

Exeter Conservation Commission
February 8, 2022
Nowack Room
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight's meeting were by roll call, Chair Andrew Koff, Vice-Chair Trevor Mattera, Nick Campion, Julie Gilman Select Board Liaison, Conor Madison, David Short, Alyson Eberhardt (remotely), Kristen Osterwood (remotely), Bill Campbell, Alternate, and Thomas Patterson, Alternate.

Staff Present: Natural Resources Planner Kristen Murphy

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Public Comment (7:00 PM)

Mr. Koff asked if there were any members of the public who wanted to speak to an item not on the agenda and being none closed public comment.

Action Items

1. 2022 Trail Project Planning

Toby Ferdyn of Fort Rock Riders identified trail work needed in Exeter at the trails in the Town Forest, Henderson Swasey and Oaklands. Fort Rock Riders has approximately 1300 members some of which are willing to provide trails maintenance. Trail Days are held in the Spring and Fall. Fort Rock Riders started a Facebook page which has been a good communication tool with trail users. The trail system also includes private lands and trails in Newfields. A list was compiled for work in the upcoming season.

The "Center-Cut" trail was identified as a priority and should be reopened from the tunnel heading north, old puncheon bridge sections should be removed. Lumber is available at Hamburger Hill. Some unapproved trails that have spaghettied out should be closed.

Ms. Murphy clarified that they want to re-establish the trail with bridging in the middle section. Mr. Short noted terrain can be tough there.

Mr. Campbell recommended a site visit to decide where the trail should go and then what its going to take, make a materials list and see what could be donated.

Ms. Eberhardt questioned how users respond to trail closures. Mr. Ferdyn noted that if trail users are loosing something to gain good assets the response is good and communication helps.

45 Older wooden bridges should be rehabbed as needed.
46
47 Signage is on hold for now and should direct users to the trail heads. Ms. Murphy noted trail names were
48 inconsistent with what users were calling them on other apps. Green signs were put up by mountain
49 bikers on Town Forest property. The Commission approved the cedar signs which needs more frequent
50 maintenance. Signs are being stolen in one location. The green signs have been useful to users so they
51 know where they are. The signs were discussed with Ms. Murphy and funded by the Riders. Mr. Ferdyn
52 noted he had ten more signs to put up and would like to replace the ones that were stolen. Ms. Murphy
53 recommended noting on the map where the signs would go.
54
55 Blazing. Pending approval more Red Trail blazes are recommended at the BLT entrance.
56
57 Map Kiosks. Recommend update to paper maps. Add copies of the current Trail Forks maps to help
58 other trail uses. The Commission discussed the use of Open Street Maps and Trail Forks and whether to
59 post on the kiosk and/or sync with the trail app. Most users who need to call for help due to being lost
60 or injured would be using a cellphone and thus be able to access the app. Mr. Koff noted they need to
61 know where they are. He likes the idea of trail blazing. There may be charges to use the trail apps and
62 paper maps should be available. Ms. Gilman noted the PD can triangulate a location off a cellphone in
63 an emergency. Mr. Koff noted that should be a last resort.
64
65 Current Working Relationships were identified and should include the Exeter PD and Public Works.
66
67 Green Trail – needs bridge work by the gas line.
68
69 Oaklands Parking (Exit 10) – replace planking with new bridges. Coordinate with Town for lumber
70 resources.
71
72 Trail Subcommittee.
73
74 Mr. Campbell noted the Trail Subcommittee is in the Commission’s By-Laws as advisory and would meet
75 at least twice a year. The Committee shall consist of at least two representatives from the Commission
76 and there are four. Other members may include both residents and non-residents of the trail network.
77
78 Ms. Murphy clarified that the Commission determined in kind repairs were maintenance and did not
79 need formal approval, just communication where changes should come back to the Commission.
80
81 Mr. Mattera noted everything is working well and he doesn’t want to strangle a good thing with over
82 formality. Medium to Large projects should be discussed beforehand and any closures or bridges being
83 built should come back to the Commission.
84
85 Ms. Gilman cautioned to be careful with the presence on the private Facebook pages with 91-A postings.
86 She noted she is hesitant to put the stamp of Exeter on it. Ms. Murphy noted Mr. Ferdyn communicates
87 regularly and Mr. Short reports on the trails monthly to the Commission.
88

89 Ms. Eberhardt opined the trail subcommittee was needed so more time could be spent on issues like
90 safety, blazing, priorities, effects on wildlife habitats and decision making with more dedicated time.

91
92 Mr. Short noted things can be accomplished informally and in six months could be discussed again. Mr.
93 Mattera agreed the Commission did not need to over formalize maintenance items so long as
94 communication is open. The bigger decisions, safety, relationships are the Commission's job not a
95 subcommittees.

96
97 Trail Maintenance Hour Tracking. Mr. Ferdyn will work with Kristen Murphy to find a method to track
98 labor hours dedicated on the network.

