



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Minutes of the February 15, 2011 Conservation Commission Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chairman), Emma Crane, Vicki Koron, Sue Clough, Terry Dancy, Laura Alexander, Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ruth White, Andy Deegan, Dan Allen

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Crane (Webmaster)

Chair Brown called the hearing to order at 9:35am.

Peter Blakeman from Blakeman Engineering was at the meeting to talk about the property on Fairway Lane that they had received approvals for and has been purchased by Fairway Lane Trust. He said that they were looking to put the driveway and sewer line in last summer. They had planned to put the sewer line in and run it along the road about 500 feet where there would be the least amount of wetlands impact. The area they tried to put the line in turned out to be ledge almost the entire way. Neither Mr. Lee (Public Works Director) nor the abutters are not in favor of blasting all along the side of the road to enable putting the line in through the ledged areas. He noted an alternate route they had considered several years ago was to go down a 25' footpath owned by the Country Club, intended for travel by foot. The paths have not been used much in the past 20 years and the Country Club has no problem with them using this route. There is, however, some impact to the wetlands. They plan to go back to the wetlands bureau to present this idea to them as a utility crossing. The actual wetlands that will be disturbed will be temporary and will be re-graded after the sewer line is in. 1770 square feet of wetlands impact. They would run the sewer line out to fairway lane on the eastern leg, to a new manhole and then to an existing manhole. Mr. Blakeman said they would need to get the permit from the state and then appear before the Zoning Board to get approval.

Mr. Stanley asked if they go down the footpath area they are in wetlands about all the way with the proposed sewer line. The wetland area appears to extend well beyond the area they had delineated. He wondered if it was a fairly large wetland complex there. Mr. Blakeman said that they didn't go onto the neighbor's property. The wetland follows the contour of the Ellison property, and on the Hamilton property it is broader and goes up behind their house. He wasn't sure how far back it went, but thought it to be at least 100'. He noted that some of the wetlands are man-made from the 60's and 70's. The majority of it is natural wetland area.

Mr. Blakeman said that right now they are just trying to get the permits in place so they can get the utilities onto the property.

Ms. Koron asked if this was a spec house. Mr. Blakeman said he did not know. They are not talking about building a house right now. They may put a house there at some point or sell it as a buildable site.

Mr. Stanley asked if it was possible to sequence the excavation process in a manner that has the material put back in the order it was removed to facilitate reestablishment of the hydrophilic vegetation as rapidly as possible. Mr. Blakeman thought the permit would have this as a stipulation, but if the Conservation Commission wanted to make that a requirement, he would be fine with it and felt it was the best way to go.

Ms. Koron asked if the path would go back to being a footpath. Mr. Blakeman said that it would. Mr. Stanley said that it is considered a right of way and that it is a wetland. Mr. Blakeman said the only time someone could walk through there would be in the winter. In the warm weather it is not passable.

Chair Brown asked the approximate depth of the sewer line. Mr. Blakeman said that it would be 4-6' deep. Mr. Brown asked if the line that is dug would it fill up with water. Mr. Blakeman said that there may need to be some dewatering done that would go into some pilot stones so it doesn't drain back into the hole. The silt would be filtered out through the stones. It should be done in the summertime when it is driest. Mr. Brown asked where the mud and silt would go. Mr. Blakeman said that it would be pumped back into the line. He didn't think it would be muck, but more just muddy water.

Ms. Clough was concerned about where the soil being taken out of the hole would be stored prior to going back into the hole. Mr. Blakeman said that it would be placed right next to the hole. The disturbance area accounts for this deposit of material. Ms. Clough asked if there was any proposal to replant the area or would they hope that the vegetation would come back eventually. Mr. Blakeman said that they would plan to put a wetlands seed mix there for quick stabilization. Ms. Clough asked if they have looked in that area to see if there were any invasive species. Mr. Blakeman said that nothing of this sort has been pointed out to him. Mr. Stanley said that this is actually a very thick with mixed vegetation. There are dense areas of trees near the road. Mr. Blakeman said he would drop a copy of the application off to the Conservation Commission once it is all put together. Mr. Stanley suggested that there should be some notes on the plan regarding putting the fill back in the order it was removed, and the seeding of the area after it has been disturbed. Mr. Dancy asked if they would be setting a precedent by allowing a sewer line under a wetland. Mr. Blakeman said that he has done it in other places in town. Mr. Stanley said that if it was anything but a septic line, it would require a variance. In this case, it is only a special exception.

Chair Brown said that there would be no vote needed on this matter, as it was only a presentation made by Mr. Blakeman. There was no decision to make at this time. Ms. Clough asked if this project would be overseen. Mr. Stanley said probably not, but he would make sure the correct information was on the plan, and depending on the contractor he may oversee the project.

Mr. Stanley said that this lot could not be a lot of record at this time, as the setback requirements would not be met. It is a small, wet lot but no one cared about that at the time of subdivision.

