



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 10, 2018 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Bill Bilodeau, Laura Byergo, Chip Hussey, Sarah Rowe

Chair Byergo opened the Conservation Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chair; she announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Wetlands Permit Application: 1407 Greenland Road [Map R21, 45]
Owner: National Propane LP
Applicant: Robert Shummricks, Unitil Corporation
This project involves the installation of above ground piping that will facilitate the installation and retrieval of cleaning/inspection devices that are inserted into the natural gas mains.

Robert Shummricks, Unitil Corporation, addressed the Commission. Following a presentation of the plan, he answered questions about the application. During the presentation R. McSorley stated that they could not build their access point for the pipeline on the already asphalted portion of the AmeriGas Propane site, “because that area was covered”. This site was selected to install the new access point because it was close to a point in the pipeline where the pipe size changes from 10” to 8”, allowing the company to send monitoring pigs down both sizes at the same time. It was highlighted that the wetlands on site were heavily impacted by invasive species and, therefore, not good for wildlife. Chair Byergo noted that the existing wetland was still serving its function of filtering runoff from Route 33, reducing pollutants going into the rest of the wetland.

Questions from the Conservation Commission included: Is Unitil leasing or buying the property?
Answer: Unitil is purchasing an easement on the property. Has Unitil modified their plans in response to the request from the Portsmouth Conservation Commission to replant a slope that will be recovered after the installation with native species, and to provide for stormwater treatment to accommodate the newly disturbed areas and the increased impervious surface area? Answer: Yes, they have a plan to re-landscape that specific slope with native species and will also plant native species at the end of a swale redirecting runoff from Route 33 around the west side of the new gravel area and into the wetland. No other stormwater treatment was planned.

There was a discussion about the surface area under the installation and the surface of the new side road giving access to the site. Unitil maintained that the ground under the gas pipes would be coarse graded $\frac{3}{4}$ ' rock and would, therefore, still function as a wetland. They also said that the new side road would be packed dirt and only used occasionally so it would not really be an impervious surface; the runoff would flow into the wetland.

C. Hussey asked what type of weed control would be used on the site. Answer: A non-woven fabric would be placed under the site.

The Conservation Commission voted that it did not have any objections to the plan. C. Hussey suggested a letter be sent to DES saying we had no objections.

2. Annual Town Report

Chair Byergo distributed copies of the Annual Town Report for members to review. Members voted to approve the report as presented.

3. Update: Van Etten Open Space

Chair Byergo informed the members that at the Board of Selectmen meeting on Monday, December 11, 2017, they agreed to allow the Conservation Commission to manage the Open Space parcel at the end of Van Etten Drive and to have half mowed each year per the advice of UNH Professor Matt Tarr to prevent the introduction of invasive species and encourage native species. Chair Byergo also briefed the members on the trail walk with Matt Tarr and Greg Jordan, UNH Forester. She showed pictures of the area where the Conservation Commission had considered moving a section of the trail that was covered in standing water. M. Tarr and G. Jordan have assessed that the site was a wetland and would require building a long boardwalk. G. Jordan had agreed to help the Conservation Commission find a more suitable place to route the new trail section. Note: M. Tarr's notes were sent to the Conservation Commission for the December meeting. Chair Byergo also informed the Conservation Commission that Jim Marchese, Building Inspector, had agreed to help post the full property boundaries of the Town owned parcel for the trail. She said the southern side of the parcel between Greenland and Stratham had not been posted. C. Hussey said the property line was on the other side of Thompson Brook.

4. Final Membership Recruitment Advertisement and Talking Points

S. Rowe presented the Conservation Commission with two versions of an advertisement to recruit new members. The Conservation Commission chose the top version, corrected the contact phone number, and made a language change to the first point to add, "... and wetlands." Members approved the advertisement to go onto Seacoast Online, on the Town website and Facebook page.

5. Database: Town-Owned Conservation Easements

Chair Byergo reported that she would be working with the Building Inspector to identify all the conservation easements held in Town. S. Rowe is preparing a Google spreadsheet that could be used to track the easements. She thought that would be the best mechanism to allow for changes when needed and still protect the information. The spreadsheet would be a Town document. C. Hussey said the information on property ownership was public information and did not need extra security.

6. Update: RPC Mapping Exercise

Chair Byergo explained she had worked with Theresa Walker, Rockingham Planning Commission, and a RPC mapping expert to specifically identify those parcels of land in Town with salt marsh habitat that would be most impacted by rising sea-levels and storm surge, and are important for conservation. She would forward the list of identified parcels to the Conservation Commission.

7. Planning Board Climate Adaptation Chapter – Master Plan

Chair Byergo noted that T. Walker had met with the Planning Board on Thursday, December 07, 2017, to review the draft of the Climate Adaptation Chapter for the Master Plan. The Planning Board proposed some changes to that draft. T. Walker has sent a revised draft chapter to Karen Anderson, Town Administrator, and the Planning Board. It will be reviewed by the Planning Board at their work session on Thursday, February 01, 2018.

8. Approval of Minutes: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 and Wednesday, November 08, 2017

The October and November minutes were voted on and approved. S. Rowe abstained from voting on the October minutes.

9. Other Business

Chair Byergo stated that the Selectmen had approved a community outreach project suggested by the Conservation Commission to work with K. Anderson to re-label stormwater basins that drain directly to streams and Great Bay. Chair Byergo will contact the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to see if they would like to participate in the project. C. Hussey suggested that the Conservation Commission provide refreshments after the work is completed.

Receipts for Approval: Chair Byergo noted that the NHACC invoice for conference payment should not be paid by the Town because she was unable to attend the conference. She submitted two receipts for approval: participation in the PREP conference, and for chains and poster board to mark the closed areas of the Liberty Lane trail. Both receipts were approved.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, February 14, 2018 – 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Meeting Notes Provided by Laura Byergo, Chairman

Approved: Wednesday, February 14, 2018