



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Approved Minutes of the June 15, 2011 Conservation Commission Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chairman), Andy Deegan, Dan Allen, Sue Clough, Emma Crane, Ruth White, Terry Dancy, Rick Anderson (new member), Laura Alexander Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Andy Deegan – arrived late.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Crane (Webmaster), Doug McKenna (Trail Intern), Gerry Gold, Charlie Hirshberg (CLD Engineering)

Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

1. Gerry Gold/CLD Proposal – 525 Shaker Street

Mr. Hirshberg explained that on Mr. Gold's property there is something that was designed as a SCS pond in 1974. It has an earthen dam and a metal primary spillway, a riser pipe and an outlet pipe attached to the bottom. The emergency spillway is earthen as well. The primary spillway has corroded over the years and caused the pond level to drop about 2 ½ feet from the normal outlet level. In the process it has silted in quite a bit. The spillway has also corroded as it goes into the dam. They would like to repair this. In order to do so, they have to get a wetlands permit to work in the water. There would be about 10,000 square feet of wetland impact which could cause them to need a major impact. Mr. Hirshberg said it is a man made pond but is considered on-stream so it could very well fall under a major impact. Mr. Stanley said that a manmade structure can be maintained as long as they don't exceed the original dimensions without a permit. Mr. Hirshberg said that the wetlands bureau has indicated they will still need a permit, although it may be a minor. Mr. Stanley said that if they press the issue they will probably let them clean out the pond as long as they don't increase the size.

Mr. Hirshberg said that it will also need a reconstruction permit from the Dam Bureau as it is a classified dam. It is currently at a low-hazard classification. This permit would be costly. Mr. Hirshberg showed plans of what they would like to do. The heavy dash line is what the pond limits would be if the spillway was at its original elevation. There were also photos shown. The top of the dam was actually 3 ½ feet above the normal water level. Typically today, it would be built at 2'. The emergency spillway elevation is only 1 ½ feet above the normal spillway. The elevation of 100, which was the original height, the emergency spillway is only ½ a foot away from that. It has vegetated in after a wash-out, causing the change in elevation. Normally, emergency spillways are cut into original ground, which is more dense than what they can compact. They need to decide whether to leave it where it is or to build it up in some way and armor it. They would need to blanket the flat lip of the spillway with a mat of seed. He would discuss this with the Dam Bureau before they go forward, who is aware of this project.

Mr. Hirshberg said there are no trees that have grown in at the dam. Upon prior inspection there was some woody growth that had been removed. Mr. Gold said there is one tree that has taken root on the downstream side. Mr. Hirshberg said that the water was coming out of the dam, around the pipe. To repair this, the whole pipe structure has to be replaced by excavating and packing soil around the pipe. Mr. Gold said that the original was planted with a seed column but that this was a sign of erosion coming through the dam. Mr. Hirshberg said the original plans show this as a homogeneous earthen structure; no clay core. When they rebuild, they want to use similar material. If they use significantly different material, it can force the water to go around it. He plans to do some core samples to find what is inside the dam.

Mr. Hirshberg said they wanted to come to the Conservation Commission to explain what they are doing to hopefully obtain support from them. Mr. Stanley said there is no zoning issue with this. Mr. Dancy said that at this point in time, the Conservation Commission doesn't know what they are being asked to approve. They are just getting information regarding what is going on in the planning stages. Mr. Stanley said the objective would be to see if anyone there would have any issue with this going forward. If it comes out to be a standard "dredge and fill" they would write a letter or do nothing, both of which would assume approval. If they have objections it was good to bring them up at this point to help with the design.

Mr. Hirshberg said that they must abide by the timeline set by the wetlands bureau. If it is a major permit they will require a 75 day process and oftentimes come back wanting more information and adding another 30 days to the timeline. They hope to begin work in the fall. Mr. Stanley asked if they have a temporary dewatering permit. Mr. Hirshberg said that he worked out with the Dam Bureau. They would hope to do it under a low flow condition. The original primary outlet doesn't have a pond drain, which is a flat valve at the bottom enabling the pond to be drained to make repairs. They don't want to have to remove the pipe and dewater and drain through that location. They may need to dig down to the base and puncture the riser so they can put a filtering device around it. That would become the drain before they remove the pipe. It would all depend on the amount of flow at that time of year.

