

Town of Newington, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes, Thursday, August 10, 2023

Call to Order: Chair Jane Hislop called the August 10, 2023, meeting at 6:31 PM.

Present: Vice-Chair Laura Rogers; Andrew Meigs; Jim Weiner; Derick Willson; Recording Secretary, Jane Kendall; Town Planner, John Krebs

Absent: Alternate Member, Bill Murray

1) Discussion: Fall 2023 projects/initiatives

Chair Hislop let the Commission know that she had sent messages to the Director of the Langdon Library to request three dates for a community education outreach presentation, and would contact Seacoast Science Center once she heard back on the dates.

Commissioner Andrew Meigs suggested that they also consider asking the Center for Wildlife in Cape Neddick to do a presentation.

Commissioner Jim Weiner said he had numerous ideas. Commissioner Weiner said he talked with someone that removed wildlife without destroying them, and that might be an interesting topic as well.

Chair Hislop suggested that everyone put submit a list. Chair Hislop went on to say that there were activities in town for children, but it was the Conservation Commission's job to educate adults, and then that information could be shared with Newington Public School or the Langdon Library.

Commissioner Weiner said he also talked to someone about constructing homes for airflow and prevention of molds and mildews.

Town Planner, John Krebs said mobile homes built with particle board in the 1980's was later found to cause cancer, and builders have learned a lot since that time.

Commissioner Meigs asked if they might include the building inspector in the discussion.

Commissioner Meigs said they could also talk about carbon pollution too. Mr. Krebs said Massachusetts was banning future sale of gas stoves because of pollution.

Commissioner Meigs wondered if the building inspector could do a community outreach, and if there might be a different way to disseminate information about local issues, shoreline permitting, and erosion control to residents, and new homeowners.

Chair Hislop replied that a checklist, and contacts had been discussed before. Mr. Krebs agreed that the Town Hall received a lot of inquiries, and said the building inspector talked about putting together an Official Town Facebook page.

Town of Newington, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes, Thursday, August 10, 2023

Commissioner Meigs suggested a presentation on companion planting for home gardeners. Jane Kendall suggested providing information to increase awareness on handling invasives like Japanese knotweed, multiflora rose, Oriental bittersweet, bindweed, and even spreading ornamentals that cause unintended consequences in gardens too.

Commissioner Weiner said the Town doesn't have purview over private homeowners, but they already provide landscape requirements and review for developers, and they could provide an informational packet to residents on landscaping materials.

Commissioner Weiner said the Commission needed to put together a list of recommended native trees for planting as well.

Mr. Krebs said he had seen a problem with the shoreline grid requirements for trees when the remaining trees were dying ash trees, adding that the Department of Environmental Services (DES) only requires owners to replace trees after cutting other trees illegally.

Commissioner Weiner suggested recording presentations and posting them on the Town website. Chair Hislop said the only problem was when presentations weren't recorded well, and the sound wasn't good, so it would be important to have a good recording device.

2) Other Business and Discussions

Chair Hislop said restoration work had been done around the parking area where Fox Point Road turned to dirt, but there was an issue with erosion on Fox Point where dirt parking area to staircase beach after a rainstorm. Chair Hislop said the area needed to be repaired with riprap to hold the woodchips in place and prevent further erosion.

Commissioner Weiner said he had observed bulldozers going back and forth 10' from the shoreline to get cement for the project, and he thought a letter should be written to the Board of Selectmen requesting the placement of boulders to prevent further erosion on the beach.

Commissioner Derick Willson said he thought that erosion control should be determined by knowledgeable parties.

Commissioner Meigs agreed that blocking off access entirely might be a problem in an emergency requiring access.

Mr. Krebs suggested that members attend a Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss this further. Commissioner Willson said he would attend the Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss concerns.

Derick Willson moved to have the Town Planner write a letter to the Board of Selectmen to fix the erosion near the new stairs, consider rip rap to prevent further erosion, and to have something done to limit vehicular access to the beach. Andrew Meigs seconded, and all were in favor.

Town of Newington, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes, Thursday, August 10, 2023

Commissioner Willson said he talked about solar carports at the last meeting, and would like to hear back from the Planning Board. Mr. Krebs said the Planning Board would be having regulatory discussions in the future, and it would be discussed then.

Mr. Krebs said the Town has had inquiries regarding charging stations, but he did not find many towns had that them, so most people relied on businesses.

Vice-Chair Rogers said Maine did grants for every town to have a changer, some change owners, some don't. thinks must be some grants. Chair Hislop commented that the use of solar charging stations was highly supported in Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Quebec, but it was not as supported in New Hampshire because of conflicts of interest with a specific power company. Vice-Chair Rogers said the grants might not be supported on a State level, but they were supported on a Federal level.

Mr. Krebs said there was not a lot of interest from Town officials in paying for solar charging stations. Vice-Chair Rogers said she understood, but there was potential for Federal funding, and self-support from the revenue generated.

Commissioner Meigs said he had seen a number of charging stations at libraries.

Commissioner Meigs wondered if the Town could encourage charging stations for new businesses. Mr. Krebs responded that the market would control the practice, but the Hannaford in Rochester had 4 or 5 charging stations, so he thought a hotel would want them too.

Mr. Krebs reminded members to encouraged new members for the Conservation Commission.

Minutes: *Chair Hislop moved to approve the May 11, 2023, Minutes. Andrew Meigs seconded the motion.*

Andrew Meigs moved to approve the July 13, 2023, Minutes. Derick Willson seconded, and all were in favor.

Adjournment: *Chair Hislop moved to adjourn. Vice-Chair Rogers seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.*

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 14, 2022

Respectfully

Submitted by: Jane K. Kendall, Recording Secretary