

**MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF NEW LONDON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2009**

PRESENT: Les Norman (Chair), Emma Crane, Dale Conly, Bob Brown, Dan Allen, Vicki Koron, Laura Alexander, Terry Dancy (alternate)

OTHERS: Peter Stanley, Zoning Administrator, Jessie Levine, Town Administrator, Bob Crane, guest, Andy Deegan, guest

MINUTES: The minutes of the January 21, 2009 meeting were approved as presented.

MEMBERSHIP: Ms. Levine joined the meeting to discuss the filling of the open slots for those members whose terms will expire in 2009. These include Dan Allen, Vicki Koron, Les Norman and Terry Dancy's alternate position. Dale Conly's Planning Board seat is also up in 2009. He is in that seat by virtue of the fact that he is also a member of the Conservation Commission (CC). Mr. Conly also had indicated to Ms. Levine that he would be willing to give up his seat on the CC, which expires in 2010, as well. She summarized by saying that there are four open seats or reappointments and one alternate seat available. Ms. Levine said she will be discussing the process of filling these positions with the Selectmen at tomorrow's meeting but wanted the CC to be aware of the situation. Mr. Dancy said that he has been on the CC since 1992. He said that if a worthy candidate expressed an interest, he would be willing to step down. Mr. Norman added that he wished to resign as Chair. He said he would consider being reappointed to a position on the CC only if there was a shortage of volunteers to fill the vacant positions. Ms. Koron said that she was also willing to give up her seat if it meant providing a position for Mr. Dancy. Ms. Levine reminded the members that they could re-up for another 3 year term if they so desired. She said that since there were many individual decisions that needed to be made, that these be considered after the meeting and let her know when those decisions have been made.

Regarding new candidates, Ms. Levine knew that Andy Deegan, who has been attending meetings of the CC, was interested and she was also aware that Sue Clough had expressed an interest about a year ago, but she was not sure if that interest was current. Mr. Norman said he would contact Ms. Clough to see if she was still interested in serving. The other membership item for consideration was who the CC would like to represent them as a voting member of the Planning Board. Mr. Deegan was asked how he felt about serving on the both the Planning Board and the CC. He said he would need time to consider this.

WINTER WALKS:

Peter Stanley reported that no one showed for the winter walk that he had scheduled. He said that he, Debbie Stanley and George Green tended to the nest boxes and that Ruth White and Mr. Green did those at Kidder Marsh. He said there was very poor production in the Low Plain this year and was not sure why, since the nest materials were excellent this year. He thought perhaps there was an active predator in the area. He discovered that of the nine boxes in good condition, there was one partial nest, one completed and one possibly completed nest, but it contained mixed eggs. Mr. Dancy reported that at the other marsh all the boxes were full.

Ms. Alexander reported that she had seven people participate in her Tree Identification winter walk. Mr. Deegan reported that he had one call regarding his walk, but did not have any participants.

TRAILS:

Mr. Allen reported on two issues:

- Fifteen railroad ties were delivered yesterday at 11:00A.M. to the trail head for the Clark Pond trail. With the help of Bob Lavoie the ties were dragged in using a trailer and are all set to go come spring. Next, he will get decking material moved in before the spring thaw arrives. He hoped to get this done in the next two weeks.
- He reported that Mark Vernon called this past weekend indicating that he and his brother and mother are in negotiations to divide up the property. The issue seems to be how to divide the lots to enable the two sons to have parcels so that they can pass this along to their children. He assured Mr. Allen that all three of them wish to have the trail remain. The issue of how they will protect the trail will be decided once the land is divided.

Mr. Deegan reported that Dave Fraser came to this office with a request to do a QUEST on the Cook Property. It is his understanding that basically directions will be given to a hiker, and upon finding the cache, the hiker stamps his/her book, which then verifies that they have hiked that trail. Mr. Norman asked for a vote on this request. The vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown reported on concerns expressed by some residents regarding an island on Messer Pond, which is less than 1/10th of an acre, and as far as he could tell was owned by the Town. He said that there were four or five white pines and four maples on the island, all are alive, with one pine being the victim of grafitti and climbers. He said there were concerns by some residents that this tree will probably not get any better. He noted that the island gets a good deal of foot traffic with most of the high bush blueberries being destroyed. Mr. Stanley pointed out that even dead trees that have fallen in the water have a place in the eco system. He suggested that perhaps the CC have a discussion with the Messer Pond Association to educate them. Mr. Brown asked if the members of the CC agreed that they would not be in favor of taking down the tree. All agreed that would not be in favor of this. After a brief discussion regarding the use of the island it was noted by Mr. Stanley since this is public land, the CC could not put any restrictions or posting on the use of the island unless it were approved at Town Meeting.

