

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 15, 2016
DRAFT MINUTES**

1. Call to Order:

Chair Carlos Guindon called the session to order at 7:00 pm.

Members present were Andrew Koff, Alyson Eberhardt, Virginia Raub, Carlos Guindon, Chair, Bill Campbell, Vice Chair, Todd Piskovitz, Anne Surman, BOS Representative, and David O’Hearn, Alternate Member.

Staff present were Kristen Murphy, Natural Resources Planner, and David Pancoast, Recording Secretary.

2. Public Comments:

There were none.

Action Items:

1. Minimum Impact Expedited Wetland Permit Application from Exeter River MHP Cooperative, Hemlock Street, for temporary impacts to a wetland for utility crossing for new water and sewer infrastructure. Tax Map 95, Lot 64 (Paige Libbey, of Jones and Beach)

Mr. Libbey presented a summary of the matter.

Ms. Raub asked what timeframe would the work occur? Mr. Libbey said they anticipate wetlands crossing/impact would occur this fall and stabilization would be done then too. This is the first big step for the MHP park upgrades, which is 34 years old. Ms. Raub suggested that they check with the Natural Resources Planner on procedures. Mr. Libbey said no fertilizers are to be used.

Wetlands seed mix is a specialty mix that they will use to stabilize the area. Mr. Campbell asked about the applicant working with drainage on Hemlock Street as well. Mr. Libbey said they will be doing a plunge pool in an upland area for sheet flow off the street and whatever is coming across it. _____(?).

Mostly this is a seepage wetlands system. There is some cape cod berming now, which was thrown together. A new road profile and road crowning will improve drainage systems.

He has a form with him for signature if the Commission approves this, so that he can get it to Mr. Dave Price of the State right away to get going for December 2016 activity to allow for the work to be done this year.

Entire area is owned by the Coop, some 100 acres, largest such park in NH. Ms. Eberhardt questioned the orientation of the silt fencing in one corner of the project. Mr. Libbey said it was a scrivener's error on the plan, that it keeps going and the whole area is wet. Mr. Koff asked about invasive species in the wetlands area. Mr. Libbey said it's forested so no scrub swamp wetlands for them to take hold in. Mostly it's purple loosestrife and phragmites. Not going to bring them in with topsoil.

Ms. Eberhardt asked if silt fence in place for 18 months and if so, how often will it be inspected and maintained? Mr. Libbey said he would be there daily during construction and it would be inspected daily and maintained as needed.

Ms. Murphy said this was expedited form, not the Town's form. Mr. Libbey said this State form goes to the State. [Mr. Guindon read the salient provisions into the record for the Commission, but they are not included here, for sake of minutes brevity.] Summary provisions are to agree to not intervene, and to agree the Commission has no objections to the project. Ms. Raub moved for approval of the expedited wetlands permit application. Mr. Campbell seconded and it passed unanimously. Chair Guindon signed the form for Mr. Libbey. Mr. Libbey said most of the other projects for the park are years and years out in terms of being done.

2. Committee Reports:

a. Property Management/Monitoring: Mr. Guindon said he hasn't been able to be out much. Mr. Campbell said that before the pumpkin festival, he walked the Raynes Barn area. There was discussion on this property. Ms. Murphy said she has started to put together reports which is done annually. She scheduled a walk with some new owners on next Tuesday, if anyone can and wants to join her, they are welcome.

Ms. Raub asked the status of the inspection of 80 Epping Road, the parcel donated to the Commission, and Ms. Murphy said she hadn't had a chance to

look at it yet. Ms. Raub said she will follow up on this property. Because no interns, Ms. Murphy said she has inspected some properties aerially with Google Earth 2016, which is up-to-date. The Chair encouraged the members to get out on to properties.

b.Trails: Update on Trail and Timber Harvest Path Inventory, Update on Fall Repairs, Little River Trail Day

The Chair reported that he and Ms. Murphy started mapping the trails that were appearing in the harvest area. Ms. Murphy said that starting in the east, she's done the Fort Rock Trail, did it in two days. She said they don't need to contract with Charley since it goes well and quickly.

