

**Town of Newington, NH**  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
Meeting Minutes, Thursday, January 14, 2021

**Call to Order:** Chair Jane Hislop called the Zoom meeting on January 14, 2021, meeting at 6:30 PM.

**Present:** Vice-Chair Jim Weiner; Commissioners, Andrew Meigs, and Jim Tucker; Alternates Benjamin Higgins, and Jane Kendall; and Town Planner, John Krebs

**Absent:** Ann Morton and Alternate Member, Bill Murray

**Public Guests:** Brian Goetz and Allan Pratt with City of Portsmouth Water Department; Britt Extrum and Darin Larry with Wright Pierce; Tracy Tarr; Lindsey White with GCA

**1) NHDES Wetlands Application(s):**

- A) Permit request by City of Portsmouth Water Department for Little Bay Subaqueous Water Transmission Main at Tax Map 1, Lot 1

Brian Goetz, Director of Public Works for the City of Portsmouth stated that they would be replacing the subaqueous water transmission main that ran under Great Bay, and supplied water to the region, including Residential the Commercial, Industrial and Office Districts. Mr. Goetz said the water main ran from the Madbury Surface Treatment Facility, through the Emery Farm, crossed Route 4, through Wagon Hill, under Great Bay, and came up on Fox Point, and continued into Pease near the bike path to the water tank booster near the Route 16, Spaulding Turnpike for the City of Portsmouth Water Department system.

Mr. Goetz stated that the water line was 60 years old, and investigation showed the line was deteriorating in salt water so need they were proposing a third line. Mr. Goetz said they were working on the design and wetlands permit.

Mr. Goetz said they were going to put the job out to bid in the summer, and begin construction in the fall and winter when the water demand was down.

Britt Extrum with Wright Pierce said they had done a quick overview of the existing conditions, and saw the need for upgrade as the valve that was originally installed by the Army Corp of Engineers (ACoE) to service the former Pease Air Force Base was currently inoperable.

Ms. Extrum said they had appeared before the Newington Conservation Commission a year before to discuss borings and Geotech information.

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Vice-Chair Weiner asked if the pipe could be shut off if there was a break. Mr. Goetz replied that the design was done well, except they recently found out that the valves had never been operated in 60 years, and were now most likely frozen open. Mr. Goetz said they would try to turn them off if they had to.

Ms. Extrum said the City of Portsmouth investigated the condition of the pipe with divers in 2016, and a portion of the pipeline is no longer covered, and so it had significant pitting of more than 50%.

Ms. Extrum said field investigations provided surface contours, and sonar data of Little Bay in 2018 to locate pipelines, and found bedrock close to the surface area.

Ms. Extrum said they did coastal and wetland surveys, and photos from May 2019 the crossing location of the pipeline, and showed topographic and physical features.

Ms. Extrum said they were proposing to install 24" HDTPE pipe between the existing pipes, connecting to the existing main at the shore, welding the length of pipe on the Newington side, excavate at both shorelines, then float pipe with concrete collars, to Great Bay, lower them into a trench on either side, and cover them with backfill.

Chair Hislop asked how deep the pipe ran, and Ms. Extrum said the depth varied because of the contours of the existing slope.

Commissioner Andrew Meigs asked how they would weld the pipe length. Darin Larry with Wright Pierce said the pipe was fused in 50 foot sections, then the sections were floated out, and longer segments would most likely be machine fused before being floated out to the water.

Alternate Commissioner Ben Hutchins asked if there were any consideration for repairs. Mr. Larry said all joints would be inspected on land as they were fused.

Ms. Extrum said the City of Portsmouth had a 40-foot easement along the length of the pipeline, and they were working with the Town of Newington to come to agreement for the construction staging area. Ms. Extrum said there was no roadway access or staging area on the Durham side, so doing most of the staging on the Newington side

Ms. Extrum said the proposed access road was through the field, and they would put up fencing. Ms. Extrum said they would put up signs, and try to maintain access to temporary trails.

Vice-Chair Weiner asked who had seen the plan so far, and Mr. Goetz said they had talked with Town Administrator, Martha Roy to get a laydown area.

Vice-Chair Weiner said he was most concerned with damage to the Fox Point Recreational area from Spring to Fall, and suggested going through the fields instead. Ms. Extrum said they were planning winter construction.

Mr. Larry asked if their goal was to minimize the impact to the Fox Point recreational area, so their preference was not to put the construction laydown area on the left side.

Mr. Larry said one trail would be blocked while for a couple of months while they were digging for access, and would identify a safe detour. Vice-Chair Weiner commented that there was a large area to walk out there so they could detour.

Vice-Chair Weiner expressed concern for erosion. Ms. Extrum stated that there would be permanent impacts from the new structure in the wetlands, but others, such as the slope and trench were temporary until it was restored. Ms. Extrum went on to say

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that they had applied for a Shoreline Impact Permit for the temporary impacts, and they would be installing a silt curtain to protection.

Commissioner Jim Tucker commented that the greater good from repairing critical infrastructure was so important that the temporary impact of closing a trail shouldn't be the focus of the conversation.

