



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Town of Greenland • Greenland, NH 03840
11 Town Square • PO Box 100
Phone: 603.380.7372 • Fax: 603.430.3761
Website: greenland-nh.com

MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, June 08, 2022 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Kathleen Babin-Johnson, Laura Byergo (by phone), Joe Fedora, Chip Hussey, Brad Lajoie, Lloyd Ziel

Members Absent: Bill Bilodeau

Also Present: Steve Smith, Board of Selectmen Chairman

L. Ziel opened the Conservation Commission meeting at 6:30 p.m. Attendance was taken, and it was announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded and live-streamed.

1. Trail Clean Up

C. Hussey reported that the Board of Selectmen approved the Conservation Commission using the remaining Van Etten bond; the balance is approximately \$2,700. After locating the items to be removed, the Commission can decide the best way to remove the debris. B. Lajoie stated the major items to be removed include a refrigerator, old mattresses, old camping toilets and sinks, etc. He thought items could be carried out. A date has not been set; vegetation has grown in thick over the past month. B. Lajoie suggested postponing the clean up until fall. C. Hussey clarified that the bond would be used to grind a trail to haul out the debris. J. Fedora has contacted members of the HOA about removing the debris: it would involve traversing the berm without using a lot of mechanized equipment; it would take one or two days. He has not received any indication that this will pose a problem with the HOA.

L. Byergo joined the meeting by phone.

B. Lajoie felt the biggest vehicle that could go out there would be a quad; C. Hussey did not recommend that. He recommended staying off the berm and cutting through the brush below it. The debris needed to be brought out in the easiest way possible. B. Lajoie suggested members walk the site; if the berm could be used, cutting may not be necessary. J. Fedora stated there were two different approaches: go over the berm or cut a path. C. Hussey stated going over the berm would rip it up. B. Lajoie stated he has a group of approximately 10 people ready to help. L. Ziel suggested C. Hussey and B. Lajoie get together and schedule something in the fall. October was discussed as a possibility to do the clean up.

2. Library Speakers: Wednesday, June 15, 2022

L. Byergo updated members that Duane Hyde, Southeast Land Trust, and Peter Steckler, The Nature Conservancy, would be speaking at the Library on Wednesday, June 15, 2022, at 6:30 pm. Topics will include conservation easements and how conservation easements and wildlife corridors can work together. This is a way the Conservation Commission can continue to provide public information. J. Fedora noted it was on the Library website.

3. Update: Summer Intern

L. Byergo has spoken with a potential summer intern. She felt one other person should be interviewed, if possible. L. Byergo had contacted an individual recommended by Matt Tarr; however, he had already taken a job with Fish & Game. That person suggested a friend who had studied with him at UNH in Wildlife Biology and was looking for work.

L. Byergo reported that the individual has not completed his degree and still has his senior year to go. He has been out for about two years and working in landscaping. He does a lot of hiking and enjoys being outdoors. He can walk a perimeter but might need more assistance than some others. He would be able to help the Conservation Commission get the job done.

K. Babin-Johnson was unable to be part of the entire interview. She has scheduled another interview with him. B. Lajoie asked if he had been questioned about identifying plants, wildlife habitats and trails, etc. L. Byergo responded it would be great if they had someone with a little more background. K. Babin-Johnson commented she could also use contacts at UNH.

L. Ziel asked if they wanted to set a deadline. C. Hussey stated they should look at the job description: they are not looking for someone who can identify wildlife trails. They were looking to make sure the setbacks were being followed. C. Hussey had not seen a job description. Basically, the Conservation Commission was protecting the wetland setbacks so they were not being encroached. It is a lot of work if done correctly.

L. Byergo stated there was a job description and she would get a copy to Lloyd. The job description was used when ads were placed in the newspaper. L. Byergo has tried to use interns because they have a Wildlife Biology background to not only walk the perimeters but to help develop information about parcels of land. It is not just monitoring dumping on a parcel, or someone pushing the easement. L. Byergo noted there is a real problem in Falls Way. She continued there are two things that should be done this year: the Weeks Trails, which is an annual State requirement, and the easement on private property should be reasserted on Falls Way.

L. Ziel asked if the work could be done by an intern. L. Byergo responded that a homeowner in Falls Way who possibly did not know where the easement was located appears to have cut down a lot of trees on his property. She showed pictures to Mark Fougere, L. Ziel, and Matt Scruton. She got permission last year to use the Town Engineers to help survey that specific property; the Conservation Commission will pay to verify. There needs to be a way to walk the easement lines that are not perimeter lines. They are within a perimeter piece of property. The onX app cannot be used to walk property lines within a piece of property.

L. Ziel stated it looked like there were different issues. One particular property needed to be enforced and surveyed; the intern needed to work with K. Babin-Johnson on easement monitoring. L. Byergo noted that some interns would not have those skills. Responding to a question from L. Ziel, L. Byergo stated easement monitoring needed to happen this year and was best during the summer. Members agreed an intern should be in place by the next meeting.

