

LACONIA CITY COUNCIL
LAND & BUILDINGS COMMITTEE MEETING
January 28, 2019

Chairman Bob Hamel called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Recording Secretary: City Clerk Cheryl Hebert

Committee Members Present: Councilors Henry Lipman, Mark Haynes & Bob Hamel (Chair)

Staff present: City Manager Scott Myers

1. Discussion of the Perley Pond Maintenance

Councilor Hamel discussed the deed of Perley Pond to the City as it pertains how the City should maintain Perley Pond. In the deed it spells out what the City should be doing to the property.

Councilor Cheney read an email from the Gauthier Family and their expectations for the Perley Pond property. The Gauthier Family could not be present for this meeting as they are out of State. Councilor Cheney stated the City has an obligation to uphold what is in the agreement in the Deed.

City Manager Myers does agree with the general contents of the letter. There was trying to be some balance between DES and Parks and to keep some of the natural habitat. The Shoreline RSA does not protect this area.

Councilor Lipman questioned if it would better to contract out for the maintenance of Perley Pond.

City Manager Myers does think the pond area is something the City can maintain. Director Dunleavy from Parks and Rec has called in an arborist.

Since July 2018 dead leaves and limbs have been removed from the pond, there has been challenges with the larger logs and not having the proper equipment. Parks and Recreation has cut some of the surrounding brush, particularly around the road area. After speaking to DES, their recommendation was not to cut the brush flush with the ground but to leave them up some. Some of the work could not be completed until the ground and pond froze. The Perley Oak Tree could benefit from some pruning but doing this would only buy it some extra time, as it is a dying tree. An arborist has stated that the tree is in a dying state.

Discussion was had regarding the added expense of pruning and fertilizing that area.

Councilor Hamel read the part of the deed that pertained to the maintenance of Perley Pond. Councilor Hamel suggested that Director Dunleavy call the arborists and ask if fertilizing will help the oak tree or not.

Councilor Haynes asked for clarification on what the appropriate height requirement is for cutting down the brush.

K. Dunleavy stated the height requirement is not exactly clear to him. Perley Pond is not a protected water body, but DES recommendation in order to keep the shrubs viable, they advise not cutting below 36 inches.

Councilor Hamel suggested cutting down to at least a foot.

Councilor Haynes suggests adding a line item to Parks and Recreation budget for caring for the Perley Pond area.

Councilor Lipman would like to see the beauty brought back to Perley Pond.

Dean Anson – Chair of the Conservation Commission – Suggested leaving the vegetation the way it is now and seeing what happens this spring and summer. With the existing vegetation, it helps with evasive species. He also suggests having a professional come out and assess the situation and present their findings to the Perley family, Council, and public before anything else be done. The vegetation around the pond keeps the sediment and salt from the road out of the pond. D. Anson also suggested finding an offspring of this particular Oak in order to grow another one.

Councilor Lipman stated if the City is not going to follow the deed then the property should be given back to the Perley family just like the deed states.

Councilor Hamel agrees with D. Anson in regards to scheduling a meeting with a professional and the Perley Family that way everyone can be on the same page.

Planning Director Dean Trefethen – In 1988, the City had different rules regarding ponds and the maintenance of ponds. Director Trefethen also wanted to make everyone aware that if this were private property, which someone wanted to build on or around, the Planning Department would not allow any disturbance of the pond.

Councilor Lipman stated if the City is not going to maintain Perley Pond area, then we need to state that and turn it back over to the family.

Councilor Cheney stated this property used to be mowed, not cut down, but mowed. The City has an obligation to the agreement with the Perley Family.

Councilor Haynes would like to see an added line item to the Parks and Rec budget for the maintenance of Perley Pond.

Recommendation to the City Council would be adding a line item to the Parks budget for Maintenance of Perley Pond, and to schedule a meeting at Perley Pond with specialists, the Council, and the Perley Family during the spring of 2019.

Councilor Haynes appreciates the effort of Kevin and his staff for all they do.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the committee, Councilor Hamel adjourned the meeting at 6:48 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Hamel, Chair