

Exeter Conservation Commission
July 11, 2023
Nowak Room
10 Front Street
7:00 PM
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, Connor Madison, Alternate Valorie Fanger and Alternate Keith Whitehouse

Staff Present: Kristen Murphy, Conservation and Sustainability Planner

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and activated Alternates Fanger and Whitehouse. He introduced the members and noted that there were two open positions.

2. Public Comment

Mr. Koff asked if there was any public comment unrelated to agenda items and there was none.

Action Items

1. Drinking Water Trust Fund Grant Application for Conservation Land (Southeast Land Trust/Trust for Public Lands)

Lynnette Batt project manager, representing the non-profit Trust for Public Land appeared with Duane Hyde of Southeast Land Trust to present the proposal to acquire 148 acres from the Rugg family, of which 46 acres are located in Exeter and the remaining acreage in Newfields for a community forest. She is asking the Conservation Commission for a letter of support addressed to the State which she can add to the grant application.

Ms. Batt presented proposals for pre-applications for grants for Newfields and Exeter, with a \$500,000 Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund grant to assist with the purchase cost for the Town of Exeter as the parcel in Exeter is in the public water supply protection area. She is recommending the balance of \$1,141,500 be funded through a Town bond. Fundraising and private donations will go towards the associated costs of the purchase. She will get feedback from the Select Board and Fort Rock Riders for what she hopes will become a community forest with 12-13 miles of trails.

Ms. Batt noted there are some title and boundary issues to be cleared up in the next two months and Don Wilson has been hired for that. Ms. Murphy noted that legal counsel will then look over the title

44 report and field work summary. Applications for grants will be submitted in the fall. The Town vote for
45 the bond would be next March. Closing would be the first half of 2025. Phase 2 would be creating a
46 new parking area on Piscassic Road.

47

48 **Proposed Funding Sources Amount Source**

49 ***Newfields***

50 USFS Community Forest Program (CFP) \$600,000 Federal

51 NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) \$500,000 State

52 NH DES Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan (with some
53 principal forgiven)

54 \$2,424,500 State/ Local

55 Town of Newfields bond Only if SRF

56 not awarded

57 Local

58 NH Parks & Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)* \$500,000 Federal

59 **Total Estimated Land Cost: Newfields \$3,524,500**

60 ***Exeter***

61 NH DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (DWGTF) \$500,000 State

62 Town of Exeter bond \$1,141,500 Local

63 **Total Estimated Land Cost: Exeter \$1,641,500**

64 **The LWCF grant is a backup, as the timeline may not work for the project – TBD after further consultation with the LWCF program.*

65

66 Mr. Koff asked if there were any comments from the public at 7:25 PM and there were none.

67

68 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned that a letter of support be issued for the proposal. Mr. Mattera seconded
69 the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 5-0-0.

70

71 2. Wetland Dredge and Fill application for the Bank Stabilization along the Exeter River at River Run at
72 Exeter Tax Map 105 Lot 79 (Paige Libbey)

73

74 Paige Libbey with Jones & Beach Engineers presented the application for stabilization of the three areas
75 of bank erosion at River Run which has frontage on the Exeter River. There were water main failures
76 which caused erosion several years ago.

77

78 Ms. Libbey described Area #1 which had two units removed and the proposal to use Gabion baskets and
79 conservation seed mix.

80

81 Ms. Libbey described Area #2 which she described as a peninsula on Camelot Road with limited access
82 and sheds located between the units. Coir logs and plantings are proposed here.

83

84 Ms. Libbey described Area #3 which she noted was similar to Area #1.

85

86 Ms. Libbey noted she met with NH DES on site and attended a meeting of the local advisory committee.

87

88 Mr. Koff asked who was doing what with what equipment. Ms. Libbey indicated a contractor has not
89 been chosen yet. The NH DES application has not been submitted yet. The local advisory committee

90 had concerns with stormwater runoff being a contributing factor. Ms. Murphy indicated she visited the
91 site with Doug Eastman, took photos and all homes are prohibited from being put back. The private
92 water system is proposed for be replaced. Ms. Murphy noted it was very obvious from the gushing
93 plume of water that stormwater was not the cause and she shared that information with Theresa.
94

