



Town of Amherst, NH

Conservation Commission

Final Minutes

Barbara Landry Meeting Room

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

Conservation Commission members in attendance were: Chairman Rob Clemens, John Harvey, Lee Gilman, Vick Bennison, Bill Widmer (Alternate member voting for Jared Hardner), Rich Hart, Bill Stoughton (Alternate member, not voting).

I. Call to Order

Chairman Clemens called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. Chair Comments

Chairman Clemens noted the Board of Selectmen had announced the hiring of a new Town Administrator.

III. Review of Meeting Minutes

Chairman Clemens deferred review and approval of previous meeting minutes as Ms. Patenaude was unable to attend. Mr. Stoughton will draft minutes of tonight's meeting.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Harvey presented the Treasurer's Report, including the receipt of a generous gift of \$1000 from Opportunity Networks in memory of Mr. Bill Long. Chairman Clemens noted he had received a note from Ms. Sue Long thanking the Commission for the trail and bench dedication in memory of Mr. Long.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Bennison and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to accept the Treasurer's Report as submitted.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

V. Planning & Permits

Mr. Hart noted that the Planning Board review of a proposal for a new development off of Route 122, where the old car show/flea market used to be, has been deferred until January 2019 at the developer's request.

Mr. Hart again noted that he has been thinking about how to deal with the impact of climate change, within working on the Master Plan. He again suggested the Commission consider building artificial vernal pools on their land. He also suggested the town look at adding electric vehicles and solar panels in order to become a net zero energy town.

a) Shoreland/Conditional Use Permit (Map 25, Lot 44) – Tom Carr, Meridian Svcs

Mr. Tom Carr of Meridian Land Services, on behalf of the homeowners, stated the owners are seeking approval for an addition to the existing house on the property. Although the size of the house is increasing, the net total amount of impervious area will be reduced through the removal of existing impervious materials. In addition, the proposed plan changes the routing of existing gutter outflow from uncontrolled to new roof leader infiltration trenches.

In response to a question from Mr. Gilman, Mr. Carr stated there are no changes to the 100-year floodplain as a result of the proposed plan. In response to a question from Chairman Clemens, Mr. Carr stated he expected the existing soil conditions would result in satisfactory performance from the proposed roof leader infiltration trenches. Mr. Carr stated that if unexpected conditions are encountered during construction, plan modifications would be sought.

Chairman Clemens stated he would send a summary note to the Planning Commission indicating the Conservation Commission did not have concerns with the proposed plan.

Separately, Mr. Carr stated he would be willing to volunteer his time should the Commission wish to consider construction of vernal pools on Commission-managed property.

VI. Wheeler Lot Update – Mr. Harvey

Mr. Harvey reported on a site visit to the Wheeler property. Previously the Commission had discussed increasing public access to portions of, and signage for, this property, which appears to have been the site of a saw mill at one time. Mr. Harvey reported that considerable cleanup of trash and abandoned materials and work to address potentially hazardous features of the site would be necessary and recommended not increasing public access at this time. The site is remote and has been in its current condition for many years, and does not require immediate action. Following discussion, and at the Chair's request, Mr. Harvey agreed to advise on what would be necessary to cleanup to an acceptable degree to permit increased public access. The Chair stated the Commission would take no action to increase public access or add signage pending further discussion on clean-up efforts.

VII. Lot Consolidations – Mr. Harvey

Mr. Harvey discussed the potential consolidation of the contiguous Davis (7-73-1) and North of Davis (7-76) lots. The deed for the Davis lot includes a provision requiring the lot be conserved. The North of Davis Lot deed does not include any similar restriction. Mr. Harvey reported he had consulted with the town Tax Assessor and, in the Assessor's opinion,

the lots could be consolidated without changing the conservation status of either current lot. The portion of the consolidated lot that was formerly the Davis lot would be subject to the conservation restriction, the remainder of the consolidated lot would not. Mr. Stoughton suggested management of the consolidated property may be more difficult as other means would be required to denote the conserved status of a portion. Chairman Clemens asked whether and how the entire property could be restricted for conservation purposes. Following discussion, Chairman Clemens agreed to introduce Mr. Stoughton to Attorney Drescher, and Mr. Stoughton agreed to discuss with Attorney Drescher the authority for and method of extending conservation status to Commission-managed properties that lack such status.

VIII. Round Table

Mr. Bennison stated putting “You are here” maps at trail intersections would likely cost \$1000 or more. Chairman Clemens suggested that the placement of such maps be prioritized so that the expense could be spread over more than one year.

Mr. Harvey stated he was putting together a Grasslands Habitat Management Workshop for the spring.

Chairman Clemens reported several items:

- a. At a recent meeting, conservation commissioners from other towns reported having to take action because of increased beaver populations and damming.
- b. Bat health is a concern in the state because of recently increased infection rates. New Boston Air Force Station (“NBAFS”) personnel reported they had completed a survey of bats on the Station property (which abuts the Joe English properties). Chairman Clemens will ask NBAFS personnel to present their findings to the Commission, tentatively at the planned January 23, 2019 meeting.
- c. A revision to Mr. Cohen’s Outreach plan will be discussed at the January 11, 2019 meeting.
- d. Progress has been made on digitization of Forestry data. The Commission should receive a status report soon.
- e. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Wilderness has asked for pictures of the Joe English property. Please send pictures to the Chair. Following discussion, Mr. Bennison agreed to research potential repositories the Commission might use for pictures related to its properties and activities.

IX. Non-Public Session

MOTION was made by Chairman Clemens and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to enter a non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3, II(d) for purposes of discussing potential property acquisitions.

Voting: .

Chairman Clemens: Aye

Commissioner Harvey: Aye

Commissioner Gilman: Aye
Commissioner Bennison: Aye
Commissioner Widmer: Aye
Commissioner Hart: Aye

Motion carried.

Whereupon, at 8:10 pm, the Commission entered Nonpublic Session.

At 8:30 pm, the Commission left the Nonpublic session and returned to Public Session.

Upon the suggestion that public release of the minutes of the Nonpublic Session just concluded would render the Commission's actions in such session ineffective, MOTION was made by Mr. Gilman and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to seal the minutes of the Nonpublic Session for a period of 90 days, subject to further extension.

Voting: .

Chairman Clemens: Aye
Commissioner Harvey: Aye
Commissioner Gilman: Aye
Commissioner Bennison: Aye
Commissioner Widmer: Aye
Commissioner Hart: Aye

There being affirmative votes in excess of the 2/3 required, Motion carried.

X. Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Mr. Bennison and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,
William R. Stoughton*

Finance and Asset Manager Report
As Of November 30, 2018

Treasury

- **Conservation Fund: \$609,819.72**
 - Paid VCS (Beaver Brook): \$1,500
 - Paid Koch (Forest GIS survey): \$4,517.50
 - Deposit (Interest): \$201.61
- **Town Budget FY19: \$20,049.08**
 - Paid Ricitelli (Meadow mowing): \$1,072.50
 - Paid SpeedPro Graphics (Trail maps): \$582.38
- **Gift: \$8,948.37**
 - Income (Opportunity Networks): \$1,000
 - Deposit (Interest): \$7.78

Contracts, Leases and Purchases

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Assets

- No transactions