



**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
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**MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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Wednesday, September 11, 2019 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

*Members Present:* Bill Bilodeau, Laura Byergo, Rich Collins, Joe Fedora, Chip Hussey, Joe Russell

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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. Other Business

Debbie Beck addressed the Conservation Commission. In 2008, the resident at 475 Great Bay Road filled in the culvert with gravel. She spoke to the previous Town Administrator about putting repair of the culvert on the maintenance schedule. After a year, the previous Town Administrator asked her to dig it out, which she did but it still didn't run. D. Beck and Mr. Gowen dug a swale on her side of the road; the water still didn't run. She built up around the swale and smoothed it out. Someone called DES and reported her. DES issued D. Beck a stop work order because she did not have a permit.

There is a requirement on the permit form she was given that the Conservation Commission had to sign in order for her to get a 30 day expedited review. She stated that she was done over there and did what she needed to do to get the water flow where it was supposed to go.

C. Hussey clarified that in DES letter D. Beck was told she needed to complete an agricultural application. D. Beck has spoken to the Agricultural Department and has the co-op agreement. The Conservation Commission was unaware D. Beck was going to be at the meeting. D. Beck stated that application had to be submitted by September 19, 2019; she missed the August meeting.

D. Beck explained to members the water flow. C. Hussey clarified that D. Beck had a NH Wetlands Impact permit and not an agricultural permit. She was told to do the agricultural application. Chair Byergo noted that to qualify for a 30 day review the Conservation Commission needed to sign the application. Members were in agreement that more information was needed. The Conservation Commission was not required to sign; if they did not sign, the application would be reviewed within 75 days.

J. Fedora noted that D. Beck partially corrected something that should not have been done and asked if she should have gotten approval before she fixed it. D. Beck responded that the DES letter stated it was 25 ft. of a stream (she referred to it as "technically a drainage swale") and 100 sq. ft. of where she leveled out. C. Hussey noted there was no record of a permit being issued and D. Beck had impacted 25 ft. of stream back with the installation of large stones and approximately of 150 sq. ft. of unstabilized soil adjacent to the stream. By trying to fix the problem, she impacted the wetlands. D. Beck stated that

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when she spoke to the previous Town Administrator in 2008, the Town of Greenland had a general maintenance permit with DES which should have covered some of it. The problem went 10 years without being rectified; D. Beck made the water go where it was supposed to go. Chair Byergo suggested she speak to the Town Administrator. D. Beck stated it is a State road; C. Hussey agreed, adding the State would be responsible for the maintenance not the Town.

D. Beck stated it is highly valued wetlands in Greenland with the cat-o-nine tails and where stormwater is going to get treated. She said her work was not impacting the wetlands; it was restoring what somebody else messed up. D. Beck has also gone to the Planning Board. She stated they told her she could finish cleaning it up. Material on one side has not been removed; however, she is willing to do it although it was not her responsibility. Chair Byergo stated the DES letter noted D. Beck had already made an impact. Chair Byergo asked if that meant what was done previously or something she did; D. Beck responded it was something she did recently. She explained that she leveled out and banked up along the drainage swale so the water runs through the culvert the way it should.

C. Hussey stated it would not behoove the Conservation Commission to sign off until D. Beck had the drawings to present. Chair Byergo explained drawings should be of what she had done and those would go with the full application. Chair Byergo was reluctant if D. Beck already had the Town and State involved as well as a third party. Chair Byergo wanted to see the paperwork as well as what DES had said. In the absence of paperwork, the Conservation Commission could not sign anything. Chair Byergo continued she was not generally inclined to sign something if it was on a State road; it was a State problem D. Beck was trying to fix. D. Beck responded she fixed what was causing the problem on her property; it was backing water up on her property. R. Collins suggested she would need an updated plan by a soil scientist similar to the one done in 2003 to show the current conditions.

D. Beck wanted the Conservation Commission to sign the application to keep them in the loop. Chair Byergo stated when working with a group, paperwork should be available in advance. If there was time, she would also like to review the site. D. Beck was told she could take pictures but did not need to hire an engineer. C. Hussey noted that the agricultural permit required an engineered plan.

There was further discussion after D. Beck left the meeting. The DES application review process and time frames were also discussed. C. Hussey stated decisions may have to be made quickly. They could request an extension from DES to review because they just received the information; that would have to be done at a meeting. A site visit from the property owner could also be requested; property cannot be accessed without permission. Chair Byergo added a site visit is not always needed; if it is complicated, it would be a good idea. She continued the Conservation Commission deserved the time to review the paperwork and research the location (physically and via satellite). Receiving information last minute doesn't serve the Conservation Commission very well. Chair Byergo would like to have any applications in time to be on the agenda when it goes out.

