

**TOWN OF NEW LONDON  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
JUNE 18, 2008**

**PRESENT:** Les Norman (Chairman), Terry Dancy, Emma Crane, Robert Crane, Laura Alexander, Ruth White, Dan Allen, Vicki Koron, Dave Cook.

Les Norman opened the meeting at 1 p.m., and the Conservation Commission addressed nine areas of business during the meeting.

**Minutes – June 21, 2008**

Ruth White amended “Peter Messer” on page six to read “Bob Messer.” Minutes accepted as amended.

Terry Dancy asked what the status of the Shultz property survey is now. Les Norman said that the surveyors are ready to speak with the Selectmen. (This is on the Selectmen’s schedule for next Monday at 8:30 a.m.) He noted that the tax map shows the Schultz lot at 90-acres, though it turns out to be somewhat less than that. Ruth White said that nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the town is getting what it wanted with this purchase.

**Milfoil Grant Requests**

The Conservation Commission has received for review (1) application for a \$7000 grant from Pleasant Lake Protective Association, (2) application for a \$2000 grant from Messer Pond Protective Association, and (3) application for a \$6680 grant from Little Sunapee Protective Association. Laura Alexander commented that it looks as though all the requests are in line with what has been approved in previous years. She asked how much is in the Milfoil Prevention and Treatment Fund now. Les Norman said \$21,000.

Question was raised about whether or not the Town should anticipate receiving a request from Lake Sunapee Protective Association. Terry Dancy reminded everyone that the letter from the Town inviting lakes to submit their requests went out later than usual this year. Ruth White asked if there will be a more uniform starting date (consistent with the schedule of the New Hampshire Lakes Association application process) established for this process (as discussed at the last meeting). Terry Dancy said it is too late to do that this year, but perhaps next year. Members agreed that they should anticipate receiving a request for Lake Sunapee, and Terry Dancy asked if he should remind LSPA of this. Conservation Commission members authorized him to do that, since the sooner the lakes can get their requests in, the better.

Terry Dancy moved that the Conservation Commission recommend a grant of \$2000 for Messer Pond, and that the balance of the fund be divided equally among the other three lake associations (including big Lake Sunapee). Motion seconded and unanimously approved.

**Capital Improvement Request**

Les Norman reminded members that the Conservation Commission has a running request for a deposit of \$50,000 to be made into their Conservation Land Capital Reserve, year after year. He said some other options the Commission may want to consider are (a) rev the fund up quickly to a balance of \$500,000, (b) rev up the annual deposit to \$100,000.

Laura Alexander suggested this may be a tough year to ask for more.

Terry Dancy said the question of using bonds for land purchases is still on the table. He reminded everyone that Selectman Mark Kaplan has raised this issue several times. Terry suggested that Conservation Commission members might wish to have a discussion among themselves as well as with the Selectmen to determine whether or not that is a valid option for this Commission.

Les Norman said Mark Kaplan has also said that the Conservation Commission should look at all sources of funding, rather than rely only on the Town. Ruth White said the Commission has always pretty much done that. She suggested that the Conservation Commission should not get locked into one funding method or another. Each project is different.

Terry Dancy said they ought to let the Board of Selectmen know that the Commission recognizes that there was a problem with the way the Shultz land purchase was handled, and would like to have a discussion. He suggested the Commission ask the Selectmen how they think they should proceed in the future, referring to the other parcels in the Master Plan list. Though Conservation Commission members agreed that this may be a good idea, Les Norman warned that there is also a potential danger in that the Commission might get locked into a commitment to a particular funding method.

Vicki Koron moved that they level fund the deposit into the Conservation Land Reserve this year (at \$50,000) and pursue this line of discussion for next year. Laura Alexander seconded. No further discussion. Motion unanimously approved.

Dave Cook said the bond issue should only arise in context of a specific property. Conservation Commission members agreed, and Laura Alexander suggested the approach in the future could be that when a project comes up, the Commission will meet with the Selectmen and ask how they think the Commission should address it.

### **Hospital Parking Lot Surface**

The Conservation Commission has received a copy of a Site Plan Revision Review application submitted by New London Hospital to the New London Planning Board. This application is requesting thirteen modifications to the Site Plan that was approved by the Planning Board on August 14, 2007.