95 Mr. Mattera asked for more information on the Gabions. Ms. Libbey described the front pockets for
96 revegetation, the metal cube with fabric surrounding it and exposed face. Mr. Mattera asked if water
97 would permeate the baskets and Ms. Libbey indicated it would and downed trees will be used for
98 buttresses.
99

100 Ms. Fanger noted the proximity of the buildings to the river and asked if that would change. Ms. Libbey
101 indicated she did not know. Ms. Murphy indicated the Building Inspector would not make that
102 recommendation unless there was imminent risk.
103

104 Mr. Koff asked if equipment would enter the river for Area #2 and Ms. Libbey was uncertain at this time
105 but if that needed to be the case she would come back before the Commission to describe the work.
106 Mr. Mattera asked if there was any active channel erosion and Ms. Libbey indicated not that she was
107 aware of.
108

109 Mr. Koff commented that the proposed trails could reduce success. Mr. Mattera agreed that people
110 needed to be funneled the way they would like and encouraged with perhaps some kind of barrier to
111 stay off the Gabions and plantings. Ms. Libbey described the proposal for the access trail with slope, flat
112 area and slope. Mr. Mattera asked if the bank would be raised up. Ms. Libbey noted she believed
113 material would be moved around but will check whether there is any intent to fill in.
114

115 Mr. Koff opened the hearing to the public.
116

117 Susan Hansen noted she was an abutter across the river. She reviewed the history from 40 years ago
118 when the cliff was man made and filled in with gravel. She expressed concerns with the affect on her
119 property across the river and the wetland on the opposite side upriver.
120

121 Mr. Koff asked if the peninsular area was fill or natural and Ms. Libbey indicated it has been that way for
122 quite a while. He asked if she saw any bricks or rubble in the eroded area or materials leaching into the
123 river. Ms. Libbey indicated she did not have geotechnical data.
124

125 Ms. Murphy asked about FEMA analysis and Ms. Libbey indicated the area was not encroaching into the
126 floodway, the flood plain across was much lower. Mr. Mattera described the workings of the inside of
127 the bow and natural mechanisms of the river. He reminded that there was unfortunately no regulation
128 over what happened 40 years ago, however the scope of the project before them was to stabilize the
129 bank.
130

131 MOTION: Mr. Mattera motioned to send a memo to the State stating that the Commission had no
132 objection to the project as proposed.
133

134 Mr. Koff noted concerns with limited access and potential foot traffic being addressed through signage
135 or limiting the area.

136

137 Mr. Mattera amended his motion. Mr. Madison seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in
138 favor, the motion passed 5-0-0.

139

140 3. Minimum Impact Expedited Wetland Dredge and Fill application for 772 square feet of wetlands
141 impact and a Wetland Conditional Use Permit associated with the construction of a residential driveway
142 for a new single-family house at 24 Powdermill Road – Tax Map 102 Lot 04 (Daniel Coons)

143

144 Mr. Koff noted that a site walk was done at 5 PM today.

145

146 Dan Coons of Ilex Wetlands Consultants of Wolfeboro presented the proposal for the wetland
147 conditional use permit for the driveway. He noted the state had already approved the Expedite Dredge
148 and Fill application. He indicated that the 20-acre parcel will be subdivided so that a five-acre parcel can
149 have a single-family home built for the daughter of the owners. Initially a ROW easement was proposed
150 for access, to avoid buffer impacts but wetlands were found on both sides, and it was determined that
151 the buffer impact coming in from the road would be much less than the ROW. The wetland parallels the
152 road.

153

154 Mr. Madison asked the amount of impact on the ROW versus the road access and Mr. Coons stated that
155 the ROW had 720 SF and the road access would be 624 with buffer impacts in the ROW 2,240 and the
156 road 1,040. The ROW has wetlands on both sides up the middle.

157

158 Mr. Madison asked when the application was going to the Planning Board and Mr. Coons indicated on
159 Thursday. Mr. Madison indicated that he struggled with the difference between the stamps of the
160 certified wetland scientists' delineations and questioned whether third party review may be required.
161 Mr. Koff agreed the open wet meadow was hard to delineate. Mr. Mattera noted the difference
162 between what was observed during the site walk and what was noted on the plan. He questioned the
163 validity of the boundaries based on what was seen in the field today. Mr. Coons indicated he could go
164 out and take another look to see if the area in question warrants flagging as an additional wetland
165 pocket. Ms. Murphy described the three criteria for wetlands to the applicant: plants, soil and
166 hydrology and noted that while the applicants noted it looks different every time all three of those don't
167 change from day to day. Mr. Coons indicated that he could check the delineation before Thursday but
168 would not have time to change the plan before then, if that became the case.

