

Draft Minutes

Exeter Conservation Commission

April 14, 2015

Call Meeting to Order

1. Intro: Jay Gregoire called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices building. Other members present were Virginia Raub, Margaret Matick, Pete Richardson, Kristen Murphy – Exeter Natural Resource Planner, and Nancy Belanger – BOS rep.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

Action Items

1. Street Tree Program Update – Eileen Flockhart

Eileen Flockhart said they have not had many meetings, but there have been a lot of emails and phone calls exchanged. She met with Jay Perkins and got a rundown of the trees that were cut down by Unitil. There were 92 trees cut down. Most of them were in the backwoods, but a number of them were very large. Unitil will be responsible for replacing some trees. At this point, they will be replacing 24 trees. Ms. Flockhart is hoping for 24 trees a year. She said Unitil is not paying for planting, but she hopes for some provision for watering. She said they still have work to do with Unitil. The Town has a “water buffalo”, which is a huge tank brought out by truck for watering. She has an opportunity next Tuesday to meet with Fred Borham from UNH to talk about tree replacement. He has volunteered to come to meetings and such. She said it could be worthwhile to visit the Urban Forestry in Portsmouth to see what their system is for planting/watering. Unitil does have an Arbor Day coming up. She said this whole process is going to take a lot of work from multiple departments to figure out how to coordinate.

Ms. Raub said Unitil took down a lot of trees, but they are not going to be replacing all that they took down. Jay Perkins is going to pick what will be suitable to plant.

Ms. Flockhart said she has a complete list of what trees came down and where. She talked to the arborist from Unitil and she is interested in helping.

Ms. Raub said there is a tree committee in the bylaws. Chair Gregoire said it looks like Ms. Flockhart is doing some great work, and they are moving in a great direction.

Ms. Flockhart said Jay Perkins had made a comment that there would be as many, if not more, trees going in on Water Street.

2. Father's Day Orienteering Event – *Deb Humiston*

Deb Humiston said June 21st is the date for the Father's Day Orienteering Event. She said it will be from 10am -1pm and there will be a fee for a map. Usually, there are about 25 people that come. She said she got permission to use the Shaftmaster's property, and an abutting property, for the event. She gave a map to the Con Com that explains the area. She gave a description of what orienteering is and how it is done. She explained you use a map and compass to find the circled areas. She said there will be no rain date, it will go on rain or shine.

She went on to say she registered this activity as an Olympic event, but haven't heard back. Ms. Murphy said she will put this on the Facebook page a couple times to see if they can get more participants. Ms. Humiston said she is happy to keep all the protected areas, protected.

Chair Gregoire asked how the numbers are split up. Ms. Humiston said it is a lot of families from all over who want the challenge. She does this to try to get families and school kids interested. There are different levels in this event, from beginner to advanced, and she explained what those levels consist of. Chair Gregoire said describing things on the Facebook page will be helpful. Ms. Humiston said there is more to this than just the challenge. There is confidence boosting and decision making skills.

3. Linden Commons Encroachment Agreement

Ms. Murphy talked about the issue here. She explained a map of the area and where this encroachment was located. She said there have been pins put in. On the map with all the abutters, in the packet, where the large circle is there is a section that, through pin review, falls in the middle of an abutter's driveway. She said the conservation easement had already been accepted when this was discovered. Legal counsel said it is hard to modify this, so they suggested doing an encroachment agreement between the Town, developer, and abutter. She needs Con Com's approval to give this to the BOS and move forward. Ms. Murphy said she has learned a lot here, and said this won't happen again. She confirmed the descriptions of the land all match, and that the pins are all there. Ms. Raub asked how this was discovered. Ms. Murphy said there was a huge snowstorm and it was difficult to find the pins. She said it is unfortunate because it makes for a messy monitoring event. She said there is no easy way to fix this. Ms. Raub asked if the homeowners are being accepting. Ms. Murphy said yes, and the reality is that many years ago someone encroached on the neighbor's property and they are being allowed to keep their encroachment. The area being talked about here is a tenth of an acre. She said the DES should be aware of this.

Mr. Richardson said it is important that they know where the pins are before anything is signed, and that didn't happen here. However, he thinks this is a good solution for a bad experience.

Ms. Murphy said everything needs to be spelled out in the conditions. Going forward, if a developer comes in front of Con Com, it needs to be identified what is Planning Board should include as conditions. She said Con Com should have a list of items they feel are important when the developer presents. She talked about coming with some type of criteria.

Don Clement said when a plan is recorded, a list of conditions is included and has been approved by the Planning Board. Selectwoman Belanger suggested breaking up the conditions to specify which ones would be conservation. Ms. Murphy said one condition should be that DES has been consulted with. There was a discussion about what should be included in the agreement. Ms. Murphy said if DES signed off, they should be aware if there is an encroachment here. Chair Gregoire said maybe it makes more sense to notify DES rather than put a condition on the agreement.

A Motion was made by Chair Gregoire and seconded by Ms. Raub to recommend that the Board of Selectmen sign the Encroachment Agreement for Linden Commons and also notes that by passing this recommendation along that we have not received confirmation of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services has been alerted to this encroachment. Motion carried – all in favor.

4. Forest Management Plan Contract and Budget Discussion

Ms. Murphy relayed that Charles Moreno, LPF had said that there would be \$15,000-\$20,000 in revenue from the logging harvest. In order to move forward with this, Con Com would have to front some money. The Charlie Moreno contract would require \$2300. There would be \$6800 required up front before revenue from the harvest could apply to the budget. Ms. Murphy said they had looked at ways to achieve this amount. Moving interns to the fall, if any interns at all, would put \$3024 towards it. That added to funds from contract services, conservation land admin, and trail management and maintenance would add up to \$5374. To come up with the rest, funds could come from the Conservation Fund that has \$1400 in LCHIP fees in it. The remaining \$26 could come from FICA/Medicare line items. Chair Gregoire said now that they had gone through funding, is the next step legal review. Ms. Murphy said yes, and the schedule. She said a lot of this requires support from Con Com. Chair Gregoire said based on the meeting, he thinks the Board has shown full support for this.

A Motion was made by Chair Gregoire and seconded by Ms. Raub that Conservation Commission proceed with the schedule as presented and the proposed budget before them. Motion carried – all in favor.

5. Officer Positions

Chair Gregoire talked about term limits. Ms. Raub said the bylaws say you can serve two terms in a row but you have to be an alternate. Chair Gregoire said they need to vote on Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk and Treasurer. He suggested taking this up at the start of their next meeting because of the low attendance tonight.

6. Committee Reports

a) Trails – Chair Gregoire said there is a Trails Meeting on May 4th at 7pm. He said they had some outstanding numbers for reblazing. He asked about possible spring closure on some trails. Ms. Murphy mentioned that Bob Kelly had said the process last year was the trails had gotten too muddy and they were closed. They will have to see if that will be the process this year. Last year they did not wait for an official meeting.

b) Outreach – Ms. Raub said members of the Congregational Church have a subcommittee that have concerns for the stewardship of natural resources. They came up with a project. They had met last Saturday morning and tackled some invasives and done some additional plantings. Ms. Murphy said some areas could be drove to erosion.

Ms. Murphy said the rain barrel program is in effect. There is a link on the town's website. Orders will be received until May 23rd. There has been talk about staffing a farmer's market day. No commitments have been made. She is going to look at what the hours are and see if anybody is interested.

c) Property Monitoring - Ms. Murphy is looking for help for the forestry harvest. It is going to be a big task. They need a game plan. She suggested perhaps a subcommittee. She asked to get the word out on May 4th to the Trails Committee. Chair Gregoire said he would craft something and circulate it.

7. Approval of Minutes: March 10, 2015

Chair Gregoire had an amendment to 3b. Outreach to correct all spelling of "Raynes Farm".

A Motion was made by Ms. Raub and seconded by Ms. Matick to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2015 Conservation Commission meeting, as amended. Motion carried –all in favor, with one abstention from Selectwoman Belanger

8. Natural Resource Planner's Report and Correspondence

Ms. Murphy talked about putting out the Great Bay Equine planning assessment for 2015. She passed it out to the Board. She said Jeff Barham will come speak soon. She said Jill Pharrell offered to give a presentation on this. She said there is grant money available here for certain actions. Mr. Richardson read an Administrative Order of Consent, saying it is on the website. It includes the 2014 report on the total Nitrogen control plan. He said the Town has a commitment to make great changes with how they deal with storm water and sewerage.

Ms. Murphy said 156 Epping Road is going before the Planning Board on April 23. She said 80 Epping Road had a technical review and they are talking about this project. She also said 19 Continental Drive will be May 14 at the Planning Board.

9. Other Business

A Motion was made by Mr. Richardson and seconded by Chair Gregoire to reimburse Ginny Raub for supplies for the snowshoe event in the amount of \$29.43. Motion carried – all in favor.

10. Next Meeting: Date and Agenda Items

The next meeting will be May 12, 2015. Elections of officers will be on the agenda.

A Motion was made by Ms. Matick and seconded by Mr. Richardson to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm. Motion carried – all in favor.

Respectively submitted,

Nicole Piper
Recording Secretary