



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF NEW LONDON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MARCH 18, 2009

Present: Les Norman (Chair), Laura Alexander, Dan Allen, Bob Brown, Emma Crane, Terry Dancy, Vicki Koron.

Absent: Dale Conly, Ruth White

Other: Sue Clough, Bob Crane, Andy Deegan, Peter Stanley- Zoning Administrator

Chair Norman opened the meeting at 1:00P.M. and asked that each person introduce themselves since there were guests at the meeting.

Minutes: The minutes of the February 18, 2009 meeting were approved with the following change: page 4, third paragraph, sixth line down. The word "coast" was changed to host. There being no other corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Trails: Mr. Allen reported that 1000 board feet of 2 inch Hemlock had been delivered, was now cut, stacked and in place ready to go come spring. This will be used for the bridges at Clark Pond. He warned that when the snow bridges that were put in place this winter melt, deep water will need to be traversed. He has made a "Dangerous High Water" sign which he will put up when the snow bridges are no longer passable. He asked that there be signs made for the 2 new trails and recommended that these trails be named after individuals who have worked hard for the Conservation Commission. He suggested they be named after Terry Dancy and Les Norman. Mr. Allen made a motion to this end and it was seconded by Dr. Alexander. There being no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously with Mr. Dancy and Mr. Norman abstaining. Mr. Dancy and Mr. Brown will make the new signs. Mr. Allen asked Mr. Stanley if it were possible to cut through the top portion of the berm to create a less abrupt change in elevation to make it easier for people to manage the trail. Mr. Stanley saw no problem with this. Mr. Dancy asked when he would be scheduling work parties to begin the bridge construction. Mr. Allen said once the snow had melted and it was easier to use the trails, he would let people know. He also said that 2 benches were needed by the pond. It was suggested that rather than purchase these they be made from logs and rocks from the area so they would be more appropriate and not compete with their surroundings. Mr. Allen then asked Mr. Stanley to present his idea of a kayak landing for the pond. He said he envisioned something short, simple and on legs that would be removed in the winter, with some sort of submerged bunker that would stick out on either side. This would be used to hold the kayak while it is being boarded and then enable the individual to push off from the dock into the pond. He said he would be willing to complete the paperwork for an application for a seasonal dock to make it possible to launch a kayak. Mr.

Norman asked if this launch was necessary. Mr. Stanley said that was for the Commission to decide. He suggested that perhaps this could wait for a year or so until we saw how the new trails and bridges were being used. Ms. Clough asked if there was a trail that went around the pond. Mr. Stanley said there was not and drew a diagram to illustrate the pond and the existing trail, noting that some of the land was privately owned and these land owners would not entertain a trail through their property. Mr. Allen continued his report by speaking of the Low Plain blinds and noting that one roof has been blown off completely. Mr. Stanley said he would reinstall it this spring.

Looking at the list of things to do this year, Mr. Allen said the Lyon Brook bridges needed attention, the Crisenti Bog needs more work, and the Kidder-Cleveland-Clough (K-C-C) trail behind the old middle school still needs work. Chair Norman asked where we were in pushing this trail through to the Ohler's property. Mr. Allen said the Recreation Department had pushed the trail through to that point, with the trail going straight down the hill. Mr. Brown said that the work completed last year on the K-C-C trail probably completes about 70% of the trail. Four bridges still need to be either rebuilt or replaced. He wondered if the lumber could be purchased. Mr. Norman said there was \$3500 in the budget for trail maintenance. Mr. Allen said that \$600-\$700 of that had already been spent. Ms. Clough suggested asking for donations from the lumber companies in return for public acknowledgement of their good will. Mr. Allen said that Cote and Reney have made small donations of lumber in the past.

Mr. Crane said that the boardwalk on the "little bog" in Low Plains is in need of repair. Regarding the Messer Pond walkway, Mr. Allen asked what the Commission's expectations were since the last time he was there, there was about 14-16" of water and he did not think the trail would be used until a boardwalk was put in. Mr. Allen asked whether the Conservation Commission had an obligation regarding the Cordingley Preserve. He was told by Mr. Deegan that the Ausbon-Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT) has been tending to this property. A student from Colby-Sawyer has been putting in trails, but he thought that the trail needed to be re-blazed. It was mentioned that this preserve had not yet been adopted by the Conservation Commission. Chair Norman said his only other comment regarding the trails was with reference to the Webb Forest Trail, saying that some additional work needed to be done on the Guide. He noted that these needed to be re-ordered and that one section of that trail needed to be re-done. Mr. Crane thought that the trail and blazing was acceptable, but that the nature or interpretations along the trail needed to be re-done. Regarding the Guides, Mr. Dancy wondered if the Guides for the Low Plains Trail had ever been re-ordered. It was suggested that he and Chair Norman make a trip to Echo to reorder 2000 of these Guide. Mr. Allen said he would contact Mark Vernon to ask him to inventory the signs along the Webb Forest Trail and he will then let Mr. Dancy know what signs are needed. Mr. Dancy said he has all the texts for the signs and could easily reproduce those that are needed.

Chair Norman commented that he looked at the Geocaching website and there were about a half dozen that were on the Low Plain. Several of them were on the edge of the pond where we did not want people to go. Mr. Allen commented that Mr. Dancy made four more signs which he will put out as soon as the snow is gone.

Easements: Mr. Deegan reported that Town Meeting approved a conservation easement on land held by ASLPT on the Clark Pond property. This easement will be presented to the ASLPT Board next month for their approval. In order to do this accurately, he asked the Conservation Commission to complete the landowner's questionnaire which he has forwarded to each member, and requested that the completed questionnaire be sent to him by the end of next week. The questionnaire pertains to how the Conservation Commission envisions the property being used in the future. It was decided that Mr. Stanley, working with Mr. Deegan, will take the lead in completing this, with the exception of questions 1, 6, and 16. Mr. Stanley asked if Dr. Alexander could provide input for number 16 which had to do with wetland shrubs and scrubs. He asked that the Commission members look at numbers 1 and 6 and get back to him with input. He said that number 1 had to do with protecting special features of the land, land access, and land use, and number 6 pertained to how the land was to be used, including hiking, timber harvesting, fishing, etc.

Camp Wallula: Chair Norman reported that Camp Wallula is up for preliminary review with the Planning Board on May 4th. He confirmed that there were no substantial alterations to their original plan submission.

Kearsarge Community Center: Mr. Stanley reported that it looks as though the Kearsarge Community Center was not going to happen. Possible uses for the old middle school building were briefly discussed with agreement that the Town needed to consider the utilization of this potential resources.

Master Plan: Chair Norman reported that there had not been a great deal of input to him from Commission members suggesting changes to this document, noting that he did make the changes suggested by Ms. Crane. He asked Dr. Alexander and Mr. Stanley to fill in the missing charts. Chair Norman will accept the changes sent to him and produce a final version. Ms. Clough was given the current version to review. Dr. Alexander said that referenced in the Master Plan is the comment that the Town needs to do a natural resources inventory. She said that the plan for next year was to have a third year project to inventory the natural resources of New London done by Colby-Sawyer students. She envisioned that once that was done the students would then compare that with the Master Plan and perhaps take a look at prioritization of these resources for the Town.

Mr. Stanley reported he has been appointed to an advisory group of eight people who will be working with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Sciences to improve the process and processing of permitting. They will look at how to be more helpful and practical to the general public regarding wetlands permits. In addition to this, the Planning Board has identified a wetlands sub-committee which will look at our wetland mapping and come up with an alternative approach. This language will then need to be included in the Master Plan. Mr. Dancy said he had written a paragraph on water resources for the Master Plan regarding the Blackwater and Pleasant Lake watershed where he mentioned that there was a study being developed cooperatively between New London, Wilmot, and Springfield. He asked if anyone knew who was handling that study from New London. Mr. Allen said he had gone to such a meeting several years ago, but recalled there were other towns involved. It was decided that in order to include this information in the Master Plan, more factual details needed to be gathered. If these

were not available, then that paragraph would be removed from the Master Plan. Mr. Dancy said he would look into this.

Membership: Chair Norman said that he and Dale Conly will complete their appointment to the Conservation Commission at the end of this month. He said it was his impression that Ms. Clough and Mr. Deegan will be joining the Commission on April 1st. It was decided that the election of a new chair and designation of the Commission member who will also sit on the Planning Board as a voting member will be deferred until after the new Commission members have been officially appointed.

Any Other Business:

Dr. Alexander reminded the members that the Scenic By-ways meeting is March 25th at 7:00P.M. at the Town Hall. It was noted that this program, focused on Route 103A, is a Federally funded program and that routes with this designation would be so noted on maps. Mr. Stanley said that this is a preliminary meeting to explore the possibilities and ramifications of this designation to New London. Dr. Alexander will circulate the announcement via e-mail to the Commission members.

Mr. Crane reported that he and Ms. Crane have completed the monitoring of last year's Conservation Commission easements, noting that there are 12 easements that need to be monitored. He thought this task should now be divided among other Commission members. Chair Norman asked if anyone wanted to participate. It was decided that the members will check the easement information and maps on the web site and this issue will then be brought back up at the next meeting.

Mr. Stanley reported that there will be a meeting tonight at 6:30P.M., sponsored by the Regional Planning Commission, with a representative from DES to speak about the Comprehensive Shoreline Protection Act.

Mr. Crane reported that just before Town Meeting, there was a meeting with Steve Walker of the Office of Environmental Planning who does the monitoring of Low Plains for the Fish and Game Department. He also runs the Land Conservation Inventory Property Program and said we have one property being monitored under that program now. In terms of thinking ahead with regard to Low Plain, he suggested that Fish and Game be approached to see if they would extend the easement. Mr. Stanley said that he had spoken with Mr. Robinson of the Fish and Game Department preliminarily about this, but also said that this decision would need to be decided by a vote at Town Meeting.

Mr. Stanley reported that the deed to the Town has been signed by Mr. Lynch, and that the other deed to Mr. Lynch from the Town is to be signed by the Board of Selectmen and notarized by Jessie Levine on Monday. The completion of this will mean that Davis Path will then become part of the Conservation Commission properties.

There being no other business, Dr. Alexander moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded. There being no discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:17P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby
Recording Secretary