

October 12, 2022

DRAFT

In attendance: Rob Clemens – Chair, Rich Hart, John Harvey (remote), Peter Lyon – Board of Selectmen Ex-Officio, Lee Gilman, Bill Widmer, Steve Lutz, and Christian Littlefield (alternate).

Staff present: Kristan Patenaude – Recording Secretary (remote).

Also present: Bill Stoughton

Chair Rob Clemens called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

1. Chair Comments

Rob Clemens stated that the ACC's Strategic Plan was presented to the Board of Selectmen last night. The Board gave positive comments and words of support.

2. Minutes: September 28, 2022

The Commission delayed the review of the minutes to its next meeting.

3. Treasurer's Report

Bill Widmer noted that the ACC spent approximately \$260 last month. As there was not much of a change to the budget, the Commission delayed a formal Treasurer's Report to next month.

Rob Clemens noted that the NHACC's annual conference will be held on November 5, 2022, in-person at Pembroke Academy.

4. Planning & Permitting

Steve Lutz stated that the last Planning Board meeting had two public hearings scheduled, for the Bon Terrain and Vonderosa properties. Both were continued to November 2, 2022.

He noted that a public hearing has been tentatively scheduled for the Master Plan in late December. Bill Stoughton stated that the intention is to take time between now and the public hearing to hear comments from residents regarding the draft Master Plan.

Steve Lutz stated that he needs to confirm but believes that there may be a conceptual review on the Brook Road property coming up in December.

Bill Stoughton stated that there have been a number of petitions from residents regarding changes to the zoning ordinances, many stemming from the warehouse project in Bon Terrain which was withdrawn. The Planning Board reviewed these topics, including one regarding outdoor lighting compliance. A Dark Sky initiative, requiring lights to be shielded above the horizontal plane, has been drafted. As there may be impacts to wildlife from nighttime lighting, he is requesting that the ACC review this item. There was not previously an ordinance for this kind of an integrated section with standards and requirements.

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In response to a question from Bill Widmer, Bill Stoughton stated that nighttime lighting can cause insect populations to decline.

In response to a question from Rob Clemens regarding enforcement, Bill Stoughton stated that this would require applicants to comply with the height of the light above the ground based on a measurement from the property, or analysis of footcandles for larger projects. He adopted the same approach for enforcement for this item that the Town has historically used – to say nothing about it. An integrated approach for enforcement will eventually need to be decided on. Enforcement could be by the Planning Board at the planning stage, or through complaints to the Building Inspector.

In response to a question from Rob Clemens regarding the timeline for this, Bill Stoughton stated that the Planning Board will meet on November 16, 2022, to discuss the proposed zoning changes. There will be a public hearing in December, and a second public hearing in January, if needed. Agreed upon changes will then be moved to the ballot in March.

In response to a question from Rich Hart, Bill Stoughton explained that the proposal requires that lights be shut off after operating hours, unless for security, and then the intensity must be reduced. Motion sensors could be used as an alternative.

John Harvey stated that Jared Hardner previously briefed the Commission on a NH Fish & Game map regarding effects of human noise on wildlife, specifically humans walking along nature trails. If scientific data is needed for dark sky lighting, the ACC can help to provide this.

In response to a question from Steve Lutz, Bill Stoughton stated that there is a definition for trespassing in the proposal. Bill Stoughton stated that certain communities have similar ordinances and there is a model ordinance from the State. He borrowed language from some more recent ordinances and incorporated items such as LED's and energy efficiency, such as prohibiting mercury vapor lighting. It also does not control for fixtures with lumen ratings below 1800 lumens, which is essentially a 100-Watt light bulb.

In response to a question from Bill Widmer, Bill Stoughton stated that any lighting that exists today is grandfathered under this proposal. The only exceptions are for current installations which need to be replaced, or, if renovated, more than 50% fixtures replaced, then these must be brought into compliance.

In response to a question from Christian Littlefield, Bill Stoughton stated that this proposal does mostly deal with commercial entities. The exception to this, is that it also deals with new residential subdivisions, including outdoor lighting on the proposed houses.

TOPICS

5. Disc Golf at Buck Meadow

Recreation Director, Craig Fraley, and Bill Bruce, Disc Golf Tournament Director, addressed the Commission. Craig Fraley explained that the Department has seen a return on investment from

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Birch Park, partly due to the tournaments held by Bill Bruce and his wife. These tournaments also help with fundraisers. For the upcoming Spring Fling tournament, Bill Bruce is requesting to use Buck Meadow as a temporary disc golf course for the weekend. There will not be heavy traffic impacts for this event. A \$5/person greens fee is generally charged.

Bill Bruce stated that the Spring Fling has been held at Birch Park for the last two years. It has sold out each time, with 90-105 players on course. There is additional interest in the event, but no space. It is a disc golfer's dream to play on a large golf course, making Buck Meadow an ideal location. There would be groups playing at each location, switching in the afternoon. This would be approximately a total of 144 players, 72 on each course at a time. The proposed date is April 15, 2023. There is consideration to do a glow-round in the evening. The baskets will be brought back to the clubhouse each evening. A flex start could be run the day before, allowing the players to see the course ahead of the tournament.

Craig Fraley stated that all funds collected could be split between the two organizations, or pooled to use for a project at Buck Meadow, as decided on by both groups.

Bill Widmer questioned letting hundreds of people walk around the conservation area and potential impacts.

