

**Town of Chester
Conservation Commission
August 8, 2017
Approved Minutes**

Attendance

Present

Aaron Hume
Chairman Chuck Myette
Deb Munson

Absent

Ted Broadwater
Baron Richardson
Phil Cassista
Selectman Liaison Dick Trask

Guest(s)

None

Call to Order

Chairman Myette called the meeting of the Chester Conservation Commission to order at 7:10 pm on Tuesday, August 8, 2017.

New Business

ZBA

There is a ZBA meeting on August 15. There are three hearings for variances:

- To construct a 30x40 barn. Where it sits encroaches the no-cut boundary from wetlands (of 25') by 6';
- 36x30 garage which sits 49' from the edge of wetlands (75' required) about 25' within the wetland buffer area; and
- 16x20 deck 53' edge of wetland, 75' required. House must already be encroaching but the deck would add into the encroachment of the wetland boundary.

Ms. Munson advised that she would have concerns about setting precedents and whether any site visits had been done.

Ms. Munson asked about the Building Inspector. Chairman Myette explained that he had denied the permits and the applicants are taking it forward to see if the ZBA will grant a variance.

Chairman Myette stated that he will attend, and is not in favor. "In each case it was about expanding property, crossing buffers." "Boundaries are established for specific reasons." "There must be someplace else, another location they can build off of." "What's the hardship?"

Wetlands permits

There is a wetlands permit application for an existing three (3) acre lot to install a 12" roadside driveway culvert to access an existing lot, with 205' sf of wetland at the narrowest location possible. Not for crossing a wetland, for creating a drainage for it.

Ms. Munson clarified that it's not for an existing house lot but for access where the ditch is a flowing wetland at certain times.

There is a wetlands permit application for 152 Candia Road, Crowley Road, 66 lot subdivision. Permit to the State for wetlands crossing is the key aspect of this one.

SLPC

SLPC has identified a 30 acre parcel off Wells Village. The owners are looking to sell two and a half acres. There is one house lot. It is off 121 and borders Sandown. On the other side of power lines it comes up into Chester (pointing at map) abutting the Exeter River. Access is from Sandown. There is a house there now. They want to tear that down and rebuild. There is no value in this back piece so they want to sell that off to offset some of the costs. Chairman Myette told them to come to a meeting and discuss it.

Ms. Munson approached the map and asked about larger adjacent pieces that may add value to it and looked up the lot numbers and owners to contact: Chairman Myette advised that it wouldn't be a bad tie-in if it were a reasonable price. Ms. Munson advised that they wouldn't be granting an access, you'd have to come down the power line.

Old Business

Minutes – July 11, 2017

Mr. Hume motioned to approve the July 11, 2017 minutes, amended as follows:

Line 59 – Borman
Line 306 Ms. Munson

Ms. Munson seconded his motion, all in favor, so moved.

Updating Town Forestry Project, Data & Mapping (Fred Borman)

Chairman Myette met with Mr. Borman last week and got him all the up to date information for plans and easements that fell into it. There were town-owned and forested. "Three of those we had plans for, so he got what he needed."

Ms. Munson asked which were managed forests. Chairman Myette explained that there were:

Herrick Woods (Bridle), Hatton - off Norton Road and the tree farm in North Chester.

Subcommittee Reports:

Strategic Land Protection Committee SLPC (Ted & Chuck)

Old Chester Turnpike, 24 acres off Ledge Road in final throws of paperwork and legal filings, and piece off Harantis and 102, the backside of Wilson property, needs easements and working with Kathy Sullivan at Wadleigh, Starr & Peters. Jenkins need to finalize.

Treasurers' Report (Chuck)

Chairman Myette reported on the new fiscal budget of \$800.00 as follows:

Administrative Salaries	\$100.00
Dues & Seminars	\$400.00
Miscellaneous	\$100.00
Exeter River Watershed	\$150.00
Southeast Land Trust	\$ 50.00

with nothing spent so far and no bills pending.

Ms. Munson motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report as stated. Mr. Hume seconded her motion, all in favor, so moved.

Planning Board

Crowley Woods

Crowley Woods is a big discussion, tomorrow night. Chairman Myette and Ms. Munson have attended meetings. Police, Fire, School and Conservation are all discussing the benefits and drawbacks.

Chairman Myette wanted to quickly introduce Report for Urbanization, Water Wetland Quality - Direct and Indirect Impacts. Talking tomorrow night about that. "In 2001 we looked at developing a Prime Wetlands Program, a special category for the State of NH." "If you identify wetlands as prime, they have to meet certain criteria: functional values, NH method of functionality, NH DOT. It's a way to look at and determine how sensitive are: aesthetics, wetlands value, forest value, wildlife, education, of 13 criteria there and sensitive and rare species." "It was put together but not put forward to the town." There was not enough PB support at the time. Once classified, then developments would have to go through state approval, with separate approval, so that's not the case here, SNH Planning has reviewed a lot of that. "I have a letter here, to Brian Sullivan concerning their review of the development and regional impact."

