ✓ The Greenwald property on Bog Road has an application for the excavation of a mound in the Shoreland overlay district, flood zone and may have other natural features. A site walk is scheduled for Saturday, January 2nd.

Several zoning amendments will be submitted on Friday morning to the Intertown newspaper and posted on the website.

- ✓ Clarifications on nonconforming.
- ✓ Changes to the Shoreland overlay district
- ✓ Changes regarding dead, dying and disease trees or destroyed by fires
- ✓ Revisions to planting shrubs, low lying vegetation.

The public hearing will be held Thursday, January 14th and if needed, January 15th.

Permit & Variance Applications

Application prepared and presented by Greg Grigsby, Pellettieri Associates:

- Pike Brook Road Revocable Trust, 80, 96, 98 Pike Brook TM 135-008/009-000 – Shoreland Permit application Continuation F-Submitted two Shoreland applications in April to get the house construction started. Worked with PB to relocate the road. Submitted amended plans reflecting the new road alinement on December 11th. Combined lots into two, 008 & 009. The old and new plans were reviewed. Pike Brooke is being realigned away from the lake following the utility cut to minimize the tree impacts. On Friday a meeting will be held with Eversource to discuss pole location as it relates to tree cutting and abutters. The material used will be forest asphalt. 700sq of total temporary disturbance. Abutters have been notified. Working to relocate the road away

from the lake and wetland buffer. Adjusting the location of the barn away from the lake according to the setback. Met the unaltered requirements at the Town & State level. Impervious is 20% reduced 4500+ sq. ft. area. Leach field design has been approved. Unaltered area meets the town requirements of 50% less impervious within the 50 and 150 woodland buffer. Adding a car port to the house. The road width will be wider than what it is current, 10'-14' for safety. Working on a storm water management plan. Application prepared by Greg Grigsby, Pellettieri Associates.

Application prepared and presented by Greg Grigsby, Pellettieri Associates:

- Breed, Judith R. Breed Revocable Trust. David Breed applicant. Wetland Permit Application for Standard Review. Property located at 47 Moyah's Lane. Tax Map 103-012-000. Project Description: Reconstruction of an existing retaining wall behind an existing natural beach, incorporated a handicap ramp for access by users with limited mobility. Shoreland restoration north of the ramp and wall, and a drywell at the top of bank. Drywell disturbance to be permitted under separate Shoreland application. Application received by the Town Nov 30, 2015.
- Breed, Judith R. Breed Revocable Trust. David Breed applicant. Shoreland Permit Application. Property located at 47 Moyah's Lane. Tax Map 103-012-000. Project Description: After the fact handicap ramp/stairs to house; rebuild existing wall along edge of bank; ADA access ramp from top of bank to beach; drywell capturing underdrains from old tennis court, remove turf between lakeside wall and old tennis court, replace with native understory vegetation, reduce area of driveway, regrade drive and divert runoff into infiltration trenches, rebuild front wall and walk. Preconstruction impervious area within 250 reference line is 22.75% and post-construction is 22.52% (a reduction). Application received by the Town Nov 30, 2015.

Any concerns from the board can be forwarded to DES.

Application prepared and presented by Pierre Bedard:

- Barbara A. Deming, Trustee. Property located at 151 Forty Acres Road. Tax Map 038-001-000. Two zoning variance applications were submitted to the ZBA Zoned Forest Conservation. Discussion of potential subdivision. Minimum lot size required is 25 acres, proposed new lot of 12+/- acres. A 400 ft. road would have to be built into the property and over a conservation easement land. Ausbon Sargent supports the variances.

Motion to support.

IT WAS MOVED (Mark Vernon) AND SECONDED (Andrew Deegan) to support the two zoning variances. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Application prepared and presented by Pierre Bedard:

- Beth Greenawalt (formerly owned by Elizabeth A. Brown). Property located at 316 Bog Road. Tax Map 106-011-000. Shoreline permit is for demolishing and regrading structure. Currently the structure is within the waterfront buffer landing between house, shed and driveway. Went before PB for an ordinance to excavate 690 cubic yards, regrading area. Redesign septic system. The house will be kept behind waterfront buffer. Relocate driveway to a safer location. Regrade mound over septic system area. A site walk is scheduled for January 2nd at 9:30am. Once plans for the site has been redesigned, they will be submitted.

Easements and Land Acquisitions

The board discussed possible fund raising, tier funding and a partnership with Asbon Sargent.

- *Davis Hill Road Project – Lot 2 – Rt. 103A side, 39 acres, assessed value is \$298,000.*
Three possibilities:
 - ✓ Two lots totaling 8 acres, abutting the lookout drive up to Clark Lookout and a portion of land under the road. Excluding field.

- ✓ Entire road up to Lookout.
- ✓ Whole parcel.

Ms. Perkins, representative for the family, brought in parcels for comparison assessing the value at \$950,000.

- Addition easement on the Evergreen Point property may need a warrant article.

Motion to enter into Non-Public Session

IT WAS MOVED (Dan Allan) AND SECONDED (Michael Gelcius) to enter the Nonpublic session for RSA 91- A:3, II(d) Consideration of acquisition sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

Roll Call: Chair Brown called the roll. Himself – Yes, Andrew Deegan – Yes, Jane McMurrich,–Yes Laura Alexander –Yes, Dan Allan – Yes, Mark Vernon –Yes, Michael Gelcius –Yes,

THE MOTION WAS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Entered nonpublic session at 10:08am.

Public session reconvened at 10:51am.

Trail Maps/ Updates

- Contacted Merrimack County Department of Corrections to inquire about whether or not there will be a 2016 program. They are no longer are organizing work details largely because of liability issues. However, they do referrals. A list is provided of the municipalities that accepting help.
- Adopter/blaze guidelines are being updated. Adopter report request form is being updated. A questionnaire is in the process with a new email address.
- *Lyon Brook Trail* – two possible connector trails for Quail Run were discussed.
 - ✓ Contact property owners involved. Robert & Susan Sullivan, Katie family and James & Jane Hunt.
 - ✓ Town of NL & the Outting Club – Brooke crossing will be needed.
- *Davis Path* – Measurement was taken. Grade level needs to come up 18 inches to make flat. Its' about an 80 ft. path. Need to reconstruct bridge path. In spring, will re-measure.

Other Business

- ✓ The board discussed the changes to their land list and possible lands to add.
- ✓ The board discussed possibly changing the time for the monthly meetings.

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission would be held on January 20, 2015 at 8:30am.

Motion to Adjourn

**IT WAS MOVED (Chair Brown) AND SECONDED (Mike Gelcuis) to adjourn the meeting.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:17am

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Richtmyer, Recording Secretary
Town of New London