

**Town of Chester
Conservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday, September 13, 2016
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

Preliminaries

Chairman Myette called the meeting of the Chester Conservation Commission to order at 7:10 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, 2016.

Roll Call

Members Present:

Chuck Myette, Chairman
Deb Munson
Phil Cassista

Members Absent:

Jeff Geary
Baron Richardson
Aaron Wexler

Members of the Public Present:

Ted Broadwater
Aaron Hume

New Business

1. Nothing to report

Old Business

1. Review of Minutes

August 9th, 2016 minutes are to be reviewed. Minutes accepted with the following amendments:

- Line 125 should be astronomy/telescope event, not astrology/telescope event
- Line 171 should be designer not designed

Mr. Cassista motioned to accept the Conversation Commission Minutes; Mr. Broadwater seconded the motion. The motion was four in favor, so moved.

2. Subcommittee Reports

A. Strategic Land Protection Committee – SLPC

None

B. Treasurer's Report (Chuck) BILLS

As former Treasurer Patrick Connelly is no longer on the Commission, Chairman Myette gave the Treasurer's Report.

The budget still has \$750.00 with no expenditures. Mr. Myette stated there was an invoice for \$49.14 and will need to check if it cleared; there are no other bills.

The current balance for the Conservation account is \$514,742.20

The current balance for the Conservation Forestry account is \$33,610.12

The current balance for the Lincoln Lane account is \$3013.93

Mr. Cassista motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report; Mr. Broadwater seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.

C. Planning Board

There are no reported activities. Mr. Myette requested plans for the Abdallah subdivision for base maps easements for the Emerson Lane property. Once received, he will send them on for the base line survey to establish boundaries.

D. Trails

Chester Academy requested they be able to maintain the natural area by the school and French Fields, which is utilized by the Cross Country; Mr. Myette granted permission.

Aaron presented a map he had created for a project which showed MPA and GIS coordinates; all trails were mapped by Aaron by utilizing an exercise application to track the routes. Mr. Myette commented that the map represented a nice mix of trails and points of interest. Aaron mentioned that as interest in the project grew by local townspeople, additional trails were added. The Committee would like to consider creating a trail map for Chester, highlighting all trails in town as well as incorporating interesting town facts and points of interest. They asked Aaron if he were interested and available to perform a similar project for the town; he would be interested and is available. The Committee would need to obtain land owner permission for the project as it will run through different property owner's land, as well as determine what technology will be needed for software, hardware requirements, budgetary and legal concerns regarding hiring a part time consultant to get the project done. Discussion will be needed to determine what should be covered in the map as far as initial trails and points of interest, as well as how to compensate Aaron. Mr. Myette requested Aaron submit a bid/estimate for creation and implementation of a town wide map.

E. Spring Hill Farm (Jeff)

There is not much new, as the season is coming to an end; there is a new baler and hay machine. Due to the weather, the hay has not grown quickly. There was complete restoration of the 1850 farmhouse.

F. Agricultural Commission (Jeff)

Town fair held last weekend, no news to report.

G. Regulations

None

H. Grants – Trails Grant

None

I. Wason Pond Conservation Area

Mr. Myette reviewed the Wason Pond Conservation Meeting held Monday, September 12th. He informed the Commission that the Conservation Group was going to meet at Wason Pond to review all the buildings and examine short and long range plans for the area, including restoration of some of the buildings, maintenance of existing trails, viability of utilizing the well onsite and the septic system. Mr. Myette also mentioned restoration of the barn and searching for revenue for roof replacement. The release of Securitas was mentioned, and how there is open discussion about securing a Ranger / caretaker / seasonal person to actively police the area during the busy season. There is a budget and a line item for this type of need, so further discussion and research will be ongoing.

J. Easements, Monitoring and Stewardship

Rockingham County needs maps to review this fall; however, Janet could not locate, and has gone back to Rockingham to get another copy. She will notify the Committee when she has received it. Mr. Myette said there was no progress on easements and is seeking help, Mr. Broadwater volunteered. Their lawyer needs to be involved, and they need to get in contact with Ed and other pertinent individuals. There is a need for a surveyor, and Mr. Myette has documented what he was interested in and will share with their attorney to write up officially.

There is a land donation that needs to be reviewed and define the boundaries, and the Committee is looking for members for the Spring Hill Farm Trust.

Ms. Munson went to the Southern NH Planning Commission – 50 years of planning. The presentation Mr. Chelnan presented was difficult to follow, however the main point was that Chester is a little rigid on planning rules in regards to streets for subdivisions. It was pointed out that communities like Portsmouth have smaller streets, which provide more of a sense of community. The environmental impact for smaller roads would help with subdivision planning. Ms. Munson said Rick was on an advisory group that writes the bible for transportation, and said

that they are trying to make it more flexible; rather than having roads A, B, C, allow some construction standards to conform to ‘neighborhood’ developments (i.e., Woodmont Development in Londonderry). Mr. Cassista commented that grids do not work in conservation subdivisions. He felt they are always loose, and feels it is a personal choice. Ms. Munson said Rick travels to other countries to assess what they have elsewhere. He feels that people like diversity, and more of a village setting. Ms. Munson mentioned that on Monday, September 19th at Southern NH Planning, they are providing an information session/training about new accessory dwelling units which covers new regulations that are standardizing the ability for people to incorporate in in-law housing.

Plan Reviews

Aaron Wexler of Aspen Consultants, representing Dion Construction, presented 3-lot subdivision to the Commission. The lots are 5 acres each. Lot 249, off Webster lane (off of 102) has a fair amount of wetlands, but two large buildable areas. Mr. Wexler showed the Commission a blue shaded area on the map, which has an existing impact on the site with very thick growth on the lot with sections that were not accessible without a ‘machete’. Two of the three proposed lots (49-1 & 2), located on Halls Village Road, need crossings. Lot 49-2 has an existing 8 inch pipe clogged with debris on a wood road. The drive for Lot 49-1 will be using impacted area. The Wetland Plan will remove the existing 8-inch pipe and use corrugated 18-inch pipe. There are 416 new permanent impacts with a new small impact area, which will be permanent; all areas outside will be restored for the existing impact. Trying to limit impact, each crossing will have stone headwalls and 2/1 slopes to limit fill area significantly. Mr. Cassista questioned why they did not consider using 24-inch pipe, however Roke Engineering did a drainage analysis which had come up with a 15-inch pipe; Roke decided to use 18-inch which will lower the driveway slightly. There is no evidence of overflowing with the existing pipe and it is felt that both areas would be seasonally saturated.

Mr. Myette questioned why they were considering small impacts rather than larger, Mr. Wexler replied that this was a grandfathered impact, and no longer considered a wetland. According to Mr. Wexler, when the company was stripping vegetation from part of the lot when doing their survey, there was some damage when using their equipment, impacting 1,767 feet. He reported that there were no holes, and they stopped when they found wetland impact. Mr. Wexler said that if you come in from the road, you can drive up and see the impact area, and to where the house will be constructed. The area is grubbed for 49A & B but they did not log the lot. Wetland boundaries were incorporated in July 2015 and grubbed in July 2016. Mr. Wexler showed the Committee a picture of the affected area. Mr. Myette asked about draining calculations, Mr. Wexler replied that was not an engineer, so he did not have an answer. Mr. Myette said that he is concerned about additional runoff and the cumulative effect/flow and would like this to be taken into consideration, as it is a cumulative effect. It was asked if there were there any vernal pools; study was done. Mr. Wexler felt the amount of runoff from the driveways is minimal, as they are fairly long drives. He also said that if there was a vernal pool it would be located at the top left location of the lot, with no impact to the area as the driveways that cut through are a distance from the area where there is a possible draining issue. Mr. Broadwater cited concerns about direction of flow and is concerned that Lot 2 shares the height of wetland vs. the foundation.. Mr. Wexler showed Mr. Broadwater why he didn’t believe that

there was a wetland issue and felt that if the Committee walked out on the property, they would be able to see that wetland flow and draining would not be an issue due to the grade of the property. He also reported that, in his opinion, direct flows would not get there and showed that the direction of the flow would go in a different direction, although subsurface cannot be guaranteed. A question was asked about septic; however, Mr. Wexler replied he is just the wetlands consultant and was not aware. Ms. Munson inquired about the other Lot which does not have wetland impact, and was told one house has been approved and they are working on the house as no wetland permit was needed.

Conversation returned to the restoration of the impacted area, Mr. Wexler said that plantings and a wetland seed mix could be used to replace the area that was affected. He said that if sanctioned by the state, this could possibly begin in the Fall. Mr. Wexler mentioned that he has never done a wetland permit plan for Dion Brothers and informed the Committee the affected area was done by a construction crew from Dion and Mr. Wexler was not present. As far as the procedure, Mr. Wexler said that they will not be able to find the same seed mix that is currently growing, however he feels it would be a better solution rather than grass seed or doing nothing at all, as it will not grow in as quickly if left for natural propagation. He also said that it will take well to the area given the fact that they grubbed the area. There are some depressions from root removal, which will be filled in, compacted, raked for seed mix, mulched and watered. There will be an inspection in the Spring to ensure the work done has taken root.

Mr. Myette asked the Committee if there were any further questions, none were raised. Mr. Myette said he did not see significant issues; will sign and move forward. All were in favor. Mr. Myette signed the documents and said he would pass on to the town for review and approval. If approved, there will be two; a permit for crossing and a restoration order which will define the procedure(s) to follow. The town will receive a copy of the approvals with a timeline to complete the restoration and follow up reports. Mr. Myette will keep one copy for their files.

Miscellaneous Business

1. Harantis Lake Easement
None
2. Chester Turnpike Easement
None
3. Web Page Update
None

Adjournment

Ms. Munson made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Broadwater seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor, so moved.

The meeting of the Chester Conservation Commission was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Perrault
Recording Secretary