Part of this effort was updating the trails data, which Ms. Murphy put together today as an overlay. How trails have changed over time is very interesting. There was discussion on Henderson Swasey property over time, starting in the early 2000's, then in 2009 and finally into 2016. New trails that were not approved/constructed by the Commission are in there, but all connect to the Town trails. There is an impact from the timbering and she had to overbrush some timbered paths so folks didn't use them.

Ms. Murphy informed the Commission that Mark King has closed the trail on his property.

Mr. Guindon said this mapping would be good and useful over time. Ms. Eberhardt said this increase in trails is an impact.

Ms. Murphy said one of the base maps on GPS is more up to date than Town mapping. If go through change in deciding on the trails increase, she's not sure how that gets corrected.

The 911 group wants the Town's trail data for access information for use in emergencies.

The plan is to collect all possible data so harvest paths can be discussed for resolutions.

Bridge work was done at Forrest Ridge and has been completed and it's very fancy. [No members have been out there yet.]

The Chair said that the Little River Trail Day was one work day but it needs a better job in the trail being marked. There was discussion on this. If others want to be involved in it, he plans to do it at the end of December. Mr. Koff said he would help out with it. Ms. Eberhardt said she might be able to go also.

c.Outreach: Raynes Farm Great Pumpkin Toss Event Update:

Ms. Raub reported that the Toss was a huge event, successful and very well attended. Mr. Piskovitz and Mr. O’Hearn got the cars into the area all day but Mr. Piskovitz said a police detail is definitely needed next year and at least four folks helping with directing cars to the parking spots. Mr. O’Hearn said some way to get elders closer to the event from the parking was needed. Mr. Piskovitz said that some handicapped spots were also necessary. Next year the Commission needs to start earlier on this. A Police detail would assist in getting drivers in and out, but would have to be paid for.

Ms. Raub said this event put Exeter on the map. Mr. Piskovitz said all people leaving said it was a great event and good fun. The vendors were great, with tractor rides and Apple Annie’s was sold out. Historical Society did well too. Band provided excellent backdrop. Ms. Murphy reported final figure between Ben Anderson and collection boxes was \$350, \$100 from a single donation and cash donations of \$100. Tee Shirt sales were \$215, and there are more to be sold. Volunteer signs and time and effort were huge, at little cost to the Commission. Mr. Anderson got 400 email contacts, and ConCom got about 50 emails. Ms. Raub said they should be used as a data base to reach out for future events and such. The Barn had a sea of people all during the event. Ms. Raub never got outside the Barn. First Saturday after Halloween will be the Great Pumpkin Toss Day event for next year. There was discussion on the fact that this was such a well-received event and about costs.

Mr. Koff said fund-raising pitch with a goal amount would be needed. Ms. Eberhardt said it needs to be a priority and that Ben Anderson needs to train the event workers in raising money. She also said that special tee-shirts or sweatshirts for the ConCom members would be a great way to identify them and have a question printed on it as a discussion starter. Mr. Campbell said that’s a great idea and that such uses of the Barn are great for the Town.

Ms. Eberhardt suggested that Ms. Surman mention this at the next BOS session. Mr. O'Hearn said that at 3 pm there were 300 cars parked there. There was discussion on the history of that area and specifics of prior uses there.

Ms. Eberhardt asked if the Commission should commit to the Toss next year. It will be held the first Saturday after Halloween. Pumpkins came from a Church in Portsmouth, got several hundred pumpkins donated. Mr. Guindon discussed resources. Ms. Murphy said that the Commission had approved up to \$300 for the event. There was only one invoice submitted for the event. There was more discussion on the costs. The trebuchet was \$2,000, which was very expensive and the Commission has no way to cover that cost. Ms. Eberhardt moved the \$85 from the bridge project be paid over to Ben Anderson for his efforts. Mr. Campbell seconded and the vote was unanimously approved.

3. Approval of Minutes: October 11, 2016:

After discussion, corrections, changes and additions to the draft minutes of October 11, 2016, Mr. Campbell moved approval of those minutes as corrected, Ms. Surman seconded, Ms. Eberhardt abstained, and they were otherwise unanimously approved.

4. Other Business:

Ms. Eberhardt received a letter commending Ms. Murphy on website page. Stewardship network traffic has been driven by ConCom's website efforts by Ms. Murphy. Mr. Guindon said that someone asked him about volunteering and he directed them to the page. Ms. Raub said that social media is vastly under-rated.