Chair Brown said that the plan is to replace the pipe and fix a few things in the process. What was the estimated total volume of material to be removed and put back in. Mr. Hirshberg said they are somewhere between 8,000 and 10,000 square feet. The original surface area is just over 10,000. The area that needs to be dredged is in somewhat from those limits. It is so loose that they couldn't get into the pond with waders and kept sinking in. Their sense is that they would be removing 3-4 feet of material.

Mr. Allen asked what they would do with the material they remove from the pond. Mr. Hirshberg said they don't anticipate 100,000 square feet of impact, but they have a location on the property that is a field are growing in with small trees on it. Mr. Gold said 4-5 years ago they did a small logging operation downstream from the pond. The idea was to clear out the low value trees. It is spread with re-growth of small poplars. They want to put some of the dredge material in this area. They would either replant or naturally vegetate as there are lots of trees around it. Mr. Stanley said if they move more than 250 yards of earth onto a site, they need approval of the Planning Board. A quick calculation suggests they would need approval. They won't necessarily need a full site plan review, but would need approval.

Chair Brown asked what would happen if it was decided not to do this. Mr. Hirshberg said it would be a Dam Bureau question as to what state the dam is left in. Larger structures are typically breached so they don't have an impoundment. Generally they do an inspection report suggesting that the dam be repaired. They don't give a timeline but want input back from them. If there is no response, something more legal is sent and it becomes part of a legal process. It is a low hazard dam and is not high on the priority list. Mr. Stanley said that if this was a full flood, full pond, there is no structure that would be impacted by a breach. There is such potential for absorption of volume there that it shrinks to insignificance.

Mr. Gold said when it was looked at in 2001, it was described as a non-hazard dam but their ratings have changed. It was built as a wildlife dam and never was a swimming hole. It still serves that purpose as its current state but if drained out there is no pond anywhere between there and Cascade Marsh. Mr. Hirshberg said that if this was abandoned, they could never do it again. On-stream ponds aren't seen any more. Flow has to be diverted from the stream and back into it. It isn't something they'd like to abandon at this point. He said in terms of habitat, it is good because it has transitional zones.

Mr. Gold said if the Wetlands Bureau said it was too complicated to make it work, it was an alternative to abandon it. He would rather not do this, however. Ms. Alexander said that she would support this action

by the way it was described. Ms. Clough agreed. It was determined that the initial proposal would be supported by the Conservation Commission.

2. Review and approve meeting minutes - April 19, 2011 & May 17, 2011

Page 3, trails and projects: LPA should be PLPA.

Page 4, under adopters: should be listed as October 14, not 17.

IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to approve the minutes form April 19, 2011, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Page 6: JP Paquette, not Parquette.

Page 5: Bog should be replaced with Low Plain.

IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to approve the minutes from May 17, 2011, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. New member - Rick Anderson

Mr. Anderson said that he met with Vicki Koron to get up to speed on things.

4. Budget

Chair Brown said their balance was currently \$13,059.83. Ms. Fraley wants to close out the first six months of 2011 and make sure all their bills and charges and encumbered expenses submitted by the end of June. He asked if there was any word on the forestry plan. Mr. Stanley said he hasn't talked to Mr. Platt since the last meeting but would find out. Chair Brown said there probably wasn't a rush on it but that it would be good to get it done the sooner the better. The clean-up work would be started as soon as the water tables had subsided. That would be a \$2,000 job that was budgeted in 2010 and the funds were encumbered.

Ms. Clough said there were people who were camping on their land near the Philips property. She asked if they had any jurisdiction on these people using the road. Mr. Stanley said that they have a right of way to use the road and go over the Philips property to get to their own land. They cannot control the mess that is made on these people's property.

5. Invasive Species

Mr. Allen said that Ruth White received an email from someone at DOT saying they have no money to spray for knot-weed along the highways. He thought New London should put a substantial amount of money in their budget for next year to do this sort of spraying along their roads. He thought they should begin to plan for that possibility in budgeting for the next round. Mr. Stanley suggested Mr. Allen getting some quotes and also talking with the Board of Selection and Mr. Lee as it is overlapping jurisdiction. Mr. Allen said they would also need to get permission from each landowner where knot-weed was located along the road.