169

170 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to draft a memo to the Planning Board describing the additional potential
171 wetland not shown on the plan that was observed during the site walk and that the Commission has
172 asked that the area be reviewed and if determined to be a wetland then the proposed plan would need
173 to be reviewed to determine if the design is the least impactful. If no additional wetland are found then
174 the Commission is supportive of the plan.

175

176 Mr. Koff noted he could attend the Planning Board meeting on Thursday.

177

178 Mr. Mattera seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 5-0-0.

179

180 4. Minimum Impact Expedited Wetland application for Epping Road Expansion

181

182 Greg Backus presented the proposal for extending the center lines on Epping Road and widening on
183 both sides for 1500.' He described the impact as 886 SF permanent and 700+/- SF temporary impact,
184 mostly roadside ditches. There will be sidewalks and drainage improvements. The town project will
185 improve safety and traffic flow. He described an Iris of concern which was found not to be the species
186 of concern and will close the loop with DES on that. He described the sidewalks to Gateway and the
187 Mobil station and one break due to a ROW. He described stormwater management and catch basins.
188 Detention basins will be expanded and have deep sumps in the catch basins.

189

190 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to sign the expedited application. Mr. Mattera seconded the motion. A
191 vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 5-0-0.

192

193 5. Conceptual discussion on the construction of commercial vehicle storage area for Foss Motors at Tax 194 Map 52 Lot 112.2 (Christian Smith)

195

196 Brendan Quigley of Gove Environmental presented the application on behalf of Foss Motors and
197 indicated that Tim Foss was present. He indicated the location of the parcel south of the prior Sylvania
198 property. He indicated the reservoir location and location of the brook. He proposed a parking area out
199 front for storage and display of inventory and a potential building to the rear for offices. He described
200 three potential wetland impacts and the location of the 300' and 150' shoreland protection buffers. The
201 impact would be substantial, 80,000 SF. He did not have a lot of detail concerning stormwater
202 management but described it would be robust in this location.

203

204 Ms. Murphy reminded this was a non-binding, conceptual, review and the Commission would be
205 entitled to differing opinions when reviewing the final plans.

206

207 Mr. Koff indicated he was not in favor of this proposal for the use or the design, due to the sensitive
208 area of the Exeter drinking water source and amount of wetland and shoreland impacts. Mr. Madison
209 agreed and indicated a tree line of some sort should be maintained. Ms. Fanger noted she was no in
210 favor of the proposal either.

211

212 Mr. Madison asked the dimensions of the office space – 22,000 SF.

213

214 Mr. Mattera described the buffer impacts right next to the reservoir.

215

216 Mr. Foss described how long his family had owned the growing business and a desire not to leave Exeter
217 in order to expand but they are maximized and have to grow.

218

219 Mr. Mattera described the purpose of the buffer to protect the water quality and indicated he would
220 need to be shown that the water coming out is cleaner than when it started in terms of stormwater
221 management. Mr. Madison agreed. Ms. Fanger was skeptical that anything could be done to protect

222 the water. Mr. Mattera questioned whether they were putting off the inevitable. Mr. Koff asked if
223 they had considered off-site properties and Mr. Foss described the importance of the display location,
224 and off-site security and maintenance concerns.

225

226 6. Committee Reports

227

228 7. Approval of Minutes

229

230 i. June 13, 2023 Meeting

231

232 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to approve the June 13, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Mattera
233 seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 5-0-0.

234

235 8. Correspondence

236

237 9. Other Business

238

239 10. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled (8/8/23), Submission Deadline (7/28/23)

240

241 11. Adjournment

242

243 MOTION: Mr. Koff moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 PM seconded by Mr. Madison. A vote was
244 taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

245

246 Respectfully submitted,

247

248 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary

249 Via Exeter TV

250 Zoom ID 815 4715 1492