

Approved February 16, 2005

**TOWN OF NEW LONDON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 19, 2005**

Present: Les Norman (Chairman), Dale Conly, Bob Crane, Emma Crane, Terry Dancy, Vicki Koron, Peter Stanley, Ruth White.

December 15 Minutes

Peter Stanley moved to accept. Ruth White seconded. No further discussion. Motion unanimously approved.

Trails Update

Bob Crane reported that he, Emma Crane, Wayne Warriner, and Terry Dancy have met to discuss trail work, and agreed to schedule a walk soon to confirm the GPS readings, in preparation for spring maintenance. He has acquired from Wayne Warriner a list of potential trail work volunteers, and the Commission agreed to place advertisements for volunteers in early spring.

Ruth White suggested they may wish to access that list of volunteers when they are ready to set up the duck boxes. She'll see how many phone calls she receives in response to the winter walk postings in the *Shopper*.

Peter Stanley said he thinks he can line up someone with a snow machine. That would be crucial for carrying the heavy duck boxes out onto the ice.

Bob Crane reported that they have observed that there are two new bridges with railings on the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough trail, courtesy of the NL Middle School's special education classes. The old bridges remain in place. No new signs of beaver observed.

Also observed: a boat frozen into the pond at Low Plain.

Also observed: some cross country skiing has taken place in the area, as in previous years.

The Commission noted that the letter regarding insurance has not been received from Norsk this year, as in previous years.

Bob Crane provided for the Commission's perusal, print-outs from the Acton, MA Conservation Commission web site, including a map of the Town and all its conservation lands, each of which is described and can be clicked on and printed out separately, as well as how-to instructions for setting up the site.

He asked if the Town has a web server that the Commission could link to.

Commission members agreed that the Conservation Commission web site could be a link from the Town's web site. Terry Dancy noted that there would be a cost, but it would be less than if the Commission were to start its own new web site.

Bob Crane will speak to Bob Andrews about this.

Les Norman said Ken McWilliams has asked the Conservation Commission to update the master plan's maps with new trail information.

Terry Dancy said they (the Planning Board) need to know the differences (since the last printing), noting that since the last printing, only the Dura Crockett has been completed but the Ohler-Clough Trail, the Cantor Trail and the Phillips Loop are in progress.

Commission members agreed to update the map for the master plan with a solid line for the Dura Crockett and dotted lines for the three which are in progress of being completed, noting that work on the master plan will extend over the next couple of years, and by the time it is finished, so may those trails be.

Les Norman will check with Ken McWilliams about how the Planning Board would like the information presented.

Terry Dancy said if they can give the Commission a background map with grids, he can draw the trails in.

Discussion re: Granger Development Plans

Terry Dancy reported that John Wilson has inquired as to the formal position of the Conservation Commission regarding this land which is currently being considered by the Eatons for development, as discussed at the last meeting. Specifically, if the development does not go forward, what is the Commission's thoughts on fund raising to purchase this land for conservation. If the development does go forward, what is the Commission's role as to assuring that all regulations are complied with.

Several Commission members noted that they are still not certain what the exact nature of the agreement between the Grangers and the Eatons is at this point in time.

The Commission as a whole is not unconcerned about this development, and would not stand in the way of private fund raising for its conservation. However, this parcel is not on the priority list and it would be difficult to go to the Town and ask voters to support purchase of this. There may be some objection to spending half a million dollars for a parcel that is not on the priority list for conservation.

Peter Stanley pointed out that this parcel has not been identified as one which, if put into conservation, would have a tremendous public benefit. He noted, however, that any development in a watershed is cause for some concern. Also, he noted that there are permanent streams on this parcel, but that it may be possible to cluster the development away from them.

He said that for this development, the Town will require completion of the road before any building permits are issued, and that the development would be phased in, with only two building permits being issued at a time.

Terry Dancy summarized the position of the Conservation Commission with regard to this parcel:

- o If the proposed development goes forward, the Conservation Commission will be available to assist in monitoring its progress to assure that extreme care is exercised, and that all environmental regulations are complied with.
- o If the development does not go forward, the Conservation Commission would support the idea of its being turned into a conservation property—possibly to include some trails, vis-à-vis private fund raising. However, the parcel is not on the list of priorities, and the Commission does not feel it can go to the Town to ask for financial support for its purchase.

Trees

Peter Stanley and Dale Conly reported receipt of a request from some Fenwood home owners to remove some trees. As the trees are not dead, or threatening near-by homes, the request has been denied.

Dale Conly reported receipt of a request from the Bucklins to cut some trees to improve their view over Putney Road. The trees in question are within the stream buffer.

They will have to go to the Planning Board for permission.

Phillips Preserve Work

Peter Stanley reported that most of the half-acre field adjacent to the forest has been cleared, and they are beginning the thinning work along the stone wall. He reminded the Commission that the purpose of these cutting forays into the wooded area, is to attain income to cover the cost of the field stumping and clearing. Hopefully, they will make enough income by limiting the cutting to the area projected for harvesting.

He pointed out that this area was pasture about 75 years ago. Now, there are approximately 200 stems per acre, and ideally, there should be about 90. They will remove some of the smaller trees- about a third to a half, leaving the better ones. There is the potential for this to be a cash reserve for the Commission over the next twenty years.

In response to Bob Crane's request about the possibility of clearing some at the top of the hill for the view, Peter Stanley suggested that they get through this project first. That may be a possibility in the future.

A slight public relations snafu occurred on the morning of this meeting when one of the logging trucks got caught in the phone wire and took down the entire utility pole. Verizon had been warned about the inadequate height of their wires.

Membership

Both Emma Crane and Laura Alexander have expressed interest in being reappointed to their seats on the Commission.

Dale Conly moved that Les Norman submit a request to the Board of Selectmen that Laura Alexander and Emma Crane be reappointed for three year terms on the Conservation Commission. Ruth White seconded. No further discussion. Motion unanimously approved.

That leaves one open position. Les Norman reported that the Selectmen's office has received expressions of interest from three residents, and those candidates will be invited to attend some meetings.

Members noted that, though terms expire on the date of Town Meeting, the positions can be filled anytime during the year.

Other

- o Peter Stanley said a Proctor student has spoken with him about a class project, and has expressed an interest in working on the beaver pipe and dam at Low Plain in the spring.
- o Terry Dancy reported that there will be a meeting of the Sunapee Region Watershed Coalition on January 27th at 7 p.m. The coalition consists of representatives from five towns: New London, Newbury, Sutton, Springfield, Goshen, as well as from various groups as LSPA and UVSRPC.

The Selectmen plan to mention the Coalition in discussion at Town Meeting.

- o Les Norman reported receipt of a notification from the State of New Hampshire that it plans to replace the guard rails along Route 11 from 103 to 89.
- o Terry Dancy reported that there will be a meeting of Friends of Mt. Sunapee at Tracy Library on January 26th at 7 p.m.
- o He and Peter Stanley reported that the Regional Planning Commission will be holding a meeting: "Being Heard in Concord: A Dialog With Some of the Region's State Legislators," at the Goshen Town Hall the same night.

o Emma Crane opened brief discussion regarding the current status of Sunapee, and related legislation.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S.A. Denz
Recording Secretary