



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

8:30 a.m.

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Maggie Ford, Michael Kennedy, Laura Alexander

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

Roll Call: Chair Brown called the roll.

2. **Public Comments - None**

3. **Permit Application / Review committee update**

- A permit was submitted for a subdivision on Bunker Road. There was a DES acknowledgement for a permit.
- 39 Knollwood Road –a wetland permit for a dry hydrant was submitted. This was already reviewed by Chief Lyon.
- 2 sewage disposal system permits for 195 Forest Acres Road and 468 Elkins Road that were accepted and approved.
- Messer Pond – a new dock has been installed at the first house right after the pond. There was never a dock or any cutting down on the waterfront but now a trail has been cut down to the new dock. Michael Gelcius notified Nicole Gage to ask if a permit had been issued for a new dock. There have not been any recent permits issued. She requested the address so she can research this.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to approve the minutes of April 18, 2018 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2018 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **Intern for Mapping**

Chair Brown discussed the need for a replacement to do mapping. Mark Vernon reported that they have a student, Colby Reardon, who is interested. Mr. Vernon has reached out to him and is waiting to hear back from him to make sure he has access to our files. He is a junior at Colby Sawyer College. Stanley Morono also has a potential candidate.

6. **Pleasant Street – East (CE)**

Chair Brown stated that there was good turnout at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on April 23, 2018. There was concern about the two specific uses that were outlined in the easement; the garden and the dog park. As a result, these two uses will be removed. There were also concerns about parking.

Chair Brown discussed the ongoing issues with the Beavers. In the past they have tried relocating them but they come back. They went to the expense of installing a castor master which is a flow device but the discharge culvert isn't flowing properly. Mark Vernon and Tom Coverdale have gone in to clean it out. The water level in the culvert on Pleasant Street is standing water which means it's being held up

somewhere downstream. If it gets cleared out and repositioned, the next step is trying to stay ahead of the Beaver activity.

Stanley Morono, Steve Root and Mark Vernon are going in to work on it Saturday. Mr. Morono will take photographs.

7. Planning Board update

Tim Paradis reported that the last Planning Board meeting was at Whipple Hall for a discussion with Continuum about proposed workforce housing. This was a conceptual discussion. Ruth White commented that they did an outstanding job and it was a good meeting. Many of the residents of Hilltop were in attendance.

They proposed one and two bedroom units and would have four, three story buildings for a total of 96 units. They will cluster the four buildings centrally on the seven acre parcel so the disruption to the perimeter is minimal and visibility from the road is reduced.

This is a separate proposal than the plans for the Hospital property, which is a Senior Living facility.

Chair Brown asked what the process was to change zoning. Mr. Paradis stated it takes a town meeting. This was offered to them but they don't want to wait that long and will seek a variance.

8. Strategic plan

Due to Maggie Ford not being at the meeting, the strategic plan will be discussed at the next meeting. The basic outline is on the website.

9. Trails & Projects

Trail Patch Program – Chair Brown asked if trail patches had been sent to the two people that had completed the program. Michael Gelcius stated that Martha Doelle and Lyndsay Ladd earned patches but couldn't make the last presentation so he mailed the patches to them. He then received two additional completed forms for Brandy Wellborne and Matt Miller. He called them but didn't get a response. Ruth White knows Matt Miller and will take both patches to give to them. Originally it was determined that the presentation of the patches would be done at a fall and spring Conservation Commission meeting. Chair Brown stated that there is no need to wait for a meeting and they can come in anytime to receive the patch. He also wanted to discuss ways to get more interest in the program. Michael Gelcius suggested putting an article about the patch program in Municipal Matters. He will send something in for the June issue. It was also suggested that it be put in the Shopper but it's expensive. Chair Brown prefers the Intertown Record or the Messenger. The radio station may also be an option as well as the Kearsarge calendar. Mark Vernon discussed providing a weekly or monthly hike series that would go toward earning the patch. He could team up with other members if they are willing to do this. The goal is to come up with three or four dates for upcoming hikes.

Timber inventory update – This started on the south end of Low Plain. Chair Brown spoke with Leo Maslin and he has started work on it. The northern end of Low Plain was harvested two winters ago and there is a good sample of the timber that shows most of the white pine is diseased with red rot. Anything done will make the forest healthier and enhance the wildlife opportunities. Enough money would need to be made to make it a wash as they don't want to spend money to do this.

