



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 17, 2020 via zoom

9:00 AM

Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically. The public has access to contemporaneously listen and participate in this meeting through the video conferencing platform Zoom.us.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (chair), Michael Gelcius, Ruth White, Stanley Morono, Andrew Deegan, Michael Kennedy, Mark Vernon, Joseph Kubit

OTHERS PRESENT: John Doyle, Messer Pond Protective Association, Liam Fleming

1. **Call to order** – Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 9:00am. Chair Brown noted that Dode Gladders was appointed as an alternate member to the Conservation Commission at the most recent Board of Selectmen's meeting. Michael Kennedy will now be a full voting member.
2. **Public comment** – None
3. **Permit applications updates:**
 - **John Doyle - MPPA**

John Doyle, President of Messer Pond Protective Association (MPPA) attended the meeting via zoom to update the Conservation Commission on the watershed work that is being done. Storm management work is being planned for Forest Acres Road this summer.

In 2013, the MPPA started the process of developing a watershed management plan. The plan was completed in 2015, submitted to DES and approved and accepted in 2016. The plan outlined 12 best practices that would reduce the nutrient and sediment going into the pond. With the help of several grants, they have been implementing these recommendations since 2016. The current grant is for \$50,000 and targets three efforts which include the work on Forest Acres Road, addressing some storm water management issues on County Road and Fieldstone Lane and doing a targeted watershed survey for storm water runoff on Bog Road and Tracey Road.

The work being done on Forest Acres road will require a wetlands permit. The design work and permitting is planned for this summer and Mr. Doyle would like expedited applications which require approval and sign off from the Conservation Commission. The work is based on a survey done last summer done by an Environmental engineer and Bob Harrington, Director of Public Works. There are

three general concerns around Forest Acres Road. The first concern is that the three culvert system needs to either be repaired or replaced. The second concern is highlighting the proximity of these culverts to the road. Because they are so close, runoff from the road is going directly into the culvert systems. The third concern is storm water runoff areas that are causing ditch erosion along the road. The plan is to upgrade two undersized culverts with one that is appropriately sized for the flow.

Mark Vernon wanted to ensure that any gravel brought in is free of invasive species (Japanese Knotweed). Mr. Doyle stated he follows the guidelines of the DPW.

Chair Brown asked if the new culvert system would be longer since they currently stop right at the edge of the road so all plowing material dumps right into the water. Culverts used to be built 2-3 feet longer than the edge of the road and included headers to help retain the road surface. Mr. Doyle stated this has been discussed and each site will be reviewed individually to see what is most appropriate. There is a cost associated with this as well. Michael Kennedy suggested putting up guardrails to prevent the material from getting into the culvert area. Mr. Doyle will bring this suggestion up to Public Works Director, Bob Harrington.

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Andrew Deegan) to approve expedited permitting for this project subject to review of the final plan. Robert Brown: Yes, Andrew Deegan: Yes, Michael Gelcius: Yes, Michael Kennedy: Yes, Joe Kubit: Yes, Ruth White: Yes, Mark Vernon: Yes. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Planning Board Update – Michael Gelcius reported that at a recent Planning Board meeting, the following items were discussed:

- Ben Barton obtained approval for an apartment over his garage.
- Peter Christians requested approval to convert a shed into a gift shop.

A letter was received from the Department of Transportation regarding work that is planned on Route 89 in Sutton and New London. This is pavement reclaim which involves stripping and repaving. During this process they will fix culverts and guardrails.

The Murray Pond Association sent a notification that they will be re-grading roads and fixing drainage areas around the pond. Nicole Gage is working with them to get the appropriate paperwork submitted.

17 Wilmot Center Road – A wetland permit was submitted for installation of a Y shaped deck. This is still in process with DES.

