



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 20, 2018

8:30 a.m.

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Tim Paradis

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:** Ariana Stokes introduced herself to the board and explained she went to school in California and was majoring in Ecology. She added she did not even know the Conservation Commission existed and requested some information. Chair Brown explained the Commission was not a ruling body but reviews applications for shoreline impact and stream buffers and suggested she look at the webpage for their mission statement and more information. Ariana suggested the commission should try to attract Advanced Placement Environmental students from the local high school. She said the Conservation Commission would be a perfect accompaniment to their studies.

3. **Permit Application / Review committee update by Mike Gelcius**

- 212 Poor Road on Lake Sunapee, permit for erosion control
- 686 Lake Shore Road on Pleasant Lake, permit for erosion control. It was hoped both these residents would appear to talk with the Conservation Commission but they were not present. They will make an appearance before the Planning Board.
- Sub-division on Bunker Road was approved by DES
- 750 Little Sunapee Road, permit to demo and replace with new septic. DES has received but not approved as of this date.
- 115 Lamson Lane, "After-the-fact" waterfront permit for patio approved with conditions
- 92 Pleasant Street (Bittersweet) for a drainage swale. DES has reported that work was done without an approval.
- Season's Condominiums, "Dredge and fill" culvert repair. This is a large and expensive culvert.
- 810 Pleasant Street, remove 15 cubic yards of material that is obstructing flow of a stream. This empties into Pleasant Lake and is silt that has accumulated and needs to be cleaned so the water will resume movement without obstacle.
- 1769 Little Sunapee Road, sewage disposal system, DES accepted permit
- West Side Drive, sewage disposal system, DES approved
- 750 Little Sunapee Road, sewage disposal system, DES approved
- 466 Otterville Road, tree cutting request. Owners mistakenly filled out a shoreland form instead of a stream overlay application. The rules for these two applications are very different. It was found to be unacceptable as a shoreland request but when stream overlay rules applied the owners were found to be within all parameters.

- Georges Mill's Cottages, removal of one burned down cottage debris has not been completed as yet. Any expansion on unit has been denied, as there is questionable footing to support a new building. The garbage is still there and a low bit of fencing has been installed in the back to protect the waterfront. Expiration time for completion of this is approaching the one-year mark. Owner still needs to submit a new plan and engage a contractor. It was agreed that photos should be obtained especially from the waterside since silt fencing does not seem to be doing the job of keeping debris out of the water. There was a question as to what happens after the expiration time is reached. It is possible fines will start to accrue? The water portion is controlled by the state and the Town of New London controls the land. There is ongoing conversation between the Town and the property owner. It was noted that 20 to 30 percent of the inflow to Lake Sunapee comes from Otter Pond where this property sits. It was suggested that another town body be engaged and a conversation with New London Zoning Administrator Nicole Gage followed with information on the Conservation Commission's concerns.

4. Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to approve the minutes of May 16, 2018 meeting with an amendment to the first sentence on page 3 which should say "... handout of Pleasant Street East." THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Intern for Mapping

Colby Reardon from Colby Sawyer College is interested and identified as able and dependable. Mr. Vernon has reached out to him and is waiting to hear back from him to make sure he has access to our files.

6. Pleasant Street – East (CE)

Mark Vernon sent a letter to Bittersweet and determined the landlord did not have all the necessary information to make a decision. This property is adjacent the Pleasant Street–East conservation land that was purchased by the town and put in a conservation easement. The recently constructed berm did not go through the permitting process. This is reflected on the tax card. No formal complaint has been filed but DES is aware of this construction and has given Bittersweet 20 days to comply. This has created an uncomfortable atmosphere and may jeopardize the connection to the trail on Pleasant Street–West. If approval is not given by Bittersweet to construct a trail over the berm, the trail head would be created about 100 yards down Pleasant Street on the newly obtained conservation property. By the next CC meeting there should be a letter of what Bittersweet has agreed to. The original letter was dated May 18, 2018. NOTE: The conservation property is on the side and the back of the Bittersweet parking lot. Currently the existing trailhead is no longer accessible due to the berm that was created by construction. Mr. Vernon has flagged the trail and waiting for volunteers to start work. Signs can be ordered in advance. The backhoe work for a parking area on Pleasant Street may be delayed as the new public works director will not start until July 1, 2018.

7. Planning Board update

The annual meeting of the UVLSRPC (Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission) was held on Tuesday, June 19, 2018 and was attended by Chair Brown. This organization is a cooperative effort with other area towns to share information and ideas. Our Town Planner Adam Ricker is a member as well as resident representative Gerry Coogan.

8. Strategic plan

Maggie Ford reported there are still many areas for committee involvement with a deadline of June 15, 2018 to sign up. This involves communication with the community and education. There are many openings and there are time frames for when items should be initiated or completed. Following still need staffing:

- A. Educating the community, both seasonal and permanent residents

- B. Working with other commission in town
- C. Increasing visibility
- D. Scheduling events
- E. Collaborating with other like-minded groups
- F. Avocation for our mission

Ms. Ford suggested either scraping what cannot be staffed or finding a way to staff. Please respond before the next meeting of July 18, 2018. Ms. Ford added she will speak with someone at the college about thoughts on funding for land acquisition. Mr. Vernon questioned a need for a subcommittee.