Mr. Anderson said they went through this with the PLPA. There is a gentleman who is a limnologist who wrote an article about knot-weed. They went around Pleasant Lake and plotted locations of it and found that many people are cultivating and caring for the weed. They put an article out to increase awareness as to what it looks like and how invasive it is.

Mr. Allen said there is another issue, which is liability. This weed chooses to go where it is wet and gets washed downstream after storm events. It infects land downstream and downstream municipalities could come after the Town. Mr. Anderson said that PLPA came to the consensus that they had to deal with this weed as it grows along the shoreline and changes the habitat, could effect erosion and becomes their

business. Their hope is that more people get involved to help them deal with the problem. Mr. Stanley said their plan for the overlook at Low Plain is to cut what is there and as the new material comes up later in the season (August) they will do an application of round-up to kill it back. The area he sprayed 15 years ago at the overlook barely has any knot-weed growing. It continues to thrive in other areas of the overlook. He believes that this method will work to knock back the weed. The only downside is that other things, such as grass, are killed as well. Normal vegetation will work back in. Mr. Allen added that one of the applications they made at Crockett's Corner (a heavy dose of agricultural lime) seemed to work well. This was determined to be a relatively inexpensive way to deal with the weed.

Mr. Deegan said one way to control this, because it is a hollow, woody stem, is that there are injectors that can be used with the Round-up. It would get it directly down into the roots without spreading the herbicide into other areas. It is something that has to be kept up on and is more labor intensive, but was an option. Ms. Alexander asked about the method of coating the leaves in the herbicide. Mr. Stanley said that it didn't work and was impractical to physically do; they had to over-spray. When using Phragmites they should do it once in the spring when the weed is low and just emerging, or even to find a pre-emergence herbicide. Round-Up really has minimal environmental impact and does not leave any residual effects on the soil.

Mr. Crane said that DOT has best-practice procedures to deal with roadside invasive species. There are also suggestions on what to do with the plants that are cut. Mr. Stanley didn't think that cuttings would propagate on their own. Any microscopic root mass will grow, however.

Chair Brown asked if there was a list made of knot-weed hot spots. He thought if they wanted to approach the Board of Selectmen and Richard Lee, they should have a list to give them. Mr. Deegan said that they could either work to eliminate the large established areas, or perhaps identify new sections of the weed that can be taken care now to prevent them from becoming larger. Mr. Stanley said there were three distinct patches at the overlook that could be experimented on with Round-Up. He had suggested clearing all the material at Low Plain and get the Town's excavator in move rocks away.

Ms. Clough said that between the Angelli office and her property there was a huge knotweed forest. Since purchasing the office, the owners managed to get rid of all of the knot-weed by using something called "Weed and Feed" and by mowing the area constantly. She said she also had luck getting rid of her own knot-weed by mowing.

Ms. Alexander said they should pick some areas and get some quotes so they can start the conversation with the Board of Selectmen. They could also put something in the Intertown Record about the weed and measures they could take to get rid of it. Some people may choose to use lime, Round-Up, or to mow. Mr. Stanley said that Multi-Flora Rose is another species that is spreading quickly. Makes it even possible to not get through areas of woodland by machinery. It responds nicely, however, to Round-Up. Ms. Alexander said that Bittersweet is another species that is seen a lot around the area.

Chair Brown asked for someone to find and list five or six sites, and try a few different ways to take care of it. Before they go and ask the Board of Selectmen for money, they need to identify the size of the problem and explain how it could be taken care of. Ms. Alexander suggested that if people could email her when they see a patch of knot-weed somewhere. Pictures would also be helpful. It was determined that this information could be forwarded to Ms. Alexander within the next few days.