Town Manager Russ Dean had contacted Ms. Murphy about use of Henderson Swasey for an off leash dog use area. She told him the Commission might not want to address it. Ms. Surman raised that the Selectmen had something on it last night for dog park interest, so it's out in the public. A recent citizen's petition failed. It's becoming more official lately. No action was taken at the BOS. Other towns and cities have done them. There was discussion on this matter. Ms. Raub asked if the Commission should vote anything on it. Mr. Dean had suggested that either Henderson Swasey or another area might have an off-leash dog area. Ms. Murphy said 2 years ago off-leash dogs were harassing hikers and others on some properties. Many trails lead to private backyards. An off-leash dog appeared on a

property and threatened someone, so the Police were called. Dogs must be on a leash for the enjoyment of all. Mr. Piskovitz, thought the ConCom should keep its current position of no dogs off-leash because properties are for the general use of all, not just dog owners. Mr. Campbell said that a policy allowing it would just attract more folks to do it there. The Southeast Land Trust has Pennal Park off Pickpocket Rd that allows it. Ms. Eberhardt said that she thought if any other property in Town might work instead of Henderson-Swasey area. Mr. Guindon said that numbers of users leads to issues on this.

Continuing discussion ensued. Raynes Barn area is used for an off-leash area by many folks.

Mr. Koff reported that he saw the YMCA Director Rob McGregor who was asking the activities park status. He did not know about the offset by DPW on sewer line. Ms. Murphy did write to legal counsel on legal liability and case law on passive recreation and the sewer line. The Commission was waiting for a formal proposal from the Y on this, but hasn't gotten it yet.

Mr. Koff said he went to the NHACC Conference this past Saturday which had many good topics and work sessions. There was a good one on invasives and one on fundamentals of ConComs and another on the wetlands review process. Third party technical review on a major project is sometimes warranted. This was discussed with respect to Exeter's Commission. The developer pays for it and it can be very worthwhile. Wetlands impacts were discussed. The Planning Board uses third party review on many projects. Zoning regulations deal with wetlands and ConCom can always request that, which is best to do so through the Planning Board. Ms. Murphy said another local town has a list of things to look for with a wetlands scientist's stamp on it.

5. Non-public session per RSA 91-A :3, II (c).

[8:41 pm] Ms. Murphy said there's a process for non-public session (NPS). Mr. Campbell moved go into NPS, seconded by Ms. Raub and a roll call vote was taken, which was unanimously approved.

[NPS minutes were taken by Ms. Murphy]

[8:57 pm] There was a motion by Mr. Campbell to come out of public session, seconded by Mr. Piskovitz and a roll call voice vote to come out of NPS and back to regular session was taken and was unanimous. Ms. Raub moved to seal the NPS

minutes pursuant to RSA 91-A. Mr. Campbell seconded. Mr. Campbell explained that the motion to seal was just a formality.

6. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled (12/13/16), Submission Deadline (12/2/16)

7. Work session:

The scheduled work session was cancelled but a brief overview was given by Ms. Murphy. Ms. Eberhardt said there is frustration on incomplete wetlands applications, so creating expectations for applicants would be fair, rather than put it all on Ms. Murphy. She just wants to empower the Commission and get higher quality submissions and plans for resource protection. Two sections of criteria the Commission would expect, the first ones are mandatory, second section are suggested/recommended. Second piece is for ConCom, and was put together by Ms. Murphy. Everyone should review a wetlands permit and think all this through.

Discussion lead to the Commission members agreed to think about all this and address it later on. NHAPC questions might be considered for this process. Ms. Raub had a question on timing. When does the Planning Dept receive a full set of plans for a wetlands application. Ms. Murphy said that has to be done at the start of the process. Ms. Raub said if want to see full set of plans, need to go look at them. Ms. Murphy said she has multiple copies of large scale plans for Commission review before or after sessions. Ms. Murphy said that submission requirements should be met and the Commission needs to decide what it wants on that.

The Chair reminded the members to submit the areas of interest for future coverage, get them to Ms. Murphy and confirm commitments of members on that.

8. Adjournment:

There being no further business before the Commission, Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Piskovitz, and the motion passed unanimously. Chair Guindon adjourned the session at 9:11 pm.