



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## NEW LONDON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bob Brown (chair) Michael Gelcius, Jim Dexter, Mark Vernon, Michael Kennedy, Sue Andrews, Dave Hollinger

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Rob Prohl

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Don Bartlett, Anna White (Climate Action Leader CSC/AmeriCorps) Don Ostler

**APPOINTMENT:** Don Bartlett and Anna White spoke about the knotweed problem; they have asked the CC for support and some funding to experiment with eliminating the knotweed in the Esther Currier Wildlife Management Area at Low Plain, at the overlook. They are recommending using the cover and smother method. Anna gave out a handout with the timeline. They estimate needing \$700. to purchase the black plastic used to smother the knotweed. They hope to have help from the DPW to bring in mulch and woodchips to put on top of the plastic. There will be some CSC interns that will be able to do the manual work. Mike Gelcius is going to run it by NH Fish & Game, as they have the easement on that property. Anna stated that she is only going to be involved until early summer.

Discussion followed:

- How involved is UNH? just as a guide not really involved.
- What happens to the plastic after 20 years? Not sure
- Mike K. asked if this could be a project that DPW & CC could work on together.
- Chair Brown opined that there are many other areas that have knotweed.
- Mike K. suggested we involved the public.
- Mark V. stated he knows someone at NL Hospital that he will reach out to and find out if the mulch behind the hospital can be used.

**Motion** made by Mike Gelcius to proceed with the project at overlook area, contingent that they are able to get mulch/wood chip at no cost, and that the CC approves the \$700 to purchase the plastic.

**Second** by Michael Kennedy, unanimously **approved**.

### **Technical Assistant Grant** Mark Venon

- Mark is working with John Walsh (botanist) and the Taking Action for Wildlife program through UNH extension. There is a grant available and Mark stated that the grant needs at least 2 CC members to sign on to qualify for the grant. Mike Gelcius agreed to become the other member. This grant does not give funding, just technical support. Mark recommended we apply and use the technical support at the Philbrook/Cricenti bog in giving it an interpretive makeover, i.e., design signs, ID plants. All CC members agreed and Mark is adding all member names to the application.

## **Trails**

- Lyon Brook – Hi Country Aluminum is building the bridge; the purchase order has been written and is awaiting Selectmen's approval. Waiting for the ground to dry up and looking into June to have volunteers carry it in and install it.
- NL Garden Club has scheduled a Secret Garden Tour – June 20<sup>th</sup>, they asked if they could use some photos from the CC website. Chair Brown would like to develop a relationship with the garden club, they have new Co-chairs.
- Shaker St. driveway access has been cleared, no culvert needed, needs some gravel put down and a few Ash trees removed.

**088-006**- Bob Brown – no update

## **Desirable Conservation Land List** Mark Vernon & Sue Andrews & Mike Gelcius

- Nothing new, Mike G. spoke about reviewing the list and putting it in order by ranking. The listing of properties is a sensitive issue and the list should be kept in-house.

## **119-002 Clark Pond wetlands** – Jim Dexter – see handout

- There were 4 obstructions in February, and now the damns have a nice flow.
- The outside vendor has worked out well.
- Water is high, lake/pond level is about 2' above. The pond went up with the recent rains, and down very fast. Flow is good.
- Mike G. mentioned the inflow and what the SRE wrote about sediment, etc going into Messer Pond.
- Jim's recommendation is that we take a wait and see approach. Jim will continue to monitor.
- The CC board thanked Jim for all of his hard work!

## **Philbrick/Cricenti Bog**

- The phase 3, Garden tundra loop, aluminum walkway is on schedule for the first week of June to be installed.
- Don Bartlett is working on the wood planks for the Tundra loop, he has some lumber but will need more.
- Chair Brown stated that a month lead time is needed for ordering and getting lumber.
- Don stated that there was a visitor in the bog recently that is concerned about the orchids that grow there, Don got his name and will reach out to him.
- Mike G. recommended changing the donation thermometer sign to a thank you note to all the donors. He also recommended changing the wording on the piggy bank sign indicating donations would be used for general trail upgrades and maintenance. Mark Vernon stated that he has some bog photos and signs from Ruth White that could be used on the bog bulletin boards.
- Chair Brown stated that he is looking into getting the bog a street number, to be used for EMS. He will also look into getting street numbering for other trails.

### **Old/New Business**

- Earth Day – April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Jim & Dave have ads in the Shopper and the Messenger.
- The American Chestnut Foundation – May 11<sup>th</sup> 2024 meeting to be held at Tracy Library at 9:00 AM. There will be a short business meeting.
- Jim Dexter mentioned a water bar project in the Webb Forest.

**Motion** made by Mike Gelcius to accept the March 20th, 2024, meeting minutes. **Second** by Mark Vernon, unanimously **approved**.

**Motion** made by Mike Gelcius to adjourn the meeting. **Second** by Michael Kennedy. **Unanimously approved**. The meeting was adjourned.

- Next meeting TUESDAY, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 8:30 AM at Whipple Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Jackman  
(via video recording)

Town of New London