Ms. Crane said that another invasive is Japanese Barberry. She sees it in the deep, shaded woods. Mr. Stanley said it is an excellent feed source for wildlife, but is invasive and is everywhere. Mr. Stanley said on Burpee Hill there is a huge infestation of Privet. Ms. Clough opined that since PLPA has put something out about knotweed, it may be good for them to put something in the Kearsarge Shopper or the

Intertown Record to point people to the Conservation Commission website to help them indentify such invasive species and teach them how to take care of them. Ms. Alexander said she could come up with something appropriate to put in the article.

Mr. Anderson said that they use a targeted herbicide on Milfoil and comfortable working with these types of chemicals. He felt they needed some education for the public on the use of it. Round-Up is the most researched herbicide in the world.

6. Forest Nursery

Chair Brown said that it seemed that everything in the nursery had survived the winter. They have 58 new plants and trees that are potted and will go down there in the next month. Mr. Lee is working on an irrigation system. They received 2-year Sugar Maple seedlings that are really taking off. Mr. Allen said that the Red Pine seem to be static but the Norway Spruce have grown tremendously.

7. CC Land Acquisitions

Priority list – Mr. Stanley said there were 43 properties on the list.

Letters - Mr. Stanley said that nine of the people on the list would get the “standard” letter notifying them that their property was desirable to the Town for conservation. He has drafted four specialized letters and suggested others review them for content. There are individual people who also will approach property owners to discuss their plans for their properties. He indicated that the letters would be printed on Town letterhead and would be signed by Chair Brown. It was decided that a dedicated “gmail” account would be set up so letter recipients could contact the Conservation Commission with any questions or comments.

Mr. Allen said he talked to Don Clark whose wife has been ill and in and out of the hospital. He wasn't ready to talk about the property with him.

Easements- Mr. Stanley noted that Bob Ewing is going to sell the property he has along Lyon Brook so the opportunity for an easement is out of the question.

Mr. Stanley said he would talk with Rich Cook and they hoped the easement would happen this year but it is moving slowly. He said the money for this would be into next year's budget and would be taken over two years.

Mr. Stanley said there was some confusion about the Conservation Commission purchasing a piece of land on Mountain Road. It was actually a piece that the Town already owns that they are planning to create a forestry plan for.

8. LaValley's Building Supply

Chair Brown said that Mr. McKenna had been doing a lot of work on the trails so far. They have found themselves in need of gloves as well as pruning pole. He contacted Bob Jackman, manager of the Lebanon LaValleys, who lives in Town, and asked if he could get some supplies at cost and was pleased to find that some gloves and a pruning pole had been donated to the Town and dropped off at his workshop recently. He said that a thank-you note would be sent.

9. Trails & Projects

Chair Brown said that they have adopters and their contact information for every trail except for Philips.

Volunteer worker list – Mr. Stanley asked Chair Brown to contact Steve Allenby who wanted to be involved in some sort of work on trails. The attorney Scott Ellison is also interested in helping out.

Mr. Allen said that on Sunday at 9am they will make an effort to move the telephone poles across the Great Brook. They could make use of someone's tractor. Mr. Stanley said he would volunteer the use of his tractor. The plan is to get the poles set and get the deck on them.

Trail work intern Doug McKenna – Mark Vernon was very pleased with the work that Mr. McKenna has done on the Webb Forest Trail. He will also be helping out on Sunday morning.

Mr. McKenna said he has walked some of the trails and has cleaned out brush and trees that had fallen. He also had to take care of the beaver behind the old Middle School, has helped with the Merrimack County work detail, has blazed a few trails, and has put some boardwalk down in Low Plain near the beaver dam, etc.

Ms. Crane said they should get some publicity on this work effort. Mr. Stanley said he would see what he could do. Something in the Intertown Record would be nice, along with some photos.

Bucklin Brook Wetland – Chair Brown has signs and they need to figure out where to put them. Mr. Stanley said he would take a look and show Mr. McKenna where they should be situated.

Signs - Ms. White suggested that the bulletin board downstairs have a sign above it saying "Conservation Commission" so there is some awareness to the community that they are there and are active. Mr. Stanley suggested that Ms. Jackman could put something together to achieve this recognition.