Chairman Myette continued "We looked at every wetland over 2 acres and larger ones that made up important wetlands." "Two acres are prime." "You have to get into multiple or series together that form a significant functional value." "This area falls within an area that we have mapped in the prime wetlands that we can call them but they don't meet that classification." "They meet through

methodology but didn't vote, this falls into A23 in this area.” “This is what we call the Black Gum Swamp.” “In this area, its fairly unique, some sensitivity, 8.7 acres of woodland off Candia Road in North Chester.” “This is in an area that really is old growth, one of the few areas we still have old growth that has not been logged off and Black Gum swamp is part of that.” “As we look at this and think about development of that and where it comes in off Crowley Road.” “This line comes into area of development so that's one thing we need to look at and make sure this sensitive wetland in this area isn't impacted.” “Basically introduce guys to maps that we have for prime wetlands.” “We talked six or seven years ago, recommended to PB and consider anytime we have large developments come in and see what kind of sensitive values we have there.”

Ms. Munson asked who did the mapping? Chairman Myette responded that “We paid a wetlands scientist to do it.”

Chairman Myette continued that if we go back to these sheets, there is a summary set for Black Gum Swamp A23 has an ecological integrity, wildlife, no fish in area, educational visual, water base recreation, hunting, birding, flood control, based on one being very important, with 1 being the highest.

Chairman Myette stated that he will make note of this stuff and ask that a wetland functional value be done on that area.

Trails (Aaron Hume)

Mr. Hume reported that he had sent in his time sheets and activated the trial GIS license but there have been changes with that and it is now only good for 21 days and cannot be shared with other desktop users. The annual license fee is \$800.00. Trailfinders is not going to be much help. Ms. Munson suggested that the library may be able to help out with a discount through Techsoup.org.

Mr. Hume reported that Hampstead had recently had an accident on one of their trails and it took responders more than 40 minutes to get out there, another reason trail mapping will be useful to show responders where trails meet up.

Mr. Hume noticed some significant hydrology changes on some trails and recommends walking and noting those during different times of the year.

Easements Monitoring, & Stewardship

No new plans to look at tonight.

Spring Hill Farm (Chuck Myette)

Chairman Myette reported that the tenants' lease is not being renewed. The tenants have a meeting on the 17th with the Selectmen to be reconsidered.

Chairman Myette suggested that one option is that Conservation has a requirement to manage the property. Conservation could set up a SHF committee with members that actually do run it with the trust as only an endowment. The farm would be run by Conservation. “You're going to use town money to manage it.” “The funding becomes threefold, with three ways to generate income, you

can go through the other two and warrant article.”

Chairman Myette explained that SHF Trustees have documents that say how the trust will run and how the farm will run and how it reports back to the town on an annual basis with one selectman and one conservation member. The Selectmen are not accepting the documents as valid documents.

Chairman Myette explained that the Trust is an endowment, they don't have to run it. They raise the funds to operate the farm. Ms. Munson advised that was just what we did on the library board, have a separate entity that would raise funds.

Ms. Munson suggested requesting a separate meeting before then and contacting various parties for support such as Agriculture, Conservation, the Trustees, hikers, hunters and the people who support the petition. “A lot of people are behind us.”

Ms. Munson will follow up with Mr. Richardson to see if she can get the ball rolling and what his opinions are.

Agriculture (Chuck Myette)

Chairman Myette reported that Agriculture met recently and is going forward with the Town Fair booth, bringing goats, alpacas, the cow, having cow plop bingo and the ugly chicken contest.

Wason Pond

Scout Projects

Chairman Myette reported that the Wason Boy Scout projects were almost finished. They are still working on the kiosk info describing the flora and fauna.

Bridge Repairs

Chairman Myette reported that they will be working on August 19 (Saturday) on the second bridge closest to the waterfall. “If anyone wants to help out work will commence at 8:00 am.” “Some of the folks from the Pounder and Rec will be there to help and the Wason Pond folks.” The bridge is only 10' wide and 13' long. They plan to tear it apart and rebuild it. They have obtained the building permit for the project, which has steel i-beams and wooden decking which deteriorated. The i-beams are 14” thick so plenty strong. It will have 4x6 pressure treated timbers, and pressure treated rail on top. “Think we can do it in one day.”

Chairman Myette provided a list of materials and estimated cost for the project of \$1,100 of which Derry Trailriders have donated \$100.00. Because it is part of the existing trail system and CC built and repaired the covered bridge, Chairman Myette proposed that CC fund the difference from current use.

Ms. Munson motioned to fund the bridge repair difference between the donations and actual cost of materials. Mr. Hume seconded her motion, all in favor, none opposed.

Security

Town has put security into some buildings, they are looking to connect four or five security cameras to this network and monitor it, in high traffic and parking areas.

Beaver trapping

Chairman Myette reported that the beaver activity appears to have ceased. “Not sure if our trapper got in there, he did not report back.”

Webpage Update (Deb Munson)

None.

Adjournment

Mr. Hume motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Munson seconded his motion. The meeting of the Chester Conservation Commission was adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer, Recording Secretary