C. Hussey recommended more research be done before surveying private property. L. Byergo stated that before going on private property with a surveyor, the homeowner would be notified.

L. Ziel thanked L. Byergo and K. Babin-Johnson for their work on the hiring a summer intern.

4. Finalize Trail Cams

The Conservation Commission voted and approved the purchase of one trail camera at the May meeting. B. Lajoie will purchase the camera and annual premium subscription, batteries, and lock. B. Lajoie recommended setting up the camera in the wildlife corridor behind Pickering Brook. It can be relocated at any time.

L. Ziel questioned if this dovetailed with the speakers at the Library on June 15th. B. Lajoie felt the use of the camera to monitor the wildlife corridor on Pickering Brook might dovetail with the discussion. L. Byergo noted there would be a certain amount of time for questions and answers. That would be a great time to announce that the Conservation Commission was putting up a camera on one of the wildlife corridors. L. Byergo suggested members from the Board of Selectmen and the Smith family (Smith Farm Conservation Easement) should be invited to attend. As the Town sees more development and traffic on Rt. 33, conservation easements are a way to build buffers for residents as well as wildlife.

5. Stump Removal

C. Hussey reported there was no money for stump removal.

6. Update: Tower Place Site Walk

J. Fedora participated in the Tower Place site walk on Thursday, May 26th. C. Hussey noted members needed to be very careful when discussing Tower Place. J. Fedora showed members a copy of the property map for Tower Place. Also on the site walk: the developer as well as his engineer, who guided the walk. Their wetland scientist., Planning Board members, Selectman Randy Bunnell, the Planning Board Engineer, Danna Truslow (hydrogeologist) and several residents.

The walk lasted approximately two hours and covered almost the entire parcel, starting at the lower entrance. They walked to the proposed wetland crossing off Maple Drive. The area is heavily wooded. Noise is deafening near I-95, diminishing as you enter the woods. Retaining walls will be built on each side of the culvert to minimize the intrusion into the wetland. Because of the terrain and the significance of the dip, it will be a fairly long retaining wall. There will be curbing on the road; runoff from the access road will not flow into the wetland. They did not walk the actual edge of the wetland. They walked to the area of the upland island. The area was damp; there was no water flowing through because it has been fairly dry. The soil composite indicates it was a wetland. The walk progressed to the proposed location of the leach field and dog park and the second wetland crossing to the island. Conditions at that narrow crossing to the island were similar to the first. They did not walk to the third narrow crossing to the island but were told it was drier there.

Significant to J. Fedora: the entire area for the proposed houses will be cleared. There will be a tree buffer between the homes on Magnolia Lane and the proposed development. They may have to cut into that area 25 feet to 30 feet on the projected rear property line for the new houses. The dog park and its impact were not really discussed.

L. Ziel reiterated that these plans are still at the Planning Board. He appreciated Joe's work on this and asked members to keep eyes on this project; the Conservation Commission has not been asked for input at this time. C. Hussey suggested a note be sent to the Planning Board requesting it be sent to the Conservation Commission; time was running out if they wanted input. It was explained there is a time limit once an application has been accepted as complete. J. Fedora noted it has been extended 65 days.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

L. Byergo attended the last Planning Board public hearing. At that meeting she stated the two islands should not be looked at as recreational areas. Those areas are of limited use to people and are a very important use to wildlife as upland areas in a wetland given the amount of upland that was taken away. The Conservation Commission can make comments at the Planning Board meeting. The Conservation Commission can wait until a wetlands permit is received.

L. Ziel will reach out to the Planning Board. J. Fedora stated if there is a process where input is expected, timing is always questioned. Sooner rather than later would be better. L. Byergo added that when something is applicable to the Conservation Commission, it is important to attend Planning Board meetings to see how plans are developing. L. Ziel responded that the Conservation Commission should be 'baked into the process' a little more rather than the onus being on the Conservation Commission.

7. Other Business

L. Byergo has three potential quotes for updating the Natural Resources Inventory. She has a draft work scope that she will have reviewed by a third party to make sure nothing is left out. It will be available at the July meeting for review.

J. Fedora has been in contact with Lynn Vaccaro, Great Bay Reserve Training Coordinator. She is interested in doing a presentation as part of the Conservation Commission's community outreach effort this year. J. Fedora noted there is an event on June 22nd dealing with sea level rise in Dover, Durham, and Newmarket. It will start at the park in Dover at 1:00 pm.

C. Hussey commented that the tanks are being removed. There is no obvious spillage but cannot tell until the tanks are moved. The Board of Selectmen are aware.

8. New Business

L. Byergo has been in contact with Matt Sargent about mowing. Further discussion was continued to the next meeting.

C. Hussey suggested a sign be put up by the road for the Liberty Hill Trail. There has been discussion about additional signage.

The right-to-know law was reviewed.

9. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: J. Fedora moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, May 11, 2022. Second – K. Babin-Johnson; three in favor, one against, two abstained (B. Lajoie, C. Hussey). MOTION CARRIED

10. Adjournment

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Second – B. Lajoie; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, July 13, 2022 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant