

City of Laconia
Conservation Commission
Wednesday, October 21, 2020 - 6:00 PM
City Hall in Room 200B
Accepted 11/18/2020

10/21/2020 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair D. Anson called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Dean Anson, Lisa Morin, Marnie Schulz, Deb Williams, Mike Foote (until 6:30PM), and Stacy Soucy, Planning Board Liaison.

Members Absent: Wes Bates

Staff: Ashley Ruprecht, Conservation Technician, and Dean Trefethen, Planning Director (until 6:30PM).

Guests: John Bernard represent the wetland CUP application at 17 Western Terrace.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.I. Acceptance Of Minutes From September 16

L. Morin pointed out that in 6.1 her last name was spelt incorrectly. A. Ruprecht will make the correction. All voted in favor of approving the minutes.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.I. 17 Western Terrace Wetland CUP

J. Bernard presented the wetland CUP application for 17 Western Terrace. Initially J. Bernard requested 20' into the wetland buffer for impact but was able to revise that to 15'. The trees on the property are about 17.5' from the foundation to toward the wetland so they would not be removed or impacted as part of this proposal.

M. Schulz said she has seen the project while driving by and that they are doing a good job.

J. Bernard explained the previous work that was done to connect the sewer line in that neighborhood and the drainage pipe that was found.

D. Williams said she would prefer no phosphorus fertilizers in the buffer area. The Commission echoed this preference and said they also do not want the use of herbicides and pesticides.

S. Soucy asked if there would be a deck in the rear of the home. J. Bernard said no.

L. Morin motioned to support the application for impacting 15' into the wetland buffer for maintenance and landscaping, with the condition that no phosphorus containing fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides are utilized in the rear of the home. D. Williams seconded.

All voted in favor. The motion passed.

4.II. 2021 Draft Meeting Schedule

The Commission had no changes to the 2021 schedule and agreed the next meeting will be on November 4 in 200B.

4.III. Commission Member Status

D. Trefethen said that if the Commission would like to change the composition of their Board from 7 members to 5 members with alternates, it will be brought before City Council.

M. Foote voiced concern about not being able to fill the current 7 person membership. A. Ruprecht noted that W. Bates emailed her and spoke with Chair D. Anson about voluntarily electing to step down from a full member to an alternate position. Chair D. Anson asked D. Trefethen how hard it would be to switch back to a 7 member Commission if they want to in the future. D. Trefethen said it would be the same process, but it would be best not to yo-yo and to stick with their decision for a few years before changing composition again.

L. Morin asked if there could be more than 2 alternates. A. Ruprecht said the statute does not state a limit on how many alternates are allowed. M. Schulz said that historically the Commission has been 5 members. There is agreement amongst the Commission that a 5 member, 3 alternate Commission would be beneficial.

S. Soucy recommends another Letter to the Editor in the Daily Sun to reach out to the public about the open positions on the Commission. D. Trefethen said that he can do that since ZBA is also in need of members as well. There are suggestions about notifying the local gardening clubs, possibly the high school to target younger members, and Prescott Farm.

The Commission reviewed draft language changing Ordinance 5-30 regarding the composition of the Commission. L. Morin motioned to change the Commission from 7 members to 5 members with 3 alternate members, with staggering terms. M. Foote seconded.

All voted in favor. The motion passed.

4.IV. Water Clean Up Days

D. Williams said she's doing a cleanup with students from the Middle School at Opechee Park tomorrow from 2:30-4PM. Chair D. Anson and A. Ruprecht will also be volunteering.

A. Ruprecht said she will check out locations tomorrow for debris and cleanup while the dams are lowered. Chair D. Anson asked if we could get prisoners to assist with cleanup. L. Morin said that they are still on lockdown due to the pandemic. A. Ruprecht will keep event planning as an agenda item for future meetings. L. Morin suggested partnering with other organizations who are already holding events. D. Williams asked if they could individually clean on weekends. A. Ruprecht said they can do that but let her know where they will leave trash bags so she can coordinate with DPW for pickup.

5. NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES APPLICATIONS

The Commission had no questions or comments on the NHDES permits listed below.

5.I. 22 Prescott Ave Unit 1 NHDES EXP Permit

5.II. 44 Winnicoash Street NHDES Wetlands PBN

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.I. Ordinance Updates

L. Morin asked if the suggestions from the last meeting were incorporated. A. Ruprecht said yes. Chair

D. Anson proposed adding an "as of [date]" below the buffer table in regards to prime wetlands.

M. Foote stated concerns about new developments on properties and that he wants to be able to work with applicants in regards to the buffer impacts.

The Commission will continue to review the document and plans to have a final vote at the next meeting.

M. Foote and D. Trefethen leave at 6:30PM to attend the ZBA meeting.

6.II. Laconia Municipal Airport-Black Brook Project

There is discussion about whether the Laconia Municipal Airport can contribute funds to projects 4 and 4A in the Black Brook Geomorphic Study rather than into the ARM fund as part of their project to remove trees. It is determined that the projects both lie within Gilford, and that the LCC can support the Gilford Conservation Commission (GCC) if they wish to pursue the project(s), but does not want to overstep. Chair D. Anson to reach out to Carole Hall from the GCC. A. Ruprecht mentioned that the Commission could always try to pursue a project and obtain funding through the Local Water Source Grant from NHDES. The same grant funded the Black Brook Geomorphic Study.

6.III. Pickerel Pond Property Update

A. Ruprecht explained the 3 structures were removed and that phase 2 will be to have a sign and gravel placed at the parking area. She is coordinating with DPW and internally and will keep the Commission informed. A. Ruprecht said long-term planning would involve decommissioning the well on the property and having a kayak ramp/structure installed since it is a mucky trek and wouldn't be easy to launch in its current state. A. Ruprecht mentioned having a drop-off turn around for vehicles at the ramp since the access road is long and it would be difficult to carry a canoe or kayak that distance. The kayak ramp should be considerate of the snowmobiler's use in the winter time if it is a permanent structure. D. Anson has concerns about people not respecting the property and leaving garbage like they do at Ahern.

6.IV. Perley Pond

A. Ruprecht provided photos from the cleanup her and M. Foote conducted earlier in the month.

6.V. Climate Change

The Commission would like to have time to research this topic on the internet to see what other municipalities are doing. A. Ruprecht will leave the topic on the agenda for meetings to come.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was discussion amongst the Commission on management of conservation easements for biodiversity, climate change, et. based on a webinar L. Morin and D. Anson attended. L. Morin suggested having meetings/conversations with the underlying property owners to discuss their goals for the conservation easements. A. Ruprecht will provide Chair D. Anson with copies of the easements.

8. LIAISON AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

S. Soucy did not have any news to report to the Commission at this time.

9. STAFF REPORT

A. Ruprecht said the NHACC Annual meeting is held via Zoom on 11/7. L. Morin and A. Ruprecht are registered. Chair D. Anson asked if others register if they can be reimbursed. A. Ruprecht said she will confirm with Kalena and let members know but it should not be an issue.

A. Ruprecht said that all the Conservation Easements have officially been monitored for the year, finishing with the Charland easement on 10/15. There were no major issues discovered on any of the walks.

A. Ruprecht provided an update on 358/366 Leighton Ave N. in regards to the tree cutting concern. After further review and discussion with the property owner, they were not in violation for the cutting that they conducted.

Approximately 2,560 gallons of milfoil were harvested over 6 days in Paugus Bay, focusing mainly on the area of the Weirs channel. A. Ruprecht said the crew was reduced to 1 crew which limited the harvest, but they may be able to conduct more harvesting before the season ends.

10. ADJOURNMENT

M. Schulz motioned to adjourn the meeting.

L. Morin seconded.

All vote in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:04PM.