### 2. Update: Van Etten Open Space Donation

The open space donation has moved forward. A tulip tree, crab apple tree, and two other trees have been planted in the Van Etten open space and paid for by Barry Posternak. Once there is a frost, the second part of his donation will be done: a small wildflower space in an area that has been disturbed. Chair Byergo has been working with B. Posternak. The grading has been done. A mixture of native grasses and wildflowers will also be planted in that area after a frost.

3. Update: Trail Maintenance and Trail Committee, Coastal Way

The Coastal Way area was repaired. Some labor was donated by Chair Byergo and R. Collins to help Don Delisle (he was paid). D. Delisle retrofitted an old lawn mower, mowed down the weeds and helped fill in the ruts. The cost was \$200. Mowing has also been done. Chair Byergo anticipates doing the mowing only once this year.

4. Update: Easement Monitoring, Intern

Chair Byergo felt the intern, Michael Thompson, did a really good job. He has done all the monitoring on all the conservation parcels and added to the database started last year. In addition, he developed a one-page report for each property with a description and map showing the monitoring track. The easement monitoring on the Weeks Brick House, which requires an annual report to the State, has been done. A report must be submitted for the Weeks Brick House, which Chair Byergo will do this week. Chair Byergo and J. Fedora accompanied M. Thompson on several monitoring assignments. Chair Byergo distributed monitoring reports to members for review.

M. Thompson also worked with Chair Byergo on new educational signs for Rolston Park. The signs will name some of the plants, including the rushes and grasses in the swale. A booklet will be attached to one of the signs giving information about the wildlife at the park, including dragonflies, butterflies and some of the birds. It is not just a vegetated swale; it cuts down on the nitrogen going into the Winnicut River and Great Bay.

Chair Byergo reported that she requested and received a grant from the DES Soak Up the Rain Grant to buy additional shrubs for the vegetated swale project in Rolston Park. Six more shrubs were added to replace the ones that died. Determining the shrubs that could survive in that wet area has been a challenge. C. Hussey stated he was working on getting the stumps ground in the park.

It was clarified that Coastal Way is Town property and a trail entrance.

5. Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan was on the August agenda; however, a quorum was not present and the Conservation Commission was unable to discuss ideas to submit. Chair Byergo stated if the CIP Committee wanted Board involvement, more than a month notice was needed. C. Hussey responded it was a work in progress. CIP forms were due September 03, 2019; Chair Byergo responded "no" for the Conservation Commission.

6. 2020 Budget

Requests for the 2020 budget are due shortly. Chair Byergo did not think anything needed to be done with the Conservation Commission budget. This year, approximately \$400 has been spent to date; dues for the NH Association have not been paid (approximately \$300).

Chair Byergo asked members if they were interested in doing the tree seedling give-away for a third year; the annual cost is approximately \$200. She felt it was good for the Conservation Commission to have a community outreach project to raise its profile. However, both years quite a few seedlings were left. Chair Byergo questioned if the Conservation Commission should continue with this outreach effort or try something else; she had an idea for another project.

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For example, the Falls Way development was built in an Atlantic White Cedar habitat. At one point the Conservation Commission tried to conserve it, but it was developed. All the houses in that area have a conservation easement and wetland on the rear of the property which is monitored. There are salamanders in some of those areas and turtles crossing from one side to the other in the spring. The Conservation Commission could do a community outreach project at night during the salamander crossing using lights. C. Hussey suggested contacting the homeowner's association to see if there was any interest. Chair Byergo want to know if the Conservation Commission was interested in doing something different before taking any action. If there was interest, training would be available. Chair Byergo noted it would be a night time project; that's when the salamanders move.

Conservation Commission members discussed the pros and cons of the seedling project versus a new type of project. The consensus leaned towards continuing with the seedling project.

Chair Byergo suggested submitting a budget for trees so Greenland could become a "tree city". J. Fedora suggested doing the seedling give-away every other year. R. Collins suggested less seedlings or more flowering types. He felt the visibility was great. B. Bilodeau stated some of the shrubs given away were popular, but some residents suggested providing fewer choices. Members felt the seedling give-away may be better than the salamander crossing on a scaled back basis. Chair Byergo suggested the Conservation Commission might want to participate in the Town's 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### 7. Approval of Receipts

There were no receipts for approval.

### 8. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, June 12, 2019. Second – R. Collins; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: J. Fedora moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, July 10, 2019. Second – J. Russell; five in favor, one abstain (C. Hussey). MOTION CARRIED

### 9. Other Business

Chair Byergo, J. Fedora, J. Russell and B. Bilodeau went out with the Great Bay Piscataqua Water Keeper. There will be another opportunity on Friday, September 20, 2019; Chair Byergo stated there may be four people to go on that one. Members felt it was worthwhile and interesting.

### 10. Adjournment

**MOTION:** C. Hussey moved to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Second – B. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

### NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, October 09, 2019 – 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant