

**Town of Chester
Conservation Commission
September 12, 2017
Approved Minutes**

Attendance

Present

Selectman Liaison Dick Trask
Deb Munson
Baron Richardson
Ted Broadwater (@7:03pm)

Absent

Aaron Hume
Phil Cassista

Guest(s)

1. Kathleen Neff Ragsdale
2. Eric Mitchell for DAR Developers (Crowley Road Subdivision)

Call to Order

Chairman Myette called the meeting of the Chester Conservation Commission to order at 7:02 pm on Tuesday, September 12, 2017.

New Business

1. Appointments

Chairman Myette reviewed the appointment terms of the members of the Conservation Commission, which shall be:

Deb Munson 3 years
Ted Broadwater – 2 years
Baron Richardson – 3 years
Aaron Hume – 3 years
Phil Cassista – 1 year

Chairman Myette will contact Mr. Cassista to see which term he would like and Chairman Myette will take the other available term.

Chairman Myette recognized Kathleen Neff Ragsdale who stated that she may be interested in becoming a member of Conservation. Ms. Ragsdale currently lives in Chester and while she has no scientific background, has worked in journalism in two NH publications.

Old Business

1. Review Minutes (August 8, 2017)

Ms. Munson motioned to accept the minutes, amended as follows:

Line 97 change to “managed forests.”

Mr. Richardson seconded her motion. With Chairman Myette and Ms. Munson voting in favor and Mr. Broadwater and Mr. Richardson abstaining, two in favor, so moved.

2. Subcommittee Reports

A. Strategic Land Protection Committee (SLPC)

Hawkins

Alex Davis Property off Ledge Road (27 acres)

In negotiations with estate attorneys who are working out details for sale or transfer.
Harantis Lake Road (28 acres)

Crowley Road (110 acres)

At 7:12 pm Eric Mitchell appeared on behalf of DAR Developers for Crowley Road Subdivision. Mr. Mitchell stated that his purpose at this meeting was to drop off paperwork only and to ask to be added to next months agenda for 45 minutes to an hour. In addition to topographical maps, Mr. Mitchell submitted a proposed conservation deed to the Town of Chester for 110 acres of land in Chester.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the deed was a template recommended by the State of New Hampshire and in addition to restricting use to conservation and recreation, there would be no hunting allowed and minimal timber harvesting when it benefits wildlife management.

CC considered other options for the maintenance and monitoring of the property, other than acceptance of the deed, that would offset the monitoring and management expenses to the town. Some options such as homeowners associations, leaving the 1/60th interest to

the individual lot owners and utilizing Rockingham Conservation trust or other management entities were briefly discussed.

Chairman Myette advised that CC would have better control and supervision of the open space through ownership and that tax revenues with retained lot ownership would be small. There is often significant expense in having to enforce restrictions on property CC doesn't own. Mr. Richardson advised that there could be a small amount of revenue from timber management. Chairman Myette advised the members to go home and consider the pros and cons of accepting the deed versus other options, and advised that a public hearing would be required before acceptance.

Chairman Myette questioned Mr. Mitchell about the results of studies concerning the Blandings turtle and long eared bat species. Mr. Mitchell replied that there were some hits but that NH Fish and Game does not disclose the locations as policy. Chairman Myette advised that CC would like to know more information about what exactly they are inheriting.

Mr. Mitchell explained the composite USGS sheet for discussion at the next meeting and in particular some areas that are indicated 20' higher than the site where Wason Pond drains into Fordway, correction Norton Pond which feeds into Fordway brook.

Mr. Mitchell departed the meeting at 8 pm.

Ms. Munson asked when the transaction will happen, before the start of building, before they sell the first home? Chairman Myette explained that they are requiring them to turn over the deed and/or register easements before any properties are sold.

Mr. Broadwater asked about incorporating ball fields and playgrounds into conservation and recreational areas and whether Planning Board could get involved. Chairman Myette suggested proposing a future warrant article.

Selectman Trask explained to Ms. Ragsdale how the town's CIP and impact fees work and their differences and which organization effectively spends those revenues.

Mr. Broadwater asked if the Planning Board could deny a subdivision. Chairman Myette advised that so long as the developers are meeting the rules. Selectman Trask further explained how the developer pays impact fees and its up to RC to put things they want or can use in CIP and bonuses for things like 55 and older communities.

Ledge Road (25 acres)

Still need to finalize with Bensons, have voted on and needs to see the recorded final through Planning.

Wells Village Road (25 acres)

In negotiations. \$50,000 range. Realtor came back with \$120,000. Told them to get fair market appraisal, may be able to negotiate. Ms. Munson asked if it was determined to be landlocked.

B. Treasurer's Report

Chairman Myette and Mr. Broadwater reported balance of:

\$	127,385.19	in checking
\$	3,376.75	in forestry
\$	3,019.78	for Lincoln Lane Bridge
\$	500,000.00	in certificate of deposit, rolled over.

Chairman Myette provided a bill from Wadleigh, Starr & Peters. Chairman Myette reported spending \$830.00 on materials for Wason Pond bridge repairs, with donations of \$880.00 and some \$500 in anonymous matching funds, with a second bridge to be worked on this coming Saturday

Chairman Myette reported a withdrawal from the operating budget in administrative fees of \$982.50 leaving a negative line item for administrative fees and will look into that. Chairman Myette reported some revenues from forestry including one check for \$1,093.70, one for \$1,343.20 and \$939.85.

Deb Munson motioned to accept the treasurer's report as stated. Baron Richardson seconded her motion, all in favor, so moved.

C. Planning Board (Chuck) Crowley Woods Subdivision meeting **Wednesday, September 13.**

Chairman Myette stated that he will attend.

D. Trails (Aaron) – Tabled

E. Spring Hill Farm (Chuck)

Chairman Myette stated that there was nothing new to report at this time. Mr. Broadwater questioned some misunderstandings of how assets are utilized and generated. Chairman Myette advised that revenues from rentals and such go back into the trust which in turn go back into the operation of the farm. Mr. Broadwater questioned about revenue generated by the tenant farmer. Chairman Myette advised that if it is their labor, gas and fuel, the tenant farmer would be entitled to those revenues. Mr. Broadwater would like to see a question and answer fact section on the website.

F. Agricultural Commission (Chuck)

Chairman Myette explained to Ms. Ragsdale some of the things that Agriculture does for the town such as the farm brochures it had put together recently and reported that at Town Fair last weekend had brought some animals, goats, llamas, the cow and had a nice

display and the cute and ugly chicken contests.

G. Regulations – none

H. Grants – Trails Grant – Tabled

I. Wason Pond Conservation Area (Chuck)

a. Horseshoe Pits & Kiosk

Chairman Myette reported that the horseshoe pits had been completed. Mr. Richardson reported that the kiosk work was finished tonight and they've cut the moldings for the Lexan (plexi-glass).

b. Wason Pond Bridge Repairs

Chairman Myette reported that the covered bridge repairs and one other bridge had been repaired and another was to begin this **Saturday at 23rd** and is looking for volunteers to come and bring crow bars and wrecking bars and battery powered drills, if possible. Mr. Broadwater reported that they may have a volunteer for Wason Pond. Chairman Myette asked to send an email. There are vacancies on CC and Wason Pond.

c. Security System – Tabled

d. Barn repairs

Selectman Trask reported that the inmates have completed the repairs to the barn roof and the siding is being looked at. Ms. Munson asked what color was chosen and Selectman Trask advised that he would imagine it would be matched to the other existing outbuildings.

e. CIP Gazebo

Chairman Myette reported that RC is considering the new gazebo project funded by the CIP, which will provide some shelter during unexpected rainstorms at the recreation area.

J. Easements, Monitoring and Stewardship

Chairman Myette would like to identify properties and keep that list going, by mid-winter.

Plan Reviews

1. None

Miscellaneous

1. Webpage Update.

Selectman Trask advised that if the CC could work on the content, they would work on the rest.

2. Workshops.

Ms. Munson advised that the annual meeting of the NHACC.org would be the first Saturday of November and has excellent workshops where she has picked up a lot of good information. There is usually a cost of \$50.00 which CC has funds budgeted for.

Adjournment

Mr. Broadwater motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Richardson seconded his motion. All in favor, so moved. The meeting of the Conservation Commission was adjourned at 8:50 pm on Tuesday, September, 12, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer, Recording Secretary
(edited by Daniel Hoijer)