



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

8:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (chair), Michael Gelcius, Ruth White, Stanley Morono (left at 10:00am) , Andrew Deegan

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Maggie Ford, Mark Vernon, Joseph Kubit, Michael Kennedy

1. **Call to order** – Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 8:30am. Stanley Morono will be a voting member today.

2. **Public comment** – None

3. **Permit Applications**

Owl's Nest Road - Permitting was done to put in a dock. The project involved moving the existing dock to the opposite side of the property closer to the abutter's property. The abutter has been fighting this. Mr. Gelcius attended a meeting last may in Concord with DES regarding this project. There was a concern about the dock and the consensus was that it would be best to leave the dock where it is. It is still in litigation and in process.

168 Pilot House Road - removal and replacement of seasonal piers.

700 Rt 103A - Subdivision request to split a 10.09 acre lot into 7.25 and 2.833 acre lots. This fits within the code for subdivision and has been approved by DES.

Little Sunapee Road - DES confirmed a forestry permit by notification.

Individual Disposal Systems - Michael Gelcius stated that he was approached about what we do regarding the testing of septic systems. He put together a packet for all the Conservation Commission members that describes what New London does and also what other areas do. The question is what is the process for testing septic systems that are on properties that abut ponds and lakes. He wants to start a dialogue because if a septic system is failing it could be polluting the pond or lake without anyone knowing about it. Other municipalities and states have rules that require dye packs be installed. This is non-invasive and once it's put in the septic system it would show any leakage that is going into the water. Mr. Gelcius feels this should be brought up to see if this should be our process moving forward. Andy Deegan asked if we should contact the Lake Protective associations to see if they are interested in this. Mr. Gelcius stated he had planned on contacting them and once he has done this we can discuss again at the next meeting. Mr. Deegan also suggested contacting the Conservation Commission Association to see if they have information on whether this is being done elsewhere. It might be worth checking with Newbury and Sunapee as well.

Chair Brown noted this has come up in the past and is a sensitive topic.

4. **New London Town Meeting**

Voting is on March 10, 2020 and Town Meeting will be held on March 11, 2020. Chair Brown would like as many Conservation Commission members in attendance as possible at town meeting. There will be a warrant to ask for approval of the conservation easement on the new Low Plain parcel. Another warrant article will be to request a 50/50 split of forest harvest profits.

5. Review and accept the January 15, 2020 meeting minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2020 meeting. The spelling of Leo Maslin's name will be corrected. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Brown noted there were two sets of meeting minutes (July and November, 2019) that were still listed as "draft".

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the draft minutes from the July and November meetings as written. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Trails

Native Plant Trust - A letter from the Native Plant Trust was received and they are requesting a visit on July 26, 2020. Ruth White will contact them and provide them with the Conservation Commission website email address to coordinate this.

Trail Intern – Chair Brown stated he will follow up with the prospective student that expressed interest in being a trail intern for the summer. The student has two other job opportunities he is exploring. The position has been posted on the Colby Sawyer College intern job posting board.

CSC Student Project – Hiking Trail -Michael Gelcius received a letter from a Colby Sawyer College student who is completing an honors capstone project. The project involves creating a reflection/guidebook on trails in New London. She sent the capstone proposal and asked if the Conservation Commission had any thoughts on what to include in the booklet. She will try to attend a meeting in the near future and will also apply for her trail patch.

Seedlings – Chair Brown stated these plantings can take a while to grow successfully. The goal is to plant them in an environment where they will thrive. It is a labor intensive project and Michael Gelcius is willing to ask the Boy Scouts if they want to be involved in the planting again. Chair Brown stated they should get their order in soon as they sell out quickly.

7. Invasive Program – Doug Cygan from the Department of Agriculture has agreed to do a public awareness training program titled “Invasive Upland Species in New Hampshire”. One of the prime focuses will be on Knotweed. This will be held at the Tracy Memorial Library at 6:00pm on July 30, 2020.

Chair Brown contacted Karen Ebel and asked to speak with her about the possibility of getting support from the Department of Transportation. This is an important topic and Chair Brown would like to discuss this with the Board of Selectmen as well.

8. New London Solid Waste Committee – Chair Brown commented that five or six years ago, the Board of Selectmen appointed a Solid Waste Committee. That committee was charged with the project of investigating, evaluating and making a recommendation with regards to single stream or zero sort recycling. The recommendation at that time was to stay with what they were doing as it seemed wasteful to haul their waste to Berlin. The Solid Waste Committee is being rejuvenated as there was a lot of input that came out of the Master Plan survey. Chair Brown stated there are openings on the Solid Waste Committee if anyone is interested.

9. Saving Special Places Program – Andy Deegan explained this is a one day workshop that includes three sessions. It will be held on April 4, 2020 in Alton NH. It is a good way to network with other organizations and other Conservation Commissions.

10. Projects

Conservation Land Acquisition Projects – Chair Brown noted that there are currently three projects being discussed.

Andy Deegan discussed one of the projects which is a parcel of land adjacent to Clark Lookout. It is a 30 acre piece of property with frontage on 103A. Mr. Deegan agrees that it is an important piece of property but the cost is high and we need to justify what we are spending. Chair Brown would like to get an appraisal and would like to request that the cost would be split.

Forest/Wildlife Improvement Harvest 2020 – Chair Brown is confident that a forestry harvest will happen this year. The southern part of Low Plain is already marked from three years ago. An issue is that the access area is about .8 of a mile to Andover Road so it is a long way to move timber. This project will be done with a cut to length process so the tops of the trees and all the debris stays on site and only the marketable timber is taken out. The southern end and the new 30 acre parcel would be harvested leaving a significant buffer along Shaker Street and along Andover Road. Chair Brown will be asking the Selectmen to sign the intent to cut on Monday.

Gnome Doors – Chair Brown commented the Gnome doors are almost done. Ruth White stated the children had a fun time working to decorate them.

Spring Clean- up – Chair Brown noted that Saturday, May 2, 2020 is Spring Trail Clean-Up day. The Recreation Commission will be helping to organize this.

11. Phillips Conservation Easement Amendment – Andrew Deegan discussed the property owned by Jane Phillips on Burpee Hill Road. Ms. Phillips is possibly selling the farm and wanted to make the easement stronger. Some of the changes weren't enforceable but a final document was agreed upon. In the state of New Hampshire, if you are amending a conservation easement it has to go to the Attorney General's office for approval. The Attorney General's office has approved it and Jane Phillips is in agreement. The Town of New London is the backup easement holder so they have to sign it as well. Mr. Deegan is asking for the Conservation Commission's approval so he can take it to the Board of Selectmen to sign.

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to support the Conservation easement. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. **New Business** - Michael Gelcius stated that a letter was received last week from Yahoo small business who is the company we use for the Conservation Commission website. This is not who the town uses. They are doubling the price of the monthly cost for web hosting. It will go from \$9.99 per month to \$19.99. An option could be to have the Conservation Commission website fall under the same server as the town. Mr. Gelcius will research this option.

Membership – Chair Brown stated that Maggie Ford’s term is up next month. Chair Brown commented that the Conservation Commission is in need of new members and it is important that anyone that is interested understands what would be required of them.

13. **Next Meeting Date** - The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

14. **Motion to Adjourn**

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19AM

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London