4. Review, accept and approve the May 20, 2020 draft meeting minutes.

IT WAS MOVED (Mark Vernon) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2020 meeting. Robert Brown: Yes, Andrew Deegan: Yes, Michael Gelcius: Yes, Michael Kennedy: Yes, Joe Kubit: Yes, Ruth White: Yes, Mark Vernon: Yes. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Trails:

- a. **High usage** – Trail usage is at an all-time high. The pot hole at the Clark Pond parking area has been filled in by DPW. They also re-graded the entire parking area with gravel. It looks very nice and is a great improvement.
- b. **Summer Trail Intern** – Liam Fleming – Mr. Fleming has begun working a few days a week and has been a great asset. Work has been done on the Bog trail, Cocoa's Path, Clark Pond and KCC west.
- c. **MCDOC work days – 2020 (Postponed)** – No update
- d. **CSC Student Project - Hiking Trail Directory** – This has been completed and is on the website.
- e. **Spofford Easement - storm water management** – Public Works Director, Bob Harrington is aware of the work that needs to be done and plans to get this done this year.
- f. **Clark Lookout – trail upgrade** – the new entrance across from the park and ride is rough due to several rocks and roots. Blue stone would be a good material to put down there and at the same time they need to fix the turn- around up top. Money was set aside several years ago from the Mary Haddad fund for this trail maintenance but was never used.

There was a discussion about removing the books at the Clark Lookout trail library due to the pandemic. It was decided to leave the books. The Conservation Commission decided to erect another trail library on Cocoa's Path.
- g. **P/C Bog – boardwalks** – Mark Vernon reported that improvements were made at the first intersection of the trail; however there is more work to be done.

6. NLCC/ASLPT Invasives program "Invasive Upland Species in NH", July 30, 2020 @ 6:00pm - Tracy Memorial Library - Douglas Cygan, Invasive Coordinator, NH Dept. of Agriculture

It was decided to postpone this presentation until next spring.

7. **Lumber** – A large lumber order will be delivered possibly on Friday. Sorting and stacking will need to be done next week. Generally two orders are used per year but we have used double that amount so far this year.

8. Projects:

- a. **Conservation Land Acquisition projects** – There are two or three possible projects being discussed.
- b. **Messer Farm Project** - . The focus right now is the Messer Pond project. It is still unclear if Mary Haddad funds are eligible for use towards the project.
- c. **Hamel Parcel** – Mark Vernon noted that this is in reference to the south Pleasant Street parcel that has high conservation value. It is 8.4 acres and has been assessed

for \$107,000. It is in the R2 zone. Mr. Vernon has spoken with the Realtor regarding the possibility of a conservation easement and he suggested that the Conservation Commission contact the owners. Mr. Vernon proposed writing a letter to the owners. As a next step it was decided that Chair Brown would discuss this project with Public Works Director Bob Harrington.

- d. **Other** – Mark Vernon discussed a possible viewing area on the Kidder Cleveland Clough west trail. Installing benches there has been discussed but Mr. Vernon would like to repurpose a lifeguard stand to put there. The Conservation Commission agreed this is a good suggestion.

9. **Gnome Doors** – Ruth White reported that the children’s Gnome Doors scavenger hunt is being advertised on the Outing Club website and the Recreation Department website. An ice cream certificate is the reward for finding all 13 of the doors.

Trail Patch Program – Several trail patches have been earned recently so patches were sent out.

10. New Business

- **Conservation Easement Stewardship program update and municipal guide** – Andy Deegan stated that he did a cursory review of the document and it refers to how to do land/owner relations with people who own conservation easements. Less face to face meetings are being done due to COVID-19. More conversations are done via phone with property owners and the monitor goes out and monitors the property. Chair Brown stated a lot of the monitoring is being done by Mark Vernon. This should be discussed further. Andy Deegan suggested using volunteers to do this.
- **American Chestnut Foundation** – Chair Brown stated that two years ago they joined the American Chestnut Foundation and received some seedlings. Only about half of the seedlings made it through the winter which was disappointing. Chair Brown received and planted about 15 seeds and about 8 of them have sprouted so this is encouraging. The Conservation Commission discussed other possible locations to plant seedlings.

11. Next meeting date -Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 8:30am.

12. Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47AM

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London