9. Trails & Projects

- Completions of the timber harvest at Low Plain–south is presenting some difficulty due to the close proximity of the neighbors. There are also many wetlands here. During the Andover Road part of the project there was not one complaint from the public. This was due to distance and education. The Low Plains–south area is going to take more work and there is more impact on neighbors and more education will be required. Public Works Director Richard Lee and the contractor Leo Maslin have decided to include Sheppard Pit on the west side and other parcels on the Wilmot town line at this time. A brief report from Mr. Maslin states harvesting should begin this fall with Richard Lee’s approval since there is disease that needs to be addressed. Perhaps another process should be considered to leave the trees but eradicate areas of tree that are diseased. It is expected to net \$5,000 to \$10,000 from selling the wood. The Board of Selectman is in favor of this and would take half of the money while the Conservation Commission would retain the other half. It was thought that this agreement would have to be on a warrant article and then go into the Conservation Commission fund, which currently has about \$13,000 (and this money did not come from taxpayer’s dollars.) Town Financer Wendy Johnson did some research and determined the money could be spent as needed and a warrant article is not required. The BOS agreed to this arrangement subject to legality. Leo Maslin takes a percentage of the gross but his work is quality and he is sensitive to leaving buffers. He is a forestry professional who can be trusted. There was discussion about the entry point for equipment and maintaining a good relationship between the abutting neighbors and the Town. There has been no negative feedback from property owners as yet but they are a lot closer than the owners on the north end. Perhaps photos and some preemptive positive public relations in the *InterTown* would be helpful. An informational trail walk should be considered. Chair Brown praised the speaker at the UVLSRPC annual dinner Ben Kilham, who has often been called “New England’s Bear Whisperer.” Mr. Kilham said that timber harvesting is the best thing that can be done for bear habitat.
- Mark Vernon stated there was a bridge failure at Clark Pond and some hikers were injured. He stated there are 3 bridges that should be replaced as well as several boards. It is imperative to use good solid or pressure treated wood. Chair Brown, Andy Degan and Mr. Vernon are looking into a grant program that would be applicable to the Pleasant Street–west area that might address the beaver infestation. This might give a more permanent solution the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough trails. This would be an elevated walkway but would require mechanical work and could not be completed by manual volunteer labor. Members agreed that the grant should be researched further.
- Trail Lending Library–Mike Gelcius stated the Cub Scout liaison who had offered to build the book kiosks is unavailable due to physical ailments. His replacement has not yet contacted Mike about the project. Mike suggested making a demonstration model for Clark Lookout where residents can have a look and give their option. Ruth White offered to keep the box stocked with books on nature and the outdoors. The library box will be situated near the existing kiosk.
- Trail maintenance project list– This list is extensive and Tom Coverdale will get started in about 10 days. Plant identification signs to be placed at the Bog and Clark Pond when the growth starts. There was discussion about removing the signs at the end of the season but it is a big job and

some of the plants move. It was decided to leave the markers and check on the condition at the end of the season. There was also concern voiced about people picking the lady slippers.

- Trail work volunteers—Mark Vernon said the volunteer list is pretty anemic and there are no women on the list. Suggestions are needed to encourage women to volunteer on Tuesday mornings. Mike Gelcius suggested an advertisement be placed in *The Shopper*, *The Messenger* and *The Eagle Times* and candidates be directed to the Conservation Commission. Chair Brown would like a description and photos included in the advertisement. Perhaps a CC Hiking Patch to incentivize.
- Low-plain seedlings—Jonathan Doheny has asked to speak at the next meeting to describe the work that was done by him and his fellow Boy Scouts.
- Phillips Memorial Preserve—Thank you to Stanley Morano for work at Phillips Memorial Preserve. Contrary to information already received, the hazelnut seedlings that were previously planted have not died. Mr. Morano has walked the perimeter and top area and found many seedlings were doing well. He planted 6 more at the top as well as some cedar seedlings. He also planted 9 seedlings in the Clark Lookout field. All are marked to water.

10. Clark Lookout/Park-N-Ride

The gate is up and signage is on the gate to direct people to park at the Park-N-Ride parking lot. Chair Brown said that people are using the trail area directly across the street as a bathroom. Chair Brown presented this issue to the Board of Selectmen and they suggested a sign. He also talked to our State Representative but felt a response is not forthcoming. A porta-potty was suggested which would be serviced once a month for \$50.

11. Desirable Lands List

Two letters have been sent but there is no response as yet.

12. Important Dates

Ruth White said tours have been determined for the month of September

September 9—Still needs a volunteer

September 16—Ruth White will head a trail walk for Philbrick-Cricenti Bog

September 23—Mark Vernon will lead a walk at Kidder-Cleveland-Clough

September 30—Jack will lead a trail walk at Clark Pond

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission will be held on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at 8:30am.

13. Other

Laura Alexander announced she would be stepping down from her position on the New London Conservation Commission due to a change of residence. Laura had served on the commission since 2002 and currently served as Vice-Chair. Laura was thanked for all her hard work and dedication to the NLCC and was given a nice round of applause.

IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 AM. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Vitiello
Recording Secretary
Town of New London