The Shepard Pit parcel is a little over 50 acres with the best timber on about 30 acres of it. It is estimated that they could net about \$10,000 by doing this. All agreed that this is a worthwhile project. Finding a market for the chips is difficult. Andy Deegan asked if they could chip it and leave it onsite. By taking it out, they are removing all the nutrition.

Chair Brown stated the value of putting the nutrients in the ground versus taking it out is unclear. Leaving it there slows down the process of regeneration. If it is chipped, it should be spread around which is hard to do.

Trail Intern - Tom Coverdale is back for the fifth year.

Pleasant Street - East and West

Mark Vernon provided a handout of Pleasant Street West with possible trail locations. This is just a proposal. He would like to know when to start cutting trails. He wants to get feedback from Police Chief Ed Andersen with regards to spur trails off of cul-de-sacs and parking.

Chair Brown asked if we had contacted the Bittersweet management group yet. Mr. Vernon stated he has spoken with them and they asked him to send a letter. Ruth White suggested having a map with a proposed route first before we send the letter. Other than putting in a staircase, putting in the trail would be easy and a loop trail would be nice. Mr. Vernon will draft a letter to Bittersweet Management. One of the concerns was the public parking on Bittersweet and this should be addressed in the letter.

Mr. Vernon asked if all were in agreement to spend funds on materials for a private project. All agreed the expense was minimal and it was a good thing to do.

Trail Maintenance Project List

Mark Vernon has a list going. There will be widening and cutting for a few parking spaces. Richard Lee can decide if a culvert is necessary.

Low Plain – seedlings

Chair Brown will pick up the seedlings and they will be available for planting day on May 19, 2018. Michael Gelcius did a walk through with the group last week to identify where to planting should be done. Starting at the third stream going back is where they will plant. They will have 6-10 scouts, plus leaders to help.

PMP – Planting will begin soon. Chair Brown has some high end hazelnuts that need to get in the ground soon. Stanley Morono has offered to help with this.

Eagle Scout Project – this project involves building a bridge out behind Spring Ledge Farm. Mark Vernon hasn't heard anything but trusts it will get done.

Library – Ruth White asked if there was more discussion about a library site at the beginning of a trail. There was an offer from the Cub Scouts in town to do this. Michael Gelcius gave them plans and a picture but he hasn't heard back from them. He will follow up. Ms. White suggests doing this at Clark Lookout as it's easy for kids and has a nice view.

Miscellaneous

Mark Vernon asked Chair Brown about orange blazing. Chair Brown responded that he cut about 100 strips and will bring them in within the next week or so.

Mr. Vernon also asked about the replacement process for Laura Alexander since she has resigned. Chair Brown stated that the process is that a prospective member would fill out the volunteer interest form. It is felt that it would be good to have a prospective member come to some meetings before they become a member to understand what the committee does. In the interim, Tim Paradis suggested making an alternate a permanent member as this would seem to be the natural progression. Mark Vernon has a few suggestions and will recommend having them come to a few meetings prior to making the commitment. The Selectmen are watching attendance closely for all committees.

10. Solar Energy Systems Exemption RSA Section 72:61 – Discussion with Energy Committee

Chair Brown met with the Chair of the Energy Committee and had a good discussion. This topic will be raised at the next Energy Committee meeting and will discuss if it is something they want to support. If they don't want to do this, Chair Brown will do this personally. He got a current report from the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions and just over half of the towns and cities have adopted this RSA in some form. Basically it states if you have a solar system, you won't be taxed on it. There are currently between 60-70 solar systems in town.

11. Desirable Lands List

The Desirable Lands list has been updated to include the 6 acre parcel on Newport Road. Andy Deegan prepared a letter and they were able to locate a local representative of the church in Vermont to send the letter to. They have not heard anything back to date.

12. Important Dates:

Board of Selectmen meeting – Monday, June 4 @ 8:30 AM

Planning Board – Tuesday, May 22 @ 6:30 PM

Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED (Tim Paradis) AND SECONDED (Andy Deegan) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission will be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at 8:30am.

The meeting adjourned at 10:22am

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London