

City of Laconia
Conservation Commission
Wednesday, January 19, 2021 - 6:00 PM
City Hall in the Armand A. Bolduc City Council Chamber
Draft Minutes

1/19/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dean Anson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

2. ROLL CALL

Lisa Morin, Dean Anson, Deb Williams, Stacy Soucy, Mike Foote, Robert Harrington (6:26pm)

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Commission saluted the flag

4. RECORDING SECRETARY

Taylor Daigle, Conservation Planner Technician

5. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Dean Trefethen, Planning Director

6. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

6.I. Meeting Minutes 12/1/2021 Draft

D. Williams motions to accept the minutes of the 12/1/21 meeting. L. Morin seconds. All vote in favor

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.I. Natural Resource Inventory 2021

The Commission spoke with T. Daigle and provided recommendations for edits to the NRI. Some of the topics of discussion included adding reference material for NHDES water quality data, links to the watershed management plans, and more information on the importance of habitat connectivity. M. Foote discusses understanding the work that happens on state lands in Laconia. L. Morin notes that the state actively looks for help managing their land, for example with logging and fertilizing. M. Foote discusses the value of connectivity among recreational trails within the City. It is suggested that the Commission holds a meeting with interested parties to discuss how we might plan recreational trails and opportunities in the City. One possible site discussed as an area suitable for these trails is the old Weirs Dump, owned by the City. M. Foote will provide T. Daigle with some contacts to look into setting up a meeting with local groups/partners. D. Anson and D. Trefethen discuss incorporating more climate change information into the NRI and Master Plan chapter. The Commission plans to review the recommendations section of the NRI and provide feedback to T. Daigle through email or at the next meeting.

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES APPLICATIONS

10. OTHER BUSINESS

D. Anson introduces the newest member of the commission, Bob Harrington, to the group.

D. Anson discusses the Winnisquam Watershed Network's plan to hold a presentation in June/July at the Loon Preservation Center. He asks if members of the committee would be interested in helping at the event if the Network is interested in help. The Commission members indicate they would be available for this. D. Anson is also interested in holding a meeting with neighboring community's conservation commissions, to learn about what each are doing and how we can work together.

D. Anson asks if we should have a Lake Host at the Messer St. boat ramp this summer and for a status update on the public access there. There is a consensus that there should be a Lake Host here. The Commission will need to fill out paperwork and determine a pay rate for the Lake Host. D. Williams says she may have some leads on interested workers for this. T. Daigle shared the status of the public access here – the City will maintain the access we've had in the past and are permitted to make certain changes to the parking area and resources on site. One topic of concern is if we can remove the rock debris that is kicked up each year from boats power loading. D. Williams and D. Anson will work on a list of recommended signage to post on the new kiosk at the boat ramp.

D. Anson asks about demo permits and requiring erosion controls prior to demolition. There is currently no language on the permits that requires this, but it can be added.

T. Daigle discusses the Paugus Bay Exotic Species Grant and the scheduled public hearing for it.

D. Trefethen discusses the proposed changes to dimensional requirements, including green space. He is looking for feedback on the proposal from the Commission. D. Anson asks if we have a build-out analysis of this proposed change. D. Trefethen say no, it would not be feasible for our office to complete one. He discusses the goals of this proposed change being to make some of the requirements more reasonable compared to similar cities and to make more lots more nearly conforming with zoning regulations. L. Morin asks about the possibility of phasing these changes in overtime so that we can better understand the impacts it may have on our stormwater and sewer systems.

S. Soucy feels the change from 60% to 40% may be too much in some zones, and density in the RG zone is a concern. She also shares the approach of using a percentage of the height of surrounding buildings as a change to the height limitations in the city. M. Foote discusses how we might be able to balance our current open space with increasing density elsewhere, but notes that new construction could take advantage of some of the changes. There is a question of where most ADU's are applying from, D. Trefethen indicates mostly in the RS zone. S. Soucy asks about concerns for erosion if we decrease the green space in the SFR zone. D. Trefethen says we have a number of checks and procedures for monitoring such, and that the state will also have a stake in any shoreline work. D. Williams has concern about the CR Residential zone value going from 60% to 40%. Laconia is a destination because of its lakes and natural resources and decreasing green space requirements could make it less attractive in that regard. D. Williams would rather leave it at 60%, S. Soucy would be okay with 50%, and M. Foote is fine with 40%. D. Anson is concerned for drainage on a site-to-site basis.

M. Foote discusses the possibility of using a Dark Sky or Dark Shoreline Initiative within the city.

D. Anson asks that R. Harrington serve as a liaison between the commission and the Taylor Community's environmental group.

11. LIAISON AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

S. Soucy informs the commission that the applicant/owner of the storage project on Artisan Court/Waterford Place in not interested in pursuing a conservation easement on the remining property.

12. STAFF REPORT

13. ADJOURNMENT

D. Williams motions to adjourn at 7:56pm. M. Foote seconds. All vote in favor