



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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APPROVED Minutes of the November 16, 2011 Conservation Commission Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chair), Andy Deegan, Dan Allen, Ruth White, Rick Anderson, Emma Crane, Laura Alexander, Terry Dancy, Peter Stanley (Planning & Zoning Administrator), Bob Crane (Webmaster), Candace Whitney (New London Resident) and Leo Maslan (Wilmot Flat Resident)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sue Clough

Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 9am and introduced Mr. Maslan. He invited Mr. Maslan to present a forestry proposal regarding his property listed as Tax Map & Lot #: 097-091-000.

Mr. Leo Maslan, a licensed New Hampshire Forester was contacted by Hilary Cleveland to perform a selected timber harvest on her 146 acre property between Seamans Road and Main Street. He spoke with Peter Stanley and found there to be a protected stream on the property. He was asking to do some forestry thinning within the 100' setback of that stream. He has submitted this to the Planning Board as well. It is about 140' of basal area along the corridor by the brook. The residual stocking will be between 80-100 square feet per acre where they cut, which falls within the guidelines of timber forestry standards. There is about a half mile of her property near the stream. A camp and property near the pond will not be disturbed. The stream channel itself will remain shaded as it is now. He was sensitive in working in those sorts of areas and doesn't want to change the ecology. They will use the existing stream crossings where they can but will also be submitting wetlands permit prior to the harvest, which will either be on frozen ground or during a dry summer.

Mr. Stanley said that Mr. Maslan has been before the Conservation Commission twice before with requests similar to this one where a stream was involved. Both times Mr. Maslan has tended to the harvest in a manner that made him comfortable. Mr. Stanley said that this type of forest management is a permitted use in these instances, but is subject to Planning Board approval. Mr. Dancy asked if they would be removing roots. Mr. Maslan said the stumps would remain. Mr. Dancy offered that the only thing to worry about is erosion. Mr. Maslan said that Fred Weld would be doing the cutting and he has used him for years and years. He would be using a Cut-to-Length system so the tops and debris is left on site and the wood is taken out with a forwarder instead of a skidder, so would create fewer disturbances of the soils. Typical forest harvesting is done by hand with a logger. A chain is then wrapped around the tree and hauled out with a skidder. Or, a tree is felled with a mechanical operation and is then brought out by a skidder in a load instead of by itself. With this other method, they use a machine that measures the product the tree will be cut in, puts it in a pile and then the forwarder (like an all-terrain logging truck) and puts the stems on itself and brought out. The non-merchantable material is left on site to decompose. This cuts down on soil disturbance. More and more loggers are using this kind of harvest method. He said that this kind of method and machinery is best for this type of job. Mr. Maslan said that not a lot of people have invested in this \$500,000 set of machinery. He has had a lot of luck with Mr. Weld using this method and his machinery. The residual stand is in much better shape without the barked up trees along the trail.

Mr. Stanley said that as they look forward to potential harvesting in other properties, this might be an interesting experiment to see how it works. Perhaps Hilary will give some of them permission to go look at the area to see how effective it is. They may consider this method for work in Low Plains and the Philips Preserve.

Mr. Maslan said from an environmental standpoint, he tends to like leaving some biomass on the ground. It holds more soil moisture and more nutrients are recycled back into the soil also. Mr. Stanley said that it also helps limit erosion from rainwater.

Chair Brown asked what the economics were in chipping the tops and hauling the rest away. Mr. Maslan said it runs between \$1 and \$2 per ton to the landowner. The price of the chips haven't kept up with the cost of operating. Every box of chips they see is probably \$30 or \$40 to the landowner.

IT WAS MOVED (Dan Allen) AND SECONDED (Andy Deegan) to approve the request by Mr. Maslan to cut within the 100' buffer of a stream on Hilary Cleveland's property (TM 097-091-000). THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Minutes of October 19, 2011

On page 2, the name should be "Carey."

On page 3, there was a statement about the RSA. Ms. Crane had pointed out in the Planning Board minutes that it was approved, but these minutes are a record of what was said and discussed. He didn't believe they should change those minutes to reflect something that wasn't discussed at the meeting. He thought they should fix this in the current minutes.

On page 4, second paragraph should be "in a hurry" not "in a hurt."

On page 2, first paragraph under "budgets" third line: requests should be "estimates."

On page 3, last paragraph, first sentence. Photos "taken by Terry Dancy."

On page 3, last sentence, add "during a second session, they got the bridge across."

On page 5, "Tom Wessels."

On page 5, he was not impressed, but "disappointed."

On page 5, he said should be "he thought."

On page 4, project list should be "Dura."

IT WAS MOVED (Ruth White) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to approve the minutes of October 19, 2011, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Beaver Update

Mr. Stanley said he hasn't been able to contact the trapper as of yet. As soon as he gets animals out of the area below the middle school, he and Mr. Denning would go pull the dam out. Mr. Allen said the boardwalk has all floated away in that area.

Mr. Allen said that a tree had fallen in the Dancy Trail and when he went to inspect and remove it, he found a beaver had cut it down. He was worried that this trail could become flooded easily should a beaver get in there and build a dam in that area. Mr. Stanley said that he should be notified as soon as anyone notices a beaver working in this area. He noted that there has always a beaver in Clark Pond. Every few years the young beavers move out of their parents' homes and makes trouble in another area.

Ms. Alexander arrived at this point in the meeting.

Budget

Chair Brown said they did get their bill from the Association of New Hampshire Conservation Commissions, which was in their budget to be paid. Mr. Allen said he had some proposals to be approved. He said he would like to build a trail on the other side of the brook by Clark Pond. Access would be across the ice in the winter and would be for skiing. He passed around a map to show where he wanted to build the trail. He and W. Michael Todd walked the area and found it to be well defined already. He suggested using an existing skid road to access it. Permission from the Canondays would be

preferable as some of the trail would go across their land. Mr. Todd has verbal permission from them and believes it not to be a problem. There would be a need for two bridges both crossing active but narrow streams. He thought he could create these from 8' 2x6's. He'd like 3 2x6's, 100 micro-blaster charges, another boar brush, and some pressure-treated decking for the Dura Crockett Bridge. Chair Brown suggested that their dried Hemlock could be used instead of pressure-treated. Mr. Allen said that the trail would be meant for skiing and would go to the property line and the skier would turn around and backtrack. It was suggested to get written permission from the Canondays for the use of their land for this trail. Mr. Dancy said the town's insurance doesn't cover non-public property unless they have written permission.

Mr. Stanley said there should be some signage on the trail that warns people about making sure the ice was thick enough to cross. They would need to be attentive to close the trail at some points when the weather gets warmer. Chair Brown said that Fish & Game have some good wordage to use for these signs. Mr. Allen felt one sign would do it. Mr. Stanley suggested putting a sign at both ends of the trail as a precautionary measure.

Mr. Dancy asked if this was a hazard they didn't want to get involved in due to the responsibility. Ms. Crane wondered if this would be a problem early in the winter when the snow is covering thin ice. Mr. Stanley agreed that this was something to consider. Mr. Allen thought they should have a vote on whether or not to proceed. Chair Brown asked if they should run it by Ms. Hallquist (Town Administrator) to see if she had any thoughts on the subject. It was agreed that this was a good idea. Mr. Stanley said he would speak to her about it.

Invasive Species

Mr. Allen said he received a 4-page handout from the Division of Pesticides Control listing the people who were authorized to apply herbicides. He contacted two of them, one in Epsom and one in Hooksett. The man from Hooksett charges \$800/day. Mr. Stanley said that if they cut it in August, and then spray it in November, they can get all at the same time, as it is all the same height. They spray the Knotweed right onto the leaves. Mr. Allen suggested that if they needed a budget figure for next year, he would suggest \$2,500 for three days of spraying. Chair Brown said they wouldn't need the information until the next meeting.

Mr. Anderson suggested an "adopt a patch" area where people can take care of patches of Knotweed. He felt the Pleasant Lake Protective Association might take this approach to deal with Knotweed around the lake. Mr. Stanley liked this idea. He added that Multi-Flora Rose was much worse than Knotweed. It blocks access to large areas of woodland and is spreading like wildfire around here. It is everywhere in New London where there is a thicket that has been allowed to grow. It will grow anywhere and doesn't require full sun. He said that it responds well to Round-Up. Mr. Anderson said the Pleasant Lake Protective Association has mapped all the Knotweed patches around the lake. These are listed on the PLPA website. The problem is that there are some delicate areas around the lake that are close to the water where Knotweed has been found.

Mr. Deegan left the meeting at this point in time.

Ms. Alexander said that Bittersweet and Burning Bush were also of concern.

October 27, 2011 Meeting held at Ausbon-Sargent, chaired by Ms. Alexander

Ms. Alexander said that it was a good meeting. They hold it twice a year and invite conservation commission chairs from the 12 surrounding towns. They talk about what is working in their towns and also discuss the RSA 36:a regarding donating to easements within their respective towns. Chair Brown

said that it was interesting listening to Grantham as they are concerned with development. They could possibly add another 200 house lots, which would impact their schools and the rest of the community.

Chair Brown added that there were six or eight towns there and it was interesting to see how the conservation commissions were structured. Some are more restricted than others regarding their funding. Some towns also don't get a great deal of support from their select boards.

Ms. Alexander saw an email about some pending legislation to take some authority away from conservation commissions. Mr. Stanley said the text for those bills probably won't be out until mid-December. Ms. Alexander said that another meeting like this would occur in March. They are held every six months.

Chair Brown – Meeting with Ms. Hallquist

Chair Brown met with Ms. Hallquist on November 4th. He hasn't had an opportunity to explain what they have been working on. He expected to spend 20 minutes with her but it went an hour and a half. She is willing to help the commission and support their activities. He was impressed with her knowledge and willingness to help.

Low Plain Easement

Mr. Stanley got an email from Rich Cook saying that they have got their grant but what they want to do is go before governor and council to approve the expenditure of both the grant and the money that New London will contribute (\$5,000) to this monitoring fund for the conservation easement. There is no reason to believe it won't happen and he was assuming it would happen within New London's budget cycle. Mr. Stanley said the easement is held by Fish & Game because Ausbon Sargent was the interim title-holder to the property and therefore could not hold the conservation easement at the time. Ultimately the land was gifted to the town of New London with an easement held by the State of New Hampshire.

Mr. Anderson thanked Mr. Crane for helping him with the Fenwood Five.

Mr. Stanley said next year they would proceed with a conservation easement on the Philips Preserve. There would need to be funds in the budget for this.

Board of Selectman's Meeting

Chair Brown said he has been trying to give the Board of Selectmen an update on what has been going on in the Conservation Commission. He talked about the trails, the intern pilot program that was successful, the corrections volunteers, and local volunteers. They also talked about the desirable land list and the letters they sent out and the responses they received. Chair Brown said that they also discussed the CIP.

Chair Brown said that a previous Planning Board meeting, the present plan was to not request a contribution for the CIP for one year, but that they would be presenting the RSA 36:a in a more formalized manner. He was looking for the cooperation and approval from the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and the Budget Committee. They all agreed to support this RSA. The next step was to give the Selectmen an update and ask for their support for part "b" which discusses contributions to lands inside the town. They would not go forward with the portion regarding contributions to lands outside the town. Chair Brown said that Mr. Stanley did a good job explaining the RSAs. At the meeting, there was a vote taken to support the Conservation Commission in passing this RSA. The Selectmen would put this RSA on the warrant.

Mr. Stanley said that right now they can make a contribution to a project but must have a fee interest in the project. By adopting the RSA, they can make a contribution to a non-profit organization towards their accomplishment of one of the New London Conservation Commission's goals with no responsibility for

the property. He thought it a desirable thing to do and it made more sense to be able to donate money towards a project, but not be responsible for the property. No stewardship or maintenance of the property is required.

Mr. Dancy said it would be important to introduce the two warrant articles as one package. Last year this was the problem. It was too confusing to people. Mr. Stanley said they need to make it as simple as possible.

Chair Brown wondered at what point they would offer to make a donation to a property. Should they do it early or wait until the end. They should come up with a way to determine this. Mr. Stanley said they could find many examples from other towns in the area that utilize this ability to donate. He said that when they have a good idea and momentum, people would give money.

Chair Brown wondered if a paper ballot at Town Meeting would be appropriate. Mr. Stanley felt it was a good idea as it takes the emotion out of the motion. Five voters have to request this method of voting prior to the meeting.

Chair Brown noted at the Board of Selectmen's meeting that the Budget Committee would endorse the RSA. They were appreciative that no contribution to the land acquisition funds was being requested for next year.

Chair Brown said that he mentioned the two parcels that the town owns on Mountain Road and Laurel Lane, which have some timber on them that could possibly be harvested. He asked the Board of Selectmen if they could evaluate the property with a forester. Ms. Hallquist suggested bring Dave Carey into the project, as the tree warden. He felt they should have a professional opinion again. Leo Maslan was suggested as someone who would be able to give a good opinion.

Forestry Plan

Mr. Stanley said that he had a letter and a summary report from Clayton Platt. He asked the members of the Conservation Commission to take a copy and review it for discussion at the next meeting.

With regards to the Philips Preserve, they would not be able to clean it up due to wet conditions.

Trails

With regards to the Messer Pond Trail, they were working on getting some help clearing it out. JP Paquette volunteered to help with this.

Chair Brown said he received an email from W. Michael Todd, who gives frequent reports on Lyon Brook Trail up until the hospital. He is hurt with a shoulder injury so cannot do any work on the trail, but has noted that there is a tree down. Chair Brown said he would take care of this.

On the south side, from Frothingham down to Brookside, Mr. Allen organized a work detail to work on some trees that were down. They were able to clear the trail. They put a new sign up showing it was a New London Conservation Commission trail at the Brookside Road entrance.

The Cleveland-Kidder-Clough project is over a year now, is incomplete and the scout has not gotten back to him. Chair Brown has put a sign up at the trail. The second part of the sign notes that it was a 2010 scout project, troop 271. He wanted to get the sign up before the ground froze.

Chair Brown said that Lyon Brook has a big sign on the corner of Frothingham that needed to be straightened up. One at the junction of the Bog also needs to be straightened. Chair Brown said there were

a couple near Newport Road that had some rotting wood. It is still legible but may need to be replaced next year.

Mr. Allen said that he and Mr. Anderson went to the annual meeting of the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions. It was mentioned that RSA 36:a is going to potentially have some changes and the association is asking for some voices. They want to be sure the law doesn't get changed so they can't do what they want.

Mr. Allen said that the cables have been put in on the Pingree Connector and Hayes Brook Bridge. His son suggested using some of the crushed glass the Town has in stock. In the beginning of the trails at Clark Pond there is a wet area. If they dig out the soil they can put some crushed glass. In the parking lot they don't use, they could fill the big dip in there with glass as well. Mr. Lee said he would bring it in and agreed with him that they need to cover it. The glass goes through a ball mill and is not sharp. Mr. Stanley said they used a lot of it when they did the firehouse expansion. It drains well, is stable, and doesn't compact. It is an excellent fill product.

Ms. White added that she was down at Clark Pond a few days ago and liked the new benches. Coming back out on the Dancy Trail it is hard to find the trail due to the leaf cover. There are no blazes. Mr. Allen said he has been putting this off and knows he needs to blaze it. Some people won't snowshoe out there until he has groomed it, as they are afraid they will get lost. Mr. Allen said he would blaze the trail.

Mr. Allen said that he's looked at the Dura Crockett's Brook Bridge and thought they could fix it in one session in a few weeks. The amount of brush that has been pushed up against it will make it a challenge.

Programs

Ms. White said last month they talked about having the winter walks in March. If that was the case, she suggested that they put it on the agenda for January so they could get it going and get it into the Shopper. She also noted that when they have the walks, she puts something up in the display in the Town Office. She has put the Bog and Low Plain information up for walks in the winter. She usually changes the information on the first and the 15th of the month. She will be back in April. Ms. Crane said that if Ms. White creates the descriptions, she would post them in the various months to come. Ms. White said she would create some generic-type informational guides that Ms. Crane could post.

Chair Brown said that there were two articles in the Intertown Record, one worked on by Ms. White and Mr. Dancy.

Chair Brown asked if they could give a one-paragraph submission to the Intertown Record to promote the winter walks. Ms. White said that they are always very supportive and willing to print whatever she gives, including photos from time to time.

Mr. Stanley said they wouldn't do the wood-duck box program this year. Last year the ice was too thin.

Files

Chair Brown said he would get the minutes signed and filed.

Other

Chair Brown said that he has received written approval for the use of the Syd Crook room for the third Wednesday of every month in 2012. Ms. Alexander had a teaching conflict for Wednesdays at this time. 2pm on Wednesdays was the time Chair Brown would try to reserve for 2012, as it was when Ms. Alexander was available to meet. The rest of the commission was in favor of this time as well.

Chair Brown said there is a pilot program in Hollis, NH regarding Chestnut trees. Using the American/Chinese Chestnuts hybrid, they have got it to come to more of an American chestnut generations down the road. It is \$100 to join the program and they give one tree. The organization is called the American Chestnut Organization.

Ms. White asked about perambulations. Mr. Stanley said he spoke to Ms. Hallquist about it and she forwarded some articles to him about it. There have been a couple of bills that haven't gotten out of committee to do away with that requirement. It is still the law currently, but is not closely enforced. Mr. Stanley felt it was a great idea for someone to check the bounds but that newer technology should be put to use.

Chair Brown said that this is the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen, who is able to delegate this. Mr. Stanley said he would check with Ms. Hallquist to see if she had mentioned this to the Board of Selectmen. It is Springfield that is due this year.

Mr. Dancy said he has been asked by the Selectmen to be the New London representative on a watershed study with relation to long term planning for the Roads Departments on flooding and the outcome of a study that was overseen by the LSPA. It is four meetings per year.

Candace Whitney thanked the Conservation Commission for the work they are doing. Chair Brown thanked her for joining them and hoped to see her in December.

IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to adjourn the meeting of November 16, 2011. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 10:56am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London