The two modifications that may concern the Conservation Commission are:

(9) The travel lanes in the pervious concrete parking lot have been changed to standard concrete due to concerns re the impact of the salt delivery trucks. Note made that this will result in no net increase in stormwater runoff because the standard concrete areas drain into the pervious concrete areas. Also, riprap has been added to the south edge of the parking lot to ensure drainage of the pavement subgrade.

(10) The gravel access drive along the south edge of the existing hospital was changed to pavement at the request of the MRI vendor who had concerns about the stability of a gravel road during mud season bearing the weight of the MRI unit. Note was made that this results in an increase of approximately 0.1 cfs in a 100 year storm—still less than the predevelopment condition for all design storms. A catch basin was added as a result of observations of erosion during the construction.

Les Norman said he reviewed the site plan revision application, and cannot find anything to argue with. Laura Alexander agreed that these sound like reasonable changes. Terry Dancy also agreed, noting that the Conservation Commission and Planning Board asked the Hospital to have as an objective the reduction of erosion and runoff, and it seems they (the Hospital) are still holding that as an objective. The Hospital is not backing away from that principle.

### **Account Consolidation**

Les Norman reported that Carol Fraley has drawn his attention to three of the Conservation Commission's accounts that may be consolidated into one. These are a money market that was opened with the bequest from Dr. Parkhurst, and that now has a balance of \$9000, the Esther Currier Fund with a balance of \$1000, and the Low Plain Fund with a balance of \$3000. Terry Dancy said that presumably by combining them into one account, there will be a greater return. Les Norman said the question is, do any of these have restrictions. Terry Dancy said the money in the Low Plain Fund can be used only for Low Plain. Dave Cook said they can all be consolidated for investment purposes without losing their individual identities (restrictions). He said the Conservation Commission should be able to authorize the investment that way. Terry Dancy said if that is not possible, then the Commission must look more carefully at what the restrictions are. Les Norman agreed that it would be a good idea to consolidate these, provided the individual identities (restrictions) can be maintained. He said the question is, how can the Commission use these funds? Larua Alexander asked, specifically what type of things can the Commission use the funds for. Terry Dancy said at one time, some consideration was given to using money from one of these funds to purchase tools for making signs, but ultimately they did not use money from these particular accounts. He added for the Commission's information, that they did purchase a router, and he has that now.

Laura Alexander moved that these three accounts be consolidated as long as any restrictions can be maintained. Terry Dancy seconded. No further discussion. Motion unanimously approved. Les Norman will look into the question of restrictions on the Esther Currier Fund and the Dr. Parkhurst money market account.

### **Spring Walks**

Ruth White and Dan Allen reported one participant on each of their walks—the wildflower walk and the trees walk, respectively. Ruth White opened some discussion about whether or not to continue these given low attendance. Dan Allen suggested that in light of low attendance they could be more flexible with scheduling, canceling for rain for example. He said there wouldn't be a problem with having two walks on the same day. Ruth White said that sometimes people wish to take both walks. Other suggestions included just keeping a rain date in mind, but not running a new ad, including a phone number for rain cancellation information in the ad, adopting a policy that the rain date will always be the following Friday.

Regarding the question of whether or not to continue the walks, Ruth White said the ads in the *Shopper* are beneficial in letting people see what the Conservation Commission does. She added that it takes about two days to do the walks—one day to prepare and one for the walk itself. Members agreed to continue the spring and fall walks as they are.

### **Trails**

Dan Allen reported that they have spent a couple of hours each week for the last three weeks at the Bog. They have stabilized much of the eastern loop at this point, and have taken up one layer of boards in some places. They observed that in some locations, the under-layer of boards is resting right on the Bog, and in other places the under-layer is quite far down in the water suggesting that they need more structure underneath. He said that next week he will pick up the new planks at Cote & Reney, and begin work on the rest of that eastern loop.

In response to Vicki Koron's concern that the rosemary along the walk be allowed to stay there, he said some cutting is necessary; it would be impractical to design the walk to go around all the rosemary. He reported that some trimming work is needed on the left loop, and Vicki will address that.

Dan went on to say that he has taken up the plastic that was over the phragmites at Crocketts Corner, observing that letting those plants overwinter with plastic on them is probably not a good idea.