P/C Bog, Low Plain, Shepard Spring – Chair Brown thanked Peter Stanley, Scott Brown, Doug McKenna and Bob Crane for their help with the Merrimack County Department of Corrections which sent three inmates and a corrections officer to New London to work on trails. They met on June 3rd and June 10th. The first day they worked on Low Plain for five steady hours to clear the brush. The corrections officer worked right alongside them. Mr. Stanley said that it is all hardwoods in the area now. Mr. Deegan asked if they put in a new trail going off to the look going down. Chair Brown said that is where they dragged the brush. Mr. Stanley said 15 years ago he had a group of Proctor students who came and did the same task. There is not a twig left of that first effort. Chair Brown indicated that he sent a thank-you for the work that had been done the first day.

The next week the inmates made a special effort to let them know how much they appreciated receiving a thank-you note. They did work in the Bog the second day. They brought in a couple hundred feet of boardwalk and picked up some debris. It was a good workday and they spent about six hours. The lumber they are using now is last fall's and some has been sitting up on sticks for about 7 months and weighs about half as much as it did when they purchased it. Drying it out makes it much lighter to carry.

The workers will come back on October 7 and 14th. They should plan on a six hour work day. They work on a regular basis for Sutton, Newbury and Warner. Chair Brown didn't know if there was total enthusiasm throughout town of the use of this type of labor. Ms. Crane indicated that they won't ever be able to please everyone.

Ms. White indicated that at Shepard Spring Trail it is very wet. Mr. McKenna said he installed a new bridge in that area. There was a newly fallen tree there that needed to be taken care of. Mr. Stanley said he would work with Mr. McKenna that Friday morning to take care of this tree and other trees that had fallen in that area. Ms. White recommended blazing the trail with a special blaze for the Conservation Commission would be helpful.

(At this point there were about 3 conversations going on at the same time and am not sure which to follow).

They are in need of a long pole, longer than 20' to use as a marker (?).

Clark Pond trail head parking – Chair Brown said it would be helpful to cut a few of the stumps in the area down. Mr. Lee may have a couple of small truck-loads of dirt (?) to dump there and spread it out a bit.

Messer Pond Trail – Chair Brown spoke with JD Paquette who said he hoped to get in there with his three daughters to clear the trail out.

Project list and priorities – Ms. Clough said that Mr. Clough and Mr. Gold have worked to connect the Devil's half-acre to the TLV road. There was a lot of forestry done in that area this winter. She thought there was a lot of work to be done on that section. It was noted that this was not New London but in Springfield. Mr. Allen said that this portion of the trail was not maintained by Springfield and that they have asked New London to take care of it.

Chair Brown said that part of the deal for the trail worker was that they needed to have a cell phone and their own transportation. He wondered if they could get Mr. McKenna a \$25 gas card to help out with his having to drive all over the place. Everyone was in agreement. Ms. Clough said if he is using his own car he should keep his mileage records, as \$25 wouldn't go far. Mr. Stanley said that the problem was that mileage wasn't budgeted for. He also noted that this was not something Mr. McKenna asked for. Chair Brown suggested that Mr. McKenna log his hours so they can keep an eye on it to have an idea how much he is driving.

Mr. Dancy said the final meeting of the Lake Sunapee Water Structure Infrastructure Project. It was the same night as the New London Planning Board meeting so no one from the Planning Board was there. Richard Lee wasn't there either. The definitive report will come out in the next couple of months. They, as the Conservation Commission should have some discussion with the Planning Board when the results come out.

10. Programs

Ms. White said the walks are over and didn't know if there would be any more programs until winter. There are some programs available at Knight's Hill that are posted on the bulletin board.

11. NLCC files

Chair Brown said that the fireproof cabinet has finally been opened and now they need to look through the files and determine what needs to stay or be thrown out. Mr. Dancy and others would get together to review the contents of the files.

12. Other

Mr. McKenna said that in his hike he noticed a bridge on the Great Brook Trail at the intersection of the Crockett Trail that had been washed out. He wondered if on Sunday they'd be able to put a new bridge

there. Chair Brown asked Mr. McKenna if he could get in there to measure things to see exactly what they need.

13. Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting date was scheduled for July 13 (Wednesday).

There would be no August meeting.

The September meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 28.

IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to adjourn the meeting of June 15, 2011. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 11:02am

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London