MASTER PLAN:

Mr. Norman reviewed the latest draft of the Master Plan. He said that he had already incorporated the “simple” changes suggested by Ms. Crane. Ms. Koron suggested the following change on page 17; where it says “Town footpaths are available” it should include the Village Sports shop. Mr. Crane suggested that in the Master Plan the web site be indicated as a place where people could go for more information. He also noted that the Master Plan still does not have an updated map. Ms. Alexander said she will look for a newer version of the trail map and give it to Ken McWilliams. Mr. Crane noted that there are two new trails that still need to be added to the new map. Mr. Stanley further noted that the draft of the Master Plan does not have to go to the Planning Board for a few more months so there was still time to revise the draft and get the maps and tables up to date. He further suggested that the Recommendations section include some additional comments on watershed analysis, bearing in mind that we still do not have a natural resources inventory. Dr. Alexander asked if the resource inventory would be done after the Master Plan was completed. Mr. Stanley replied that was correct. She thought that the students could then go back and determine how this changes things as part of their project for next year. Mr. Stanley said that the recommendations from the previous Master Plan were reviewed and updated, based on what had already been accomplished. He suggested that Mr. Dancy draft a summary of future actions in relation to erosion control, water resources and the whole water shed question. This should be brief, but not too concise, to allow other ideas to fit into it in the future.

Mr. Crane pointed out that we have Town land that is not protected. Mr. Stanley said that everything on the chart in the draft that is protected has a CE after it. Mr. Crane noted that there was Town land that could benefit from this and wondered if these have been identified. Mr. Stanley thought this was a good recommendation, but noted that not all were controlled by the CC. He thought it might be good to identify in the Table those that do not have Town protection, but could be protected. Mr. Stanley thought this could perhaps be done by either adding one more column or including this in the Recommendation section. He will make a first draft of this for review.

Mr. Norman said he will maintain the most up to date draft and he will circulate via e-mail at intervals for review. Any changes that are wanted should be sent to him. He can then e-mail this version to Mr. Stanley who will print it for those that want to review a written copy. Mr. Allen suggested that “as a goal the CC should seek a grant for continuation of the two 6-8 feet wide graded trails suitable for ADA from Bog Road to Clark Pond, said trail to also be suitable for cross country skiing”. Mr. Stanley said that there might be some money available for this as a result of events that are happening now, but he would have to check on that. Mr. Norman said that the CC has about a \$10,000 fund which can be spent as the CC determines. Mr. Stanley said that this could be spent only after a public hearing was held to discuss the expenditure. Mr. Norman thought something like the ADA trails would be a good place to spend some of these funds. Mr. Dancy suggested it would be good to apply for a grant first to see if there was seed money available with matching funds.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Norman indicated the following pieces of correspondence:

- Copy of a document from Mr. Stanley which was given to Mr. Kaplan on the Clark Pond Easement.
- PSNH sub-station upgrades which now no longer involves any wetlands.
- Lake front property on Martin Road next to Wilder Road which has no CC issues.
- Letter from NH Arborists Association.
- Easement of Stanley Farm property. This completes the Stanley Farm property easement from Burpee Hill Road to Newport Road.
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Ms. Koron reported that on the sale of NL 2008 foot path map. She said she delivered 140 copies, mostly to Morgan Hill Bookstore and Village Sports which generated \$488. The stores and library buy them for \$3.00 and then sell them for \$4.00

Mr. Brown brought up the issue of Milfoil funding. He is not sure that a letter has ever gone out but suggested that one be sent this year and that it go out in March, right after Town Meeting. He said he believed the Town has a fund available to protective associations. He indicated that the letter of invitation, highlighting some key points, used to go out in April but thought it really should go out much earlier. He noted that when the protective associations apply to NH Lakes for the lake host funding money, the applications have to go in early. Also, the towns are in the process of hiring people and if they do not know whether or not money is available, those protective associations that are not as well off would have to cancel their programs if no money became available. The CC would like to urge Ms. Levine to get these letters out in relation to Milfoil protection soon after Town Meeting this year to initiate this process before the end of March.

Mr. Stanley announced that the red boat house is going to be removed from Lake Sunapee next week. It will be rebuilt once a design is agreed to, with the crib and deck being rebuilt in the meantime.

There being no other business, Dr. Alexander moved to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Dan Conley. The meeting was adjourned at 2:05P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby
Recording secretary