



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

8:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (chair), Michael Gelcius, Ruth White, Michael Kennedy, Mark Vernon, Joe Kubit

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Maggie Ford

MEMBERS ABSENT: Stanley Morano, Andrew Deegan

STAFF PRESENT: Nicole Gage, Kim Hallquist

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Grigsby, Pierre Bedard

1. **Call to order** – Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 8:30am.
2. **Public comment** – None
3. **Permit applications**
 - **Pierre Bedard – 772 Bunker Road - Parcel #076-020-000 – James & Kathryn Muirhead - Wetlands Permit for retaining wall repair.**

Pierre Bedard explained that a stone retaining wall on the shore front has been falling apart and the home owners didn't have an opportunity to repair it during last year's lake draw down. He presented pictures of the fallen rocks. The existing rocks will be put back in place in the same location. They will reach in from the shore side to do the work. This is a permit of notification and Mr. Bedard is hoping the Conservation Commission will sign off on it so they can get it done during this lake draw down which starts on September 19, 2019.

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the expedited permit request. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- **Pierre Bedard – Wetlands Permit for Hopwood – Beach replenishment.**

Pierre Bedard confirmed that there would be six or less cubic yards of sand replenished. Mr., Bedard stated that the Hopwood's received a permit to repair a retaining wall last year. In the course of doing the work, the small beach area washed away and boulders were exposed so they are just looking to replenish the area.

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Gelcius) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the expedited permit request. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- **Greg Grisby – 133 Lighthouse View Road - Parcel #126-013-000 – Deck replacement**

Greg Grigsby attended the meeting to discuss a deck replacement. The deck is connected to the primary dwelling and is part of a larger shore land application. As a result of this project they will need to go before the Planning Board for temporary access into the 50 foot water front buffer as well as the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

When the original deck was constructed there wasn't enough space put between the boards so all the water that lands on it runs back towards the house and has rotted out the sill. The footings have heaved and moved as well so the deck is compromised. Other improvements include a reduction in impervious area and a shore land restoration. There is currently a blue stone driveway with a few catch basins in the corner. A large volume of water comes off the roof onto this driveway and silt goes into catch basin. They are looking to convert a good portion of the driveway to pervious pavement using pervious technologies. This will reduce the amount of sand needed on the driveway, address the water coming off the roof and reduce sediments going into the catch basins and then washed into the natural woodland area.

There is a plan for a new wider, more uniform walkway. Currently there are treacherous flat pieces of stone and mulch to the main entry of the house. They will reuse the flat pieces to create a stepping stone pathway along the side. This will help control erosion and reuse materials that exist on site. The whole area on the lake side, as it exists now is currently turf. They will replace this with low growing native vegetation.

There is no change in the footprint or layout of the surface area of the deck except a change in the location of a set of stairs for convenience sake. As a result of this project they will have a new and more uniform walkway and there are plans to install a couple of drip edges in areas where they can that will capture and convey the water and some of the roof runoff to dry wells. There are many environmental improvements that are taking place as part of the shore land proposal. This is currently under technical review at DES.

- **41 Camp Sunapee Road - Parcel #033-003-000 – John Muller**
9/11/19 – Shoreland Permit application – “After the fact” permit request for work performed which created a pathway due to mechanized use of a “ditchwitch” machine. Application includes steps to fix damaged areas.

Nicole Gage reported that Bonin Architects couldn't attend today's meeting. This was a situation that was happening without any permits and there was small equipment being used and neighbors were complaining. They were notified to install silt fencing and to stop all activity until permitting from the state is received. They were moving debris and disturbing wetlands. Within a few business days, Bonin Architect submitted a storm water management control plan to the town. The state documented the site. As of Friday, they are awaiting their state approval for their shore permit after the fact.

Chair Brown asked who was doing the work, the homeowner or a contractor. Ms. Gage believes the work is being done by Scott's Lawn Care. They were under the impression that this was just yard clean up and permits were not required. Michael Kennedy feels there should be some sort of repercussion for the contractor. He suggested putting a letter in the file in the event that it happens again. These types of companies should be aware and the Conservation Commission

expects them to know what is required. Ms. Gage stated it is ultimately the responsibility of the property owner. Kim Hallquist asked if the Conservation Commission considered asking these companies to come to a meeting or writing them a letter. It is her opinion that these companies want to keep Conservation Commissions happy and be made aware of any concerns since they often have to work together. Kim Hallquist has asked Nicole Gage to create a document for homeowners in the shore land overlay district with a summary of the regulations and rules. Contractors could be included to receive this information. Ms. Gage felt in this case they reacted quickly and the resolution to this has been positive.

- **18 Camp Sunapee Road - Parcel #033-007-000 & 033-008-000 – John Muller**
 - 7/29/2019 – NHDES issued a letter (Land Resources Management File #2019-02295) to notify owner that a complaint was filed for constructing a path to Little Lake Sunapee within protected shoreland setbacks without a permit or proper NHDES authorization.
 - 8/27/19 – NHDES issued a letter requiring the submission of a Shoreland Permit and to take other actions related to the unauthorized work.

The latest update that Nicole Gage has on this property was from September 12, 2019 when a new shoreland permit application was received but she has not reviewed it yet.

- **Owl's Nest Road – Parcel 135-001 – David Brewster**

A permit was issued for a new dock and walkway. This was submitted to DES and approved. Michael Gelcius went to the public hearing. Nicole Gage commented that if Conservation Commission members are attending state hearings, she would like to be informed of this.

4. Acceptance of \$25,100 Gift

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist met with the board to discuss the \$25,100 gift given to the Conservation Commission. Ms. Hallquist noted that the Conservation Commission can accept gifts, with the approval of the Selectmen; the Selectmen gave their approval at their last meeting. She explained that Doug Lyon worked to get donations to go towards the recent purchase of the 30-acre parcel of land on Route 11 and Shaker Street, so the money should be used for that purpose. Chair Brown noted that the board is not sure how much the conservation easement will cost, so he suggests that \$2,500 be reserved in the Conservation Fund for that purpose. Ms. Hallquist noted that the funds can be used towards the \$225,000 purchase price, to reduce the amount needed by the Mary Haddad Fund, and it can be used for the legal fees, title insurance, closing costs and environmental study that were required prior to purchase.

The board discussed the importance of placing a conservation easement on the parcel to conserve it in perpetuity. Ms. Hallquist noted that Doug Lyon, when delivering the checks, expressed that the people he spoke with felt that placing a conservation easement is important. Chair Brown noted that he will contact Fish & Game, holder of the easement on the adjoining property, to see about extending the easement to include the new 30-acre parcel.

IT WAS MOVED (Bob Brown) AND SECONDED (Michael Gelcius) to accept the gift of \$25,100 to the Conservation Commission. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Bob Brown) AND SECONDED (Michael Gelcius) to expend the balance of the gift, (reserving \$2,500 to place a conservation easement on the parcel) toward the purchase of the land. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

It was decided that Ruth White will draft a thank you letter to Doug Lyon for his efforts in raising money towards the purchase of this land.

5. Other Business

Projects – Michael Gelcius stated he has concerns about the overseeing of projects. He thinks it may be worth sending letters to people that do work in the area. He would like to know what mechanisms are in place if any, to review projects that are being worked on. Do we do site reviews? Nicole Gage stated review is limited. They don't do building inspections. It is more a reactionary approach if there are complaints or concerns they need to look in to. They are not often out in the field. Ruth White feels this has been a problem for years. There isn't anyone checking the work after the fact. Ms. Gage stated there is a committee that the Board of Selectmen has formed, the Buildings and Facilities Committee that will be considering the pros and cons of bringing on a building inspector. They are just getting started on this process. Mark Vernon noted that this topic is also on the Master Plan Committee's radar as well.

Messer Property – Mark Vernon asked if the town or the Conservation Commission would be interested in making a contribution towards this property. Chair Brown stated that would have to go to town meeting and he would like to hear the plan first. Kim Hallquist stated this is on the market for 3.2 million and there is a buyer already interested.

New London Trail Maintenance – Mark Vernon has heard from the Greenway that there are funds earmarked for trail maintenance in New London.

Maps – Mark Vernon would like to make a connecting trail from Chestnut Lane Birch Acres Road to Kidder Cleveland Clough extension trail. He sent a letter to the four closest abutters and three have responded that this is fine and he hasn't heard from the fourth. He would like to move forward with this. The Conservation Commission is in favor of this.

Fall Trail Series – Mark Vernon asked if it was too late to organize this for this fall. Last year they planned four hikes. It was decided to organize hikes at Clark Lookout (Mark Vernon) and Low Plain (Michael Gelcius) and Ruth White will work on scheduling these dates in October and advertising it.

Facebook Page – Michael Gelcius will work with Lyndsey Lund from the Recreation Department to set up a Facebook page for the Conservation Commission.

Public Awareness Tour - Michael Gelcius will be meeting today with Tim Fluery at Low Plain to go over the property as the first step in doing the public awareness tour.

Merrimack County Department of Corrections - Michael Gelcius stated that the work done by the DOC this year was very helpful. All were in agreement to have them come back next year.

6. PHSC – Ski Trails

Chair Brown stated the Pine Hill Ski Club has a new President. The Conservation Commission requested to meet with her and didn't get a response. Kim Hallquist commented that she has spoken with them in the past and has encouraged them to come to a Conservation Commission meeting. They would like the Conservation Commission to sign their agreement but there are

issues with it. They do annual trail maintenance which involves tree cutting and brush clearing. Chair Brown would like them to show what there are planning to do and where. Ms. Hallquist would like the Conservation Commission to share with Pine Hill Ski Club what is given to property owners to get permission. This is a volunteer group and they may not know our expectations. We want them to use our properties.

Michael Gelcius suggested having them put down a deposit so if cleanup isn't done; it can be taken out of that. We should also specify our expectations.

7. Trails & Map Projects

- **Tuesday Work Projects** – Mark Vernon reported the work projects are going well.
- Michael Kennedy and Mark Vernon met with David Cook as he would like tree cutting done. They were generally supportive but have asked Mr. Cook for a more detailed plan. Mr. Vernon also noted that Mr. Cook is not in a hurry to have the work done and it may be next year. Mr. Cook also needs to provide an insurance certificate.

8. Updates:

- **Desirable Lands List** – Chair Brown stated that work needs to be done on the desirable lands list. Information needs to be added and deleted. The group working on this list is Maggie Ford, Andy Deegan and Michael Kennedy.
- **October 5, 2019 Webb Forest Trail Race** – Brandon Baker is aware that he needs to submit a copy of the insurance certificate. Porta potties are being delivered to the Lake shore drive trail head.
- **Kidder Cleveland Clough Beaver Dam Situation** - A week from today the town will go in with a small excavator to take the dam apart and get the water level down. Once it is drained they will decide if the device can be fixed or if the beavers should be relocated.
- **American Chestnut Program** – Chair Brown commented that he is disappointed in the seedlings they received. The trees hardly had any buds on them. When he asked about it, it sounded like they had some that didn't do well and the ten we received seem to be in that category. The Biologist has invited Chair Brown to his lab in Plymouth and he has offered to replace the ones we received.
- **Tree City Program** – Chair Brown referenced an article about New London celebrating its 31st year being a tree city. He would like to know more about the program but learned that it funds \$2.00 per resident for tree planting. Chair Brown would like to know what Tim Fleury, County Forester recommends. Chair Brown would like to have Cary Lagace come and talk to the Conservation Commission about what this program is and what we've done as this is something we should be aware of. Mark Vernon noted that New Hampshire is the second most forested state so it seems odd that we are talking about planting more trees. He's wondering if it should be geared more towards planting pollinator friendly plants, shrubs and replacing habitat that is lost as agriculture has diminished.

9. Projects:

- **Clark Lookout** – Chair Brown has a list of things that weren't done at Clark Lookout and he is hoping they can get done this year. They voted to take \$6,000 out of the Mary Haddad fund to do the stoning of Clark Lookout and this money hasn't been used yet. This money is still available to do trail maintenance there. If time is an issue for Bob Harrington we will have to work something else out to get this work done.

- **Refurbish Signs at Sheppard Spring Trail** – Michael Gelcius is working on this.

10. 2021 Budget Request

- The budget for next year needs to be prepared but there shouldn't be any big changes. Mark Vernon suggested putting money in the budget for a management plan for all of our parcels. Chair Brown will talk about this with Leo Maslan.

11. NHACC Annual Conference – November 2, 2019

Chair Brown will most likely not attend this year but encouraged other members to attend.

12. Next meeting date -Wednesday, October 16, 2019

13. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:54am

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London