

Exeter Conservation Commission
Nowak Room
Town Hall
10 Front Street
August 11, 2026
7:00 PM
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight's meeting were: Chair Dave Short, Vice-Chair Connor Madison, Andrew Koff, Keith Whitehouse, Valorie Fangor, Michelle Crepeau, Alternate Kyle Welch, Alternate Ethan Fishbaugh, and Select Board Representative Dan Chartrand.

Staff Present: Kristen Murphy, Conservation and Sustainability Planner

Chair Short called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and the members and alternates introduced themselves. Alternate Kyle Welch indicated that he was active.

2. Public Comment

Select Board representative Chartrand reported that Mr. Whitehouse attended the Select Board meeting to pitch Art in the Barn In a canvas cow cutout that his wife made.

Action Items

1. After-the-Fact Wetland Conditional Use Permit and Restoration Plan at 26 Wadleigh Street, Tax Map 54 Lot 5-2. (Marc Jacobs, NHCWS).

Chair Short read the public hearing notice out loud. Chair Short noted the goal is to not set a precedent in the neighborhood.

Marc Jacobs presented the application. He noted the 2018 approval and his tasks and other permitting. He indicated there would be no precedent because of the physical attributes of the lot which was surrounded on three sides by steep slopes to wetland and or drainage to gravel wetlands and noted the stormwater runoff to Norris Brook. He stated that there are no other lots except for Lot 9, that come close. He described the underdrain system which floods up to 72 hours and drains slowly making a potential hazard for small children.

Mr. Whitehouse asked about the last storm and Mr. Jacobs described several feet of water the first day which subsided the second day.

Ms. Fangor noted it is not just setting a precedent in this neighborhood but throughout the town. Mr. Jacobs noted there had been a lot of miscommunications. The fence is a new request; there is the lawn and clearing of some trees.

Ms. Crepeau asked if developers had changed and Mr. Jacobs indicated no.

Mr. Madison discussed restoration with plantings in the swing set area. Mr. Jacobs described the moving of the set and timbers and mulch bed and restoration with plantings as well as 40% of the lawn. Ms. Crepeau noted that the Commission had asked for 100% restoration. Mr. Madison agreed. Mr. Chartrand noted he would like to see the topsoil scraped and noted the presence of knotweed.

Mr. Chartrand indicated this cannot happen again and asked whether there could be penalties and if that could be enforced.

Mr. Jacobs stated that his time, Matt's time (the building contractor) and the plant materials are a financial penalty. He noted they would be on the Planning Board agenda on September 24th. Chair Short noted he would like to see restoration happen by the first week of October.

Ms. Murphy indicated that buffer boundary discs were not in place before the clearing process and there are still no discs so she would like to make sure it is expressly a condition of this approval. There are also utility poles placed in the conservation area that must be moved.

Matt Silva of Profile Homes stated that it was an honest mistake because the site wasn't laid out properly.

Mr. Chartrand asked if there had been others and Ms. Murphy indicated not with wetland buffer impacts.

Chair Short reviewed the criteria for granting a conditional use permit:

1. permitted in the zone – yes.
2. no alternate design – constraints of lot
3. functions and values, impacts not detrimental to wetlands or the hydrological system
4. design minimizes impact to wetland and buffer
5. no hazard to individual, public, health, safety, welfare or loss of wetlands and contamination of groundwater
6. elsewhere on the site – lot constraints rule that out
7. restoration proposal
8. permits – n/a

Ms. Fangor asked if other designs were feasible and noted it is detrimental to the wetland.

Ms. Crepeau noted #7 but for the remaining lawn. She noted after seeing it it was a small area she was ok with. Mr. Madison agreed there wasn't much to gain there. Mr. Whitehouse noted it was a tough one. Mr. Koff referenced the fence area. Mr. Jacobs noted no fence right now.

MOTION: Ms. Fangor motioned to deny because there are other designs that are feasible and it is detrimental as proposed to the wetland. There was no second, motion failed.

MOTION: Mr. Madison motioned that the Commission has reviewed the wetlands conditional use permit application and are in support of the application as proposed with two conditions. We endorse this application due to the uniqueness of the lot surrounded by steep slopes, drainage and wetlands. This is not to set a precedent for future applications.

Conditions:

1. To have restoration including planting installation complete by October 10, 2026; and
2. Boundary discs are to be confirmed as installed upon completion by October 10, 2026.

Chair Short seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Ms. Fangor voted nay. The motion passed 6-1-0.

2. Discussion of Stormwater Maintenance Agreements Tracking

Ms. Murphy noted that Ms. Fangor raised questions about stormwater maintenance reports and the condition that they be submitted annually; that there is no tracking and no consequences. Ms. Murphy noted that do not receive reports on a regular basis. Chair Short noted that staff needs to be identified that can track and take action. Ms. Murphy noted there have been vacant roles in engineering. She will raise the issue with Steve Cronin. She noted Mr. Sharples began conditioning approvals after 2016. Mr. Koff asked if conditions were getting lost in transition to an HOA and Ms. Murphy indicated the condition is in their by-laws. Mr. Welch asked if there was the ability to issue a penalty. Ms. Murphy will look into that.

3. Potential for Boardwalk at Raynes

Mr. Whitehouse recommended getting permitting to build an observation platform and boardwalk using the underpass identified as a cattle crossing in the town landing. Ms. Murphy indicated they would need a tidal dredge and fill permit. Mr. Madison noted the elevated system would have a more intensive review. Mr. Whitehouse described the muddy area after the underpass. He noted in the deed the train has to maintain it. He noted there would need to be engineering. Mr. Chartrand proposed a site walk before the next meeting.

4. Conservation Fund CIP Request

Ms. Murphy proposed a \$150,000 CIP request for FY 2027 since the Commission was not in favor of funding from land use change tax this year.

Ms. Murphy reviewed the draft FY 2026 budget request, adding interns, mowing and the Portapotties. Mowing has increased. Mr. Chartrand advised that FY 2026 was artificially low and recommended members assist staff in presenting the budget.

5. Committee Reports

a. Property Management

b. Outreach Events

i. Art in the Barn Event (9/26)

Ms. Murphy reported that canvasses were given out and how the art can be returned to town hall before September 15th. Chair Short discussed marketing materials.

c. Other Committee Reports (River Study, Sustainability, Energy, Tree, CC Roundtable)

6. Approval of Minutes

i. July 14, 2026 Site Walk

MOTION: Chair Short motioned to approve the July 14, 2026 site walk minutes. Ms. Crepeau seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

ii. July 14, 2026

MOTION: Chair Short motioned to approve the July 14, 2026 meeting minutes. Mr. Madison seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

7. Correspondence

Ms. Murphy reported a request for 140 Kingston Road to help with cemetery clean up. She will circulate a doodle poll.

Mr. Madison reported that GZA is looking for two wetlands to review.

MOTION: Chair Short motioned to allow GZA to review two wetlands seconded by Mr. Koff. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the emotion passed unanimously.

8. Adjournment/ Next Meeting: 9/8/26, Submission Deadline 8/28/26

Chair Short motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 PM. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

175 Respectfully submitted,
176 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary
177 Via Exeter TV
178 Webinar ID: 870 2022 1678