Minutes

December 29, January 19, 2011, February 4, 2011

There were no comments or amendments to the minutes.

IT WAS MOVED (Terry Dancy) AND SECONDED (Sue Clough) to approve the minutes of December 29, 2010, January 19, 2011, and February 4, 2011, as circulated.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Brown referred to what had happened at the Budget Committee on January 31st. Mr. Dancy was there as well. The Budget Committee was more concerned about the CIP portion and a motion was made by Mr. Meck to reduce the amount from 25,000 to \$10,000. He stood and said that they could live with that and it appeared to be a compromise. He said that all the Budget Committee members present voted in favor of the reduction. The one member over the telephone voted against. Chair Brown said that they did not really discuss their operating budget but that there were some comments about it being OK. He had to explain that this would not be considered a town employee, but just an intern working for 244 hours. Chair Brown said that Jim Wheeler, the chair of the Budget Committee has volunteered to help out with trail maintenance.

Peter had sent some text to the Conservation Commission explaining certain points regarding the three articles that pertain to easements and donating money to other non-profit conservation organizations in and outside of New London. His text was well-received by all on the Conservation Commission. Chair Brown said that the text stated 2009-2010 and he wondered if it was up-to-date for counties that passed/failed the optional powers vote. Mr. Stanley said that it was up to date. He felt it could be helpful to note at town meeting the voting history of other towns. He also suggested talking with Ms. Levine and the Board of Selectmen to be able to present the article first in a positive light. Negative comments coming afterwards would be fine, but generally, as per Robert's Rules, a friend of the article reads the article. He thought it useful for them and the moderator to know ahead of time who would be recognized to speak to the article.

Chair Brown asked who would be at Town Meeting from the Conservation Commission. Ms. Koron said that her husband would speak at the meeting, if asked. Mr. Dancy, Sue Clough and Chair Brown would be there. He assumed that Dan Allen would be there. Mr. Stanley suggested asking Dave Cook to speak. Dale Conly and Les Norman were other names brought up as people who may be willing to speak on the behalf of the Conservation Commission issues. Mr. Stanley also thought that Karen Ebel would be a good person to ask to speak. He said he would be happy to ask her. The commission agreed to have an informal workshop to speak with those being asked to participate. Mr. Stanley said that as long as they do not have a quorum of the Conservation Commission, it would not need to be noticed and they would be legal.

Chair Brown said the term "optional" or "additional powers" was a confusing term. Any decision will require review and vote at Town Meeting. Mr. Stanley said that they need to emphasize that they will accomplish more conservation objectives for less money by being able to contribute to a qualified organization, especially out of town. The town does not want ownership, but they want to help other organizations along to accomplish the town's own goals.

They decided to plan the get-together for Wednesday, February 23rd at 3pm or the 28th, any time. Mr. Stanley would contact Karen Ebel and Ms. Clough would contact Dave Cook to see if they would be able to help at Town Meeting.

Ms. Koron said it is always good to bring up the Master Plan, as these RSAs correspond to things that were on the wish list of the majority of the population in New London. Mr. Stanley thought that would be a good thing to do.

Land Acquisition Study

Chair Brown said that the next day there would be a hearing for the gift of the small parcel of land from the DiClericos. The previous Monday, he went to the Selectmen's meeting and they voted to accept the gift. The hearing the next day would be a formality.

Mr. Stanley noted that those people, whose properties are on the desirable land list, should be sent a letter to let them know that they are on the list. He said that he had checked the most desirable properties that were the most important to acquire.

Those not likely to be conserved:

Bucklin – on Morgan Hill – not likely to ever be available to the Conservation Commission. They manage the forest and take care of it in plans to keep it.

Pingree Road/Baxter – Could be a desirable acquisition for access to the property the town owns (Colby Sanctuary) that is on the other side of Great Brook.

Vernons – nice piece of land along the brook. To the right of Pingree Road. Desirable to protect as it has trails on it. It is forest conservation and is pretty well protected.

Putnam – needs to be changed from Putnam Trust to the current name which is the name of the children who now own it.

Kidder on Pleasant Street – It is the piece of land to the left from the corner of Barrett Road to the sewer plant. It is kind of wet and scruffy. Has potential for development but they didn't think it was anything they'd want to conserve.

Cantor – 130 acres. This property has an Indian well, an escarpment, and rock outcroppings. He wasn't sure of the boundaries. There are many features that would not allow for development on the property.

Harris – Little Sunapee Road. There are 22 acres, which comprises the house site.

Bob Messer's Fields – Along Pleasant Street.

Joan Bucklin – Not particularly visible and not as important as along Little Sunapee Road.

Hunter Hill Trust (was Anderson) – High priority because it is the ridgeline that can be seen across from Hall Farm Road. Although it is working forest, in current use and a Forest Conservation Zone, there might be something workable with them. He felt that they might be a potential for an easement on this property.