99
100 2. By-laws Tree Subcommittee Amendment

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102 Ms. Murphy provided a copy of the By-Laws and proposed edit to Section 3 Tree Committee.

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104 MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to adopt the edits to the by-laws to include the Tree Committee. Mr.
105 Madison seconded the motion.

106
107 Ms. Eberhardt asked about recommendations for planting non-invasive species and prioritize regionally
108 native species. Ms. Murphy noted the Tree Committee focuses their species list to include regionally
109 native species. Information is available on the Town website.

110
111 A roll call vote was taken: Eberhardt – aye, Osterwood – aye, Madison – aye, Koff – aye, Mattera – aye,
112 Campion – aye and Short aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

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114 3. Committee Reports

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116 a. Property Management

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118 Mr. Koff noted drilling will be later next week at the Morrisette property. If conditions continue
119 to be muddy Mr. Madison will reach out to the drillers to let them know crossing the muddy
120 area is a bad idea.

121
122 Ms. Murphy noted ATV and snow mobile use at the Garrison Lane entrance. Public Works
123 installed boulders and someone with a tractor removed them. Jay Perkins then dropped a
124 Jersey barrier but they are still getting access. She will speak to Public Works.

125
126 Ms. Murphy noted there is no parking when plows need to be out on Brentwood Road and
127 better signage may be needed so motor vehicles won't park during storms and police can
128 enforce that.

129
130 MOTION: Mr. Short motioned to approve spending to allow the signage. Mr. Koff seconded the
131 motion. A roll call vote was taken Eberhardt – aye, Osterwood – aye, Madison – aye, Koff – aye,
132 Mattera – aye, Campion – aye and Short – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

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b. Trails

Mr. Koff noted it may be necessary to limit trail use and post if it gets muddy.

c. Outreach Events

i. Full Moon Snowshoe at Irvine/Exeter Country Club 2/12 6:30 PM

The Commission agreed the event will continue although there isn't any snow right now and it will be quite warm on Saturday so users will need to stay on the path. There is no bonfire scheduled just a walk. Ms. Eberhardt noted she can help on Saturday and Mr. Mattera will help as well. Ms. Murphy will post to the community forum.

ii. Tree Committee's Big Tree Scavenger Hunt

Ms. Murphy reported the Tree Committee will be sponsoring a scavenger hunt and is working with different schools. Big trees will be identified and listed. Greg Bisson has offered a \$25 gift certificate to a Parks & Recreation program.

iii. Alewife Festival – Saturday, May 14th

Ms. Murphy will provide sea level rise information and maps, Pollinator Pathways and trails map information on the table. Mr. Koff noted photos of flooding at Swasey would be a good educational tool.

4. Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Campbell recommended edits.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to approve the December 14, 2021 minutes as amended. Mr. Campion seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Eberhardt – aye, Osterwood – aye, Madison – aye, Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campion – aye and Short – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

5. Correspondence

Ms. Murphy reported the Wetland Permit was received for 32 Charter Street where they are restoring and constructing the multi-family condominium units.

6. Other Business

a. Proposed Legislation (NHACC e-News)

176 Ms. Murphy reported there is legislation pending concerning firearms regulation by the
177 governing body. The Commission could write a letter in opposition or individually. Ms. Gilman
178 noted the House meets on the 16th or 17th. Mr. Campbell noted it is HB 307. Ms. Gilman noted
179 voters could change the legislation locally. Ms. Murphy noted concerns with donor properties
180 where the donor prohibits hunting and while she assumes deeded restrictions would hold she
181 has concerns about the ones where the deed is silent and the Commission applies no hunting
182 restrictions. She noted someone could appoint Ms. Murphy or Mr. Koff to reach out in
183 opposition to the state legislation on behalf of the Commission.

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185 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to reach out in opposition to the bill. Mr. Short seconded the
186 motion. A roll call vote was taken Eberhardt – aye, Osterwood – aye, Madison – aye, Koff – aye,
187 Mattera – aye, Campion – aye and Short – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

188
189 Ms. Gilman provided viewing of the upcoming legislation on her laptop for anyone who was
190 interested in reading it on their way out.

191
192 b. Raynes Farm - Article 15 Town Deliberative Session

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194 Ms. Murphy noted the Raynes Farm matching funds for the L-CHIP grant are on Article 15 and
195 should be presented at the Deliberative Session. The Historic Society has put together videos on
196 the website explaining the Warrant Article and repair needs in detail. There is a fact sheet with
197 pictures.

198
199 7. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled (3/8/22), Submission Deadline (2/25/22)

200
201 Adjournment

202
203 MOTION: Mr. Koff moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM seconded by Mr. Short. A vote was
204 taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

205
206 Respectfully submitted,

207
208 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary
209 Via Exeter TV

210
211 This meeting was also presented virtually Zoom ID 858 8587 5827

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