He has obtained a booklet titled "Best Management Practices for Roadside Invasive Plants" and will make that available to anyone who would like to borrow it. Bob Crane said that the Conservation Commission's web site page on invasive species is the one that sees the most visitors.

Ruth White observed seeing crested wood fern at the Bog. And she reported that at the junction where they'd cut the large shrub of wild raisin, there is one shoot of it thriving and flowering.

She reported for the Conservation Commission's information that Spring Ledge has observed a problem this year with a beetle infestation of viburniums.

Laura Alexander referred to the mention at the last meeting of some yellow flags at the Bog. She said she put those up for a class, and she has since removed them.

Terry Dancy asked who was supposed to get him the information on missing signs at the Webb Forest Interpretative Trail. Mark Vernon.

### **Master Plan**

Ruth White reported that the subcommittee has made good progress. They have (a) worked on the lists as a group and given those to Ken McWilliams as he'd requested, (b) made individual assignments for the narratives, (c) identified those sections (particularly Goals and Recommendations) that the entire Conservation Commission should work on.

Dan Allen submitted for the Commission's review his narrative on Hiking Trails, and the list of trails maintained by the Conservation Commission.

Les Norman suggested that they draft a revised version highlighting what still needs to be done. Bob Crane said the map in the last master plan is not the most recent one. He asked if they can get the GPS layer and the layer with the corrections added to it. Terry Dancy reminded everyone that the last time they asked for that to be added, they were told that it would be too expensive to redo the map. At this meeting, Conservation Commission members agreed that it is unacceptable to have an outdated map in the master plan. Laura Alexander will look around for those layers. Ruth White said that the narratives, the lists and the maps all need to be coordinated. She will be in touch by email with subcommittee members about the next meeting.

### **Other**

Terry Dancy reported that he and June Fichter presented the Sunapee Area Watershed Coalition's watershed plan to the Board of Selectmen last Monday. He said that the Selectmen asked several questions regarding implementation of the plan, and acknowledged that the recommendations made in the plan are equally applicable to other water bodies as Messer Pond and Pleasant Lake. He said that it is clear that implementation of the recommendations fall under purview of the Planning Board, and that phases of the watershed plan should be worked into the Master Plan.

He said that runoff from roads into the lake constitutes a great part of the problem and the swirler basin placed at Sunapee harbor has been found to be fairly effective in catching much of that. As a result, Robert Wood and Richard Lee have agreed to place a swirler basin on Elkins Road for Pleasant Lake. However, the question raised by Selectmen last Monday is, wouldn't that be more effective at the inflow rather than at the outflow. At this meeting, Terry Dancy said that is correct. Pleasant Lake Protective Association has not yet been consulted regarding placement of the swirler basin, and data that group has collected indicates that the greater problem for Pleasant Lake is runoff coming in via Red Brook. This will be pursued.

He said that another question that has been raised is, is it up to the Messer Pond Protective Association and the Pleasant Lake Protective Association to deal with their own watersheds? He said that Terry Bingham of MPPA attended the Selectmen's meeting on Monday, and indicated that that group is concerned that its activities be equally supported by the Town. Terry said that he reminded her that Bob Brown is on the Conservation Commission. Bob Crane noted that the Messer Pond watershed goes in the direction opposite of the Sunapee watershed.

Terry Dancy said that Charlie Hirshberg has developed a booklet of Guidelines for Erosion Control, stemming from his study of Chalk Pond in Newbury, and it has been suggested that that booklet could be given out with building permit applications.

He said that Selectmen agreed that even if that booklet is too large to be given out with the applications, the building permit process itself could be a valuable tool in protection against erosion and runoff. The building permit application includes a list of things that must be complied with, and he and June Fichter suggested to Selectmen that property owners could be required to sign off on each item on that list.

Les Norman said that it sounds as though the key points that came out of that meeting are that implementation of the watershed plan's recommendations is a planning board matter, and that the Conservation Commission and Lakes Associations are really the canaries in the mine.

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As the Conservation Commission had no further business to address at this time, Laura Alexander moved to adjourn. Emma Crane seconded. No further discussion. Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah A. Denz  
Recording Secretary