Ms. Extrum said they anticipated the finalize design and permit process to be complete by summer 2021, and the construction mobilization setup to begin in September or October 2021 was contingent on permitting, bidding, and contractor's approach, and estimates. Ms. Extrum said she thought they hoped to do the construction in the water February, and do site restoration from March to May when they could plant grass and shrubs.

Alternate Commissioner Jane Kendall asked if they had plans for native plants for erosion control, and Ms. Extrum replied that they hadn't made a list, but would be interested in hearing recommendations, adding that they didn't want trees to prevent roots from impacting utilities. Chair Hislop suggested that they contact the Department of Environmental Services (DES) shoreline people for recommendations, noting that one plant recommended for shoreline erosion control was native blueberries.

Town Planner, John Krebs asked if the Commission wanted them to return with a planting plan. Vice-Chair Weiner replied that he thought that DES would make good suggestions that would be wind tolerant. Commissioner Tucker said he would like to see a plan.

Chair Hislop asked if there was a new wetland application, and Ms. Extrum said they submitted their application in November 2020, and had received comments from DES. Ms. Extrum said there was no meeting in December, so they were outside of the 40-day window for comments, but DES would still submit comments if they wanted.

Commissioner Kendall asked if the Commission wanted to submit a letter of support.

*Jim Weiner moved to have Town Planner, John Krebs write letter to Stephanie D'Agostino at DES that the Newington Conservation Commission recommended approval of the permit request from the City of Portsmouth Water Department for Little Bay Subaqueous Water Transmission Main at Tax Map 1, Lot 1, and that the applicant provide a review of the shoreline restoration planting. Andrew Meigs seconded, and voted in favor, along with Jane Hislop, Ben Hutchins, Jane Kendall, Jim Tucker and Jim Weiner.*

B) Permit request by Essential Power Newington, LLC for the construction of stairs and boom tie project at 190 Shattuck Way, Tax Map 14, Lot 2

Tracy Tarr, and Lindsey White with GCA reviewed the wetlands permit materials for the upcoming project with Essential Power, LLC, but stated that the wetland permit had not yet been submitted.

Ms. White stated that the intent was to adjust the existing dock, construct an aluminum set of stairs, and granite boom anchor within the 100-foot tidal buffer. Ms.

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White said the work area would be above the high tide mark on the existing path so there would be no wetlands impacts.

Ms. White said the stairs were needed for safe access for crews to employ the oil boom, as well as implement the spill prevention plan. Ms. White said the current steep slope conditions created difficulty for emergency crews, and would be more challenging during real emergency in the dark, or during a storm. Ms. White said they were currently using a tree for an anchor, which was not ideal, and a granite boom anchor would be more durable and reliable.

Ms. White said the tidal buffer impact would be minimized by minimal concrete landing, and foot crews going in a single file line.

Ms. White said they had coordinated with the Natural Heritage Bureau regarding sturgeon species identified in nearby waters, but there would be no direct impact with the water.

Ms. White added that they would be coordinating with Stephanie D'Agostino at DES, and DES had approved the mitigation fee for planting restoration.

Commissioner Meigs asked how the granite post would be installed, and Ms. Tarr replied that it would be pounded in, and there would be no excavation.

Chair Hislop asked what they would do if sea levels rose above the stairs and granite post as predicted. Ms. Tarr said they would put in another permit. Ms. White added that the project probably had a 30–50-year life span.

Chair Hislop asked about erosion on the walkway, and if they were planning on doing any planting mitigation. Ms. Tarr said a shrub and a seed mix were recommended.

Ms. White said they were looking for a recommendation, and were planning to submit to their permit application to DES shortly, and the Commission would receive a copy. Mr. Krebs said the Commission wouldn't vote on until a formal application was submitted, and suggested that they return for the next meeting on February 11, 2021.

Ms. White responded that they didn't need a review before submission, but could send an email, and assumed they wouldn't put a 40 day hold on it because they had already presented the project for review.

Vice-Chair Weiner said he didn't plan on any objections.

### **2) Other Business and Additional Discussions**

Chair Hislop said she and Vice-Chair Weiner had met with the Board of Selectmen, and they said they would cover the Commission's legal costs under their budget, and removed \$1,000 from the Commission's budget's legal line item.

Chair Hislop said she had submitted the Commission's 2022 budget request for \$8,508.

Vice-Chair Weiner said the budget had been dropped by 68% since 2012 when they had a budget of \$19,000.

Vice-Chair Weiner said he and Chair Hislop found out from Town legal counsel, Attorney John Ratigan wetlands consultants for applications, advise the Planning Board, and they can request that their fees be charged back to the applicants, and shouldn't

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come out of the Commission's budget. Vice-Chair Weiner said they decided to leave some money on the line item in case other expenses would occur, and could return the funds if unused.

**Minutes:** Andrew Meigs said he thought the Minutes for August 13, 2020, had been approved previously, and Jane Hislop agreed.

Andrew Meigs moved to approve the October 8, 2020, Minutes. Jim Weiner seconded, and all were in favor.

Andrew Meigs moved to approve the November 12, 2020, Minutes with corrections as discussed. Jim Weiner seconded, and all were in favor.

**Adjournment:** *Andrew Meigs moved to adjourn. Jim seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.*

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, February 11, 2022

**Respectfully  
Submitted by:** Jane K. Kendall, Recording Secretary