



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, April 12, 2017 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Bill Bilodeau, Laura Byergo, Chip Hussey

Chair Hussey opened the Conservation Commission meeting at 7:02 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chair; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Reorganization of the Board

Chair Hussey explained that he was not appointed as the Board of Selectmen's Representative to the Conservation Commission. Reorganization of the Board was continued to later in the meeting.

2. NH Setting Sail: Lisa Graichen and Amanda Stone, UNH

Lisa Graichen, UNH Cooperative Extension and NH Sea Grant, addressed the Conservation Commission. Also present was Christos Tsiamis, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. NH Setting Sail is a project based on the recommendations of the New Hampshire Coastal Risk and Hazard Commission, which sunset at the end of 2016.

The NH Coastal Risk and Hazard Commission was created in 2013 by the NH Legislature to better understand and prepare for future coastal risks. The Commission worked for three years, creating a report that can be found at www.nhcrhc.org. The project they're working on is building off that report. There is information from the Science and Technical Advisory Panel included that goes into more detail. Sea levels are expected to rise; storm surge impacts and extreme precipitation will increase.

In order to build off of the NH Coastal Risk and Hazard Commission efforts, partners joined forces to create the project NH Setting Sail. It's funded through NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration); project partners include DES, the coastal program, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Rockingham and Strafford Planning Commissions, UNH Cooperative Extension and NH Sea Grant.

The goal is to support State and municipal implementation of the Coastal Risk and Hazard Commission report. There are three main components:

- (1) Education and Outreach—a workshop is scheduled for the end of April for Board members; they are reaching out to the communities around Great Bay; their colleagues from the Planning Commissions are reaching out to Planning and Zoning Boards.

- (2) Municipal Assistance and Implementation: There are small grants available to the 10 Great Bay municipalities. A Request for Proposal is available and closes at the end of the month; Greenland has submitted a proposal.
- (3) State Coordination Assessment and Implementation: In addition to the municipal work that's being done, their partners at DES are working to coordinate with other State agencies to assess their vulnerable assets.

The Coastal Risk and Hazard report assesses the vulnerability of four different assets: the economy, the built landscape, natural resources, and heritage. L. Graichen distributed a fact sheet to members relevant to natural resources (copy on file). Rising temperatures can contribute to the spread of invasive species, pests and diseases, and impacts forest health and wildlife. Another key impact is increasing precipitation and storm events. The third impact is drought, which will impact drinking water and water-based recreation, wildlife and agriculture.

The top five actions that Conservation Commissions can implement include: communicate and build public awareness about climate change. Several communities are implementing the High Watermark Initiative through FEMA and are working with RPC. The NH Coastal Adaptation work group is a collaboration of 22 local organizations; there a number of programs available for municipalities. The second main action is to control invasive species. The Stewardship Network does community-based invasive species events. The third action is to encourage landowners to preserve the beneficial functions of natural features; this can be done through outreach to landowners. UNH Cooperative Extension would be a good resource. The fourth action incorporates climate change into municipal documents. Any municipal documents the Conservation Commission is involved with can be updated to incorporate climate impact, vulnerabilities and actions to address those. The final action is to develop and add climate vulnerability as well as adaptation benefits to the criteria to prioritize the parcels might provide some resilience to climate impacts. L. Graichen also reviewed other options the Conservation Commission could utilize: Management and Restoration, Land Conservation, Land Use Planning and Regulation, and Communicating and Education.

L. Byergo stated that she had seen a more complete presentation at a joint Conservation Commission meeting. She asked L. Graichen to explain the workshop process. L. Graichen recommended a workshop series "Preparing for Climate Change"; several towns have gone through the series. This could lead to other workshop series for the Town.

B. Bilodeau asked what was going to happen to these programs, which are federally funded, under the current administration and their beliefs about climate change. L. Graichen responded it was going to be a challenge; they have funding for the project and are committed to completing it: their timeline goes through March 2018.

L. Graichen was also asked if there was a mapping report. The C-RiSe project looked at 1.7', 4' and 6.3' of sea level rise; they also overlaid storm surge. A variety of maps are available that indicate impacts to different areas (link: <http://www.rpc-nh.org/regional-community-planning/climate-change/resources>).

C. Hussey recommended that if the NH Setting Sail program is presented to other Boards, it should be kept to a minimum.

3. Review--Conditional Use Permit: 22 Brackett's Point Road (Map R14,14)

Owners/Applicants: Tom and Alison Brackett

The owners/applicants are proposing a docking structure that consists of a 4' x 40' fixed wood pier, a 3' x 40' aluminum gangplank and a 10' x 24' float, providing one slip on approximately 2,640' of frontage along Great Bay. Overall structure length will be 104'.

Steve Riker, Ambit Engineering and representing Tom and Alison Brackett, addressed the Commission. Also present was Ken Anderson, president of Riverside and Pickering Marine Contractors. The Brackett's have requested a Conditional Use Permit for a proposed dock. A Wetlands Bureau Standard Dredge and Fill Application has been submitted to NHDES and is currently under review. S. Riker would like a recommendation from the Conservation Commission for the Planning Board and DES.

The tidal docking structure consists of a 4' x 4' wooden landing that will provide access to a 3' x 20' accessway which leads to a 4' x 40' fixed wood pier and 3' x 40' aluminum gangplank and 10' x 24' float (secured by chains and moorings). The overall structure length will be 128', providing one slip on approximately 2,640' of frontage on Great Bay. S. Riker noted the pilings on the plan; pilings will be driven by a crane barge. Nearly all construction will be done from the water side to prevent sedimentation or erosion. The pilings are driven to refusal. The accessway, 4' x 40' fixed wood pier, gangplank and float will be pre-fabricated off site and taken to the site with a crane barge.

S. Riker reviewed the profile view of the docking structure. The float will be on the mud at low tide. There will be four 8" to 10" pilings under the float; on the float tub will be a piece of wood run laterally on the bottom of the float. At low tide the float will rest on the pilings. DES and Army Corps requirements are to keep the float off the mud at low tide. Documents and photos included in the packet were reviewed.

L. Byergo clarified it was a seasonal dock. S. Riker explained that the first walkway and 4' x 40' wood pier were permanent structures; they were designed to withstand the elements. By permit, the owner is required to remove the gangplank and float; they will be in violation if not removed. L. Byergo asked for justification for a 40' dock. S. Riker explained that it was a "catch 22" of structure length with useable window time. If DES felt the structure was unreasonable and the impact wasn't reasonable for the location, the application would be returned.

Unless the client opts to upgrade to different material, the wooden portion of the deck and pilings are traditionally built with Southern Yellow Pine. It is a pressure treated product but is designed for a salt water environment; the product has been approved for use in the Bay. The decking is ACQ, but doesn't touch the water; anything in the water is CCA. The dock will be on private property and not open to the public. There was a very brief discussion about the small parking area noted on the plan.

L. Byergo questioned if the dock needed to be that long. K. Anderson responded that it came down to practicality for the owner who is making a significant investment in the property. He stated that the owners have adequate frontage and it's their right. When building these structures, they take into consider the least impact on the area.

Responding to a question from C. Hussey, S. Riker stated they have to demonstrate to DES that the structure is a minimum of 20' from a property line extended. Based on a comment that was made by a member of the audience, S. Riker noted that this is a designated spot for people to dock rather than trekking through natural resources in that area.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MOTION: L. Byergo recommended that the length of the dock be reconsidered and parking should be reviewed. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

4. Review and Update: Piscataqua Region Environmental Planning Assessment

After reviewing the 2017 Update Municipal Tracking Form for Shoreland and Wetland Regulations, the only response was to Question 2. There was a brief discussion regarding vernal pools.

5. 2017 Goals

L. Byergo suggested tabling the discussion of goals; the Board was in agreement.

6. Approval of Minutes: Wednesday, February 08, 2017

MOTION: L. Byergo moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, February 08, 2017. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

7. Other Business

- C. Hussey stated that he would clarify his position on the Conservation Commission with the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on Monday, April 17, 2017. As the Selectmen's Rep, he would only be able to vote if there was an absence. There was a discussion about potential members for the Conservation Commission.
- Members were in agreement that dues should be paid to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions.

MOTION: L. Byergo moved to pay membership dues of \$296 to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

- MOTION: B. Bilodeau moved to appoint L. Byergo as Chairman of the Conservation Commission. Second – L. Byergo; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED
- MOTION: L. Byergo moved to appoint B. Bilodeau as Vice Chairman of the Conservation Commission. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED
- The stakes on the trails need to be looked at again. C. Hussey will contact Troy Thibodeau and the surveyor about setting a date.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: B. Bilodeau moved to adjourn at 8:23 p.m. Second – J. Fredericks; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, May 10, 2017 – 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: 