Child – Abuts the bog off of Newport Road. It is a house lot and couldn't make more than that out of the land because it is all wet.

Hale – Scenic and a fair amount of frontage on Newport Road. Some potential down the road, but is not available.

Cricenti Fields – Not a high priority and did not think it would be available. It is a pretty field, but is behind a major commercial development in town. It is agricultural at this point in time. Ms. Clough said it wouldn't hurt to write Jim Cricenti a letter about the property.

Mary Messer – 2nd part of the fields along Little Sunapee Road. In two parcels.

Littlefield – Land that isn't visible but ought to be available for development due to its proximity to the town and access to town water and sewer. Not a high priority.

Howard – Parcel that surrounds the Clark Lookout. They will not work with the town. No point in having it on the list.

Woodruff – some potential but they want too much for the property. Not one he would put at the top of the list.

Kings – Wilmot Center Road. It is a working farm with Alpacas. Didn't think it was a high priority. 35 acres.

Genair Trust – Farwell Lane, 15 acres. Wants too much for the property, which is essentially a house lot. He did not think it a high priority.

Harris – Land across the street from Genair and an even lower priority.

Andover Road – Ballin – Between Blueberry Lane and Hall Farm. 50+ acres, not particularly visible. Behind Colonial Farm Inn.

Pratt – Integral to the Low Plane. He has talked to them personally and thought a follow-up letter from Chair Brown would be helpful.

Ewing – 79 acres above Lyon Brook to the developed part of his lot. He is constantly talking to the land trust. If someone would pick up the transaction costs, he may be willing to proceed. He felt this was a good one because of the watershed it is in, which goes right to the brook.

Cleveland Family – a conservation easement has been put on 20 acres of the field they see when heading south on Main Street. There are some deed restrictions on the balance of the land. They would be insulted if anyone approached them about the property.

Darrah – Brad White's house to the Low Plain. Would like to keep the balance undeveloped.

Dalton – 10 acre field across from Greenfield Farm. Didn't think there was any potential there.

Leach – 10 acres that doesn't include a stream that they had thought.

Lynch – the big piece alongside the Low Plain. He felt that was a good piece to get.

Mountain Road – Dump closure piece.

Marilyn Kidder – 132 acres that goes to the cascade brook. He didn't think she would work with anyone on this to conserve it. He felt that the land would eventually be developed.

36 Andover Road/LSCC – driving range, no potential.

Tracy Road/Hanson - Deed restriction to keep it from being developed.

Old Main Street – Pam Green – Goes to outflow of Clark Pond. Not available.

Blueberry Pancake Trust/ Tom Cottrill – Land he just acquired from the Hanson deal. Restriction on the land so it cannot be developed.

King Hill Road/Clark. Land on the south side of King Hill Road just before Ruth White's house. 33 acres. Entirely forested.

Carr Trust – 103a down to King Hill Brook outlet. Land that went with Soo-Nippi Park. He thought that Carr may work with someone and would discuss options, at least. They couldn't buy it, as it would be too expensive, but if they could contribute to the transaction costs, it might be worth his while.

1375 King Hill Road/Miller Trust – 53 acres in size. Big wetland complex that is in the back area behind Stony Brook Road/King Hill Road to the East. He thought if the owner could be interested in a project.

He has wanted to get rid of it for a long time. Extremely difficult to develop. Wetland and stream buffer issues. Might be able to put an easement on the property.

Chair Brown said that they should draft some letters to these property owners.

Trails

Mr. Allen has requested some supplies that will be under \$300.

IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (Laura Alexander) to approve the expenditure for Mr. Allen to purchase \$300 in supplies for trail maintenance.

Stephen Allenbee, a relatively new resident, is interested in helping with trail work. He told Mr. Allenbee that when it gets closer to spring, he would contact him.

Website Help

Chair Brown said that there was some talk previously about getting some help with the website when Mr. Crane is away. Ms. Jackman has volunteered to help out with this. Mr. Crane will sit down with Ms. Jackman to show her the program and walk her through the process.

Programs

The ads were run, but the phone numbers were wrong and the location was not listed. There is one event left.

Elkins Fish and Game Club will be doing the Wood Duck Boxes in Kidder's Marsh.

Invasive Species

Ms. Alexander didn't have anything to comment here.

Nursery

Chair Brown said that there were some chestnut trees available online and he would give her the information to check them out.

Document Files

The file cabinet has been unlocked. They haven't looked at the files yet, however. Chair Brown asked if anyone would like to look through the cabinet to see what is inside.

Next Meeting Date

It was decided that March 15th at 9:30am would work. The Cranes and Ms. Koron would be away.

It was decided that April 19th at 9:30am would be the next meeting.

IT WAS MOVED (Terry Dancy) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to adjourn the meeting.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London