Rob Clemens stated it is unclear what the traffic impacts would be, especially if traffic is restricted to only the existing trails. Most of the bird nesting in the area does not start until May 1st.

John Harvey agreed that early May is when ground-nesting birds return back to where they were the year before. Nest building begins in the middle of May, and, at that point, no human activity should be allowed in the grasslands. This tournament, as proposed, should not have an impact on the wildlife.

Rich Hart stated that the proposal seems to be less of an impact than when this area was used as a golf course. The money could be used to help combat invasives at Buck Meadow.

In response to a question from Rob Clemens, Bill Bruce stated that his group would be responsible for all trash. Tournaments are generally carry-in/carry-out, but the area will be swept and left spotless.

Rob Clemens stated that the ACC is generally in favor of the proposal but would like to see a layout of the proposed route, once available.

In response to a question from Lee Gilman, Bill Bruce stated that tournaments can either allow or disallow spectators. Occasionally, caddies are allowed as well.

Rob Clemens noted that advance notification would need to be given to the condo owners regarding the glow-round.

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Rich Hart moved to approve this process to go forward, with participation from the ACC regarding the layout. Seconded by Lee Gilman Harvey – aye; Littlefield – aye; Widmer – aye; Clemens – aye; Gilman – aye; Hart – aye; and Lutz – aye. 7-0-0; motion approved unanimously.

6. Other Business

Marion Kastner, trail steward, explained that she has been a trail steward for approximately two years and was looking for more information regarding the trail stewards' program.

Rob Clemens explained that Rich Hart has recently taken over responsibility for the trail steward's program. Rich Hart stated that there was a trail stewards gathering last month, and he is trying to get together small groups of stewards to hike trails of interest.

Marion Kastner stated that she would send along her email address to be included on future information.

Christian Littlefield suggested that a link be added to the ACC's website for those involved with volunteering.

Rob Clemens briefly ran through the Strategic Plan presentation he made to the Board of Selectmen last night. He updated the Board on the ACC's efforts toward forests, water resources, meadow management, invasive management, public outreach, and addressing climate change. The financial strategy using both the Town budget and the Conservation Fund was addressed. He explained that the ACC has historically tried to use the Conservation Fund for major expenditures, while controlling the Town's operating budget for smaller items such as signage, public outreach, and hardware for trail improvements. He noted that the ACC's signage and infrastructure needs have been leveled and funds have thus been shifted to water resource items, largely to be used toward testing costs next year, along with the Souhegan Watershed Association's project. The Board's response was very supportive and positive. The Ways & Means Committee expressed a comment that it is a good idea to use funds to test the waters of the Souhegan River.

Christian Littlefield explained that the Eagle scout project to demo the old Joe English bridge was approved. The Eagle Scout hopes to start demolition on November 5/6, 2022.

In response to a question from Bill Widmer, Christian Littlefield stated that he and Jared Hardner will be helping mentor this project.

Bill Widmer noted that the formal process previously voted on by the ACC included several milestones, including presentation of schematics to the ACC, that the Scout was responsible for. He does not believe this project has been formally reviewed by the ACC. Rob Clemens stated that, as this project has gone through Eagle Scout Board approval, it should now come before the

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ACC for review. There has already been a lot of action in the field, but he does not believe this was previously presented to the ACC. Christian Littlefield stated that he will retrace this item and double-check on the process.

Christian Littlefield stated that signs previously ordered have been delivered and will go up within next month or two.

Bill Widmer stated that he brought 4lbs of acorns to the Wheeler property and staked them in.

Rich Hart noted that there will be a memorial service for Bruce Beckley on the 22nd.

In response to a question from Steve Lutz regarding the status of the Joppa Hill beaver bridges, Rob Clemens noted that he believes this is a standing item on Frank Montesanto's list. Rob Clemens explained that he took a site walk with the Bedford Town Planner and local trail stewards on September 30th, to look at the road from the farm to the bridge area. This is severely eroded. It was mentioned that the entire road will need to be rehabilitated, with a good amount of the road in Amherst. He will reach out to DPW on this item.

Rob Clemens noted that some tree cleanup will need to be done on the fields recently mowed by Mike Richetelli. He also asked Christian Littlefield to review the Wheeler property cleanup item.

Bill Stoughton stated that he is going to help get the ACC's polo shirt order completed.

Lee Gilman noted that the invasives management working group will next meet the week of the 25th to discuss next steps.

Bill Stoughton noted that deer hunting seasons are longer than previous years, from November 9th to 18th. This will be of interest to those using the trails and those hunting. Rob Clemens noted that the ACC has received two requests for tree stands, per its policy, so far this year.

7. Non- Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II, (d)

- Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

Rob Clemens moved to enter into Non- Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II, (d), at 8:23pm. Seconded by Rich Hart.

Harvey – aye; Littlefield – aye; Widmer – aye; Clemens – aye; Gilman – aye; Hart – aye; and Lutz – aye. 7-0-0; motion approved unanimously.

Rob Clemens moved to exit Non-Public Session at 8:58pm. Seconded by Rich Hart.

Harvey – aye; Littlefield – aye; Widmer – aye; Clemens – aye; Gilman – aye; Hart – aye; and Lutz – aye. 7-0-0; motion approved unanimously.

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220 **The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.**

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223 *Respectfully submitted,*

224 *Kristan Patenaude*