

EXETER CONSERVATION COMMISSION DECEMBER 9, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting convened at 7:00 PM in the Wheelwright Room of the Exeter Town Offices. Members present included: Jason Gregoire - Chair, Peter Richardson, William Campbell, Anne Surman – Board of Selectmen Representative, and Kristen Murphy – Natural Resource Planner.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. *Review of the Shade Tree Management Proposal for the Exeter Country Club Conservation Easement Area.*

Members from the Board of Directors Al Lambert, Jonathan Leavitt, greens-keeper Patrick Pascucci, were present to discuss the proposal. Mr. Lambert provided the Conservation Commission with an overview of the project. In order to facilitate air flow and sunlight hours to promote healthy grass growth, they are proposing to remove or limb trees in various locations throughout the course as identified in their proposal provided to members in their meeting packet. The proposal had been reviewed by Ms. Murphy who identified what level of review would be necessary for each task. Mr. Gregoire asked for a total number of trees proposed for removal but a total number was not known at this time. Mr. Lambert explained they no longer intend to remove any trees that would trigger a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Board or any action from the State Department of Environmental Services when asked if any actions were no longer a part of the proposal. The revised request is for trees in item 1 to be limbed, not removed, the roots of trees in item 5 that protrude into the greens will be pruned, only trees that pose a safety hazard in item 6 will be removed (approximately 2 trees). The overall goal is to select cut, remove dead and prune healthy trees. Mr. Campbell explained that he felt the intent of the proposal is good and that he would be more comfortable if a person from the Conservation Commission were onsite to review the individual trees for removal. Mr. Campbell moved that they approve the activities described in this proposal with review by Ms. Murphy or a representative of the Commission onsite. Future requests would return to the Commission for review. This was seconded by Mr. Richardson. Vote: Motion passed, unanimously.

2. *Request by the Exeter Snowhounds for Permission to Utilize the Snowmobile Trails within lands managed by the Exeter Conservation Commission.*

Ms. Murphy provided members with a map of the trails utilized in previous years by the Exeter Snowhounds. She explained that the past permission term had expired and the Snowhounds were requesting permission to re-approve use of these trails. The term of approval in the past had varied from 1 year to 5 years. The Snowhounds were supportive of whichever timeframe the Commission was comfortable with. There was a brief discussion about the Snowhounds concern over the sharp turn required in one section of the trail just south of the powerline as the trail turns toward the Elliott property but for this year, given the timing the request is only for use of the previously approved alignment. Mr. Campbell moved to approve the use of the trail within the previously approved alignment for a term of 5 years. Seconded by Ms. Surman. Vote: Motion passed, unanimously. Mr. Richardson requested to inform the Snowhounds the Commission was supportive of the re-alignment as that corner seemed dangerous.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. Committee Reports:

- a. Boundary Monitoring – Ms. Murphy has scheduled an inspection of the Bunker property (owned by the Barkers) on Beech Hill Rd. on Wednesday December 10th.
- b. Trails – Ms. Murphy reported that from discussions with Eben Lewis of NHDES, it may be possible to obtain authorization for the large bridges that cross prime wetlands in the Forest Ridge conservation area. She reported it could be accomplished with a Notification of Trail Maintenance

request provided it includes a request for exemption from the Prime Wetland regulations because the impacts to the bridge are already existing and authorizing them does not increase impacts. If the Commission was supportive, Ms. Murphy would draft up this request for addressing at a future meeting. Mr. Gregoire stated that he was supportive of this. Mr. Richardson explained that he was not supportive because without the use of those crossing structures, trail users could still connect the sections north and south of the powerline using the trail that runs along the powerline. Ms. Murphy explained that the wetland along the powerline section is actually larger than what is shown on the maps as a result of beaver activity. The Snowhounds use this section when the wetland is frozen. Mr. Richardson made a motion to approve preparing the Notification of Trails Maintenance form. Mr. Campbell seconded.

Mr. Gregoire discussed the request to repair a bridge in significant deterioration within the Forest Ridge conservation area, indicating on the map where this crossing is located. Bob Kelly believed the bridge could be repaired for less than \$200 in materials. Mr. Richardson moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$200 for repair of the above mentioned bridge. Mr. Campbell seconded. Vote: Motion passed, unanimously.

c. Outreach – nothing to report this month.

2. **Minutes:** Approval of minutes was tabled until the next meeting, noting the following revisions: Action Item 1 4th paragraph should read Mr. Costello maintained that there were “no” impacts found from runoff. Committee reports – Trails last sentence should read Ms. Raub talked about “2-8foot sign posts”.
3. **Treasurers Report:** Ms. Murphy reported that \$691.48 remain in the budget for the current year.
4. **End of Year Purchase Requests:** Ms. Murphy presented information from Don Briselden to the Commission regarding the Raynes repairs and the timber management update. Don suggested the Commission approve up to \$200 for temporary repair of the east side of barn and holes in the flooring. Mr. Campbell made a motion to approve \$200 for these repairs, seconded by Mr. Richardson. Vote: Motion passed, unanimously. Ms. Murphy presented an invoice for the voluntary dues payment to the Exeter Squamscott Local Advisory Committee (ESRLAC) of \$150. Mr. Richardson made a motion to approve this expense, seconded by Mr. Campbell. Vote: Motion passed, unanimously. Mr. Richardson motioned to purchase necessary small items with any remaining funds (examples include flagging, no hunting signs, etc) seconded by Mr. Campbell. Vote: Motion passed, unanimously.
5. **Natural Resource Planners Report:** Ms. Murphy suggested she provide a table of projects that are submitted to the Planning Department rather than take up meeting time discussing them. The group agreed with this approach. Ms. Murphy also mentioned the Town Report submission was coming due and if members had suggestions for information to discuss to please send it along to her. Mr. Gregoire suggested focusing on the Elliott property acquisition and the collaborative efforts associated with the acquisition process.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 18th at 7:00 PM.

By motion from Mr. Campbell and second by Mr. Richardson, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Murphy
Natural Resource Planner
Planning & Building Department