

Town of Newington, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, November 12, 2020

- Call to Order:** Chair Jane Hislop called the November 12, 2020 meeting at 6:35 p.m.
- Present:** Chair Jane Hislop; Vice-Chair Weiner; Commissioners Andrew Meigs; Ann Morton; Jim Tucker; Alternate Jane Kendall; and Town Planner, John Krebs
- Absent:** Commissioner Jim Tucker; Alternates Ben Higgins and Bill Murray
- Public Guests:** Steve Haight, P.E. with CivilWorks Engineering

1) **NHDES Standard Dredge and Fill:** Request Little Bay Lobster/Lordco Pier Associates regarding property located at 158 Shattuck Way, Tax Map 20, Lot 17

Steve Haight, P.E. with CivilWorks Engineering informed the Commission that Little Bay Lobster had repaired electric lines for their new building, and needed to inform the Commission of the Standard Dredge and Fill because they hadn't filed a Permit by Notification (PBN) before the utility work was done, but there was no need for a signature.

Town Planner, John Krebs added that Dave Price with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) allowed the applicant to backfill the trench for site safety before the review.

Mr. Haight added that they had also submitted a combined Shoreland Permit and Wetlands application to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). Chair Hislop asked if DES had reviewed the applications, and Mr. Haight said it was dropped off and signed on November 5, 2020, but they hadn't reviewed the Wetlands Permit as yet.

Vice-Chair Weiner noted that the applicant had also asked the Planning Board for a waiver from the landscape requirement, but he had asked if anything landscaping accents could be anything done. Mr. Haight showed the layout of the site, which showed that it was landlocked with easements, so they couldn't do anything on anyone else's property.

Commissioner Meigs asked if anything could be done to beautify the pier. Mr. Krebs pointed out that it was an industrial pier. Mr. Haight agreed, noting that it was a

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working waterfront from Portsmouth up, and although it would be nice to make it attractive, it was not the same as a recreational dock.

2) **Additional Business and Discussions**

A) 2020 Budget

Chair Hislop said she and Vice-Chair Weiner had presented the 2020 budget to the Board of Selectmen, and made adjustments that brought the total to \$9,518.00. The line items included \$2,500 for Services \$2500, \$191 for FICA, \$1,000 for Legal; \$500 for Community Education; \$50 for General Supplies; \$275 for Dues; \$1 for Beautification; \$5,000 for Consulting and \$1 for Reference. Chair Hislop said the proposal would be presented to the Budget Committee on Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

B) Prime Wetlands

Chair Hislop asked Mr. Krebs if the variances for the old cider mill on Fox Point Road had been approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), and Mr. Krebs said they had. Chair Hislop asked if they would need to return to the Conservation Commission for anything, and Mr. Krebs replied that they wouldn't unless there were new impacts.

Chair Hislop wondered what would happen if the property was sold, and the new owners wanted to expand to a four-bedroom dwelling. Mr. Krebs replied that it was a very small footprint, and it was almost impossible to get a septic for a single bedroom.

Chair Hislop said she had sent an email request for Prime Wetlands delineations before going to ZBA meeting because she couldn't find it. Mr. Krebs responded that he could email copies to the commissioners. Chair Hislop said she thought the maps should be available on the website for the community.

Mr. Krebs commented that the maps might need updating as Town wetlands consultant, Mark West had discovered that some wetlands that had been designated by aerial photographs.

Chair Hislop added that it would be helpful if property were included. Mr. Krebs said that the Board of Selectmen budgeted \$2,000 to update the maps, but \$2,000 wouldn't do much because it would cost closer to \$20,000.

Chair Hislop noted that the Board of Selectmen had charged the Conservation Commission's budget for Mark West's consultation on the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (A.R.M) funds criteria for Eversource's Seacoast Reliability transmission line expansion mitigation.

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C) Mitigation and Conservation Easement Discussions:

Chair Hislop reminded the Commission that Duane Hyde with Southeast Land Trust had invited the Commission to a site walk on the Adams Homestead Conservation Easement on Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 2 p.m.

Mr. Krebs said there had been discussion about using conservation funds to protect the Flynn Pit but Town Administrator, Martha Roy rejected the idea.

Chair Hislop said the Commission had hired Attorney FX Bruton to do research on legal protections for Fox Point Conservation area, but the Board of Selectmen at the time had rejected the Commission's recommendations. Vice-Chair Weiner said that was the objection that an outside entity would require public access. Commissioner Kendall added that the New Hampshire Attorney General's office did not allow property owners to hold their own easements because it was considered a conflict of interest.

Commissioner Meigs suggested that some entities, such as Wesleyan University were working with towns for carbon footprint credit by declaring conservation areas for a period of time. Chair Hislop wondered if local companies could donate to conservation easement credits.

D) Public Education

Vice-Chair Weiner told the Commission that he had spoken with a game warden about doing a public presentation, and the game warden wondered why the Town couldn't hook up cameras for boards, presenters, and audiences to connect the DeRochemont Room, the Kent Auditorium, and the Old Town Hall for as little as \$75, so that a resident like Emily Savinelli wouldn't have to record meetings with her phone.

Chair Hislop talked about lack of compatibility of systems between the fire, school and Town systems. Vice-Chair Weiner said that is why it would be good to get a good system.

Chair Hislop commented that Durham had all meetings on a channel. Mr. Krebs commented that he did not like recordings as a Board of Selectmen in his town, but it would be interesting to talk to Durham or Exeter that posted videos of their meetings to find out how many watched.

Commissioner Meigs agreed that he didn't think people would be as open in their interactions if meetings were taped.

Alternate Commissioner Jane Kendall said she had worked for the City of Portsmouth Planning Department, and their public access recordings didn't seem to deter discussions, and something could be said for professional transparency.

Mr. Krebs commented that the Economic Development Committee (EDC) did a good video on economic opportunities in town, and he thought it would be a great idea to do a video of the Adams Homestead history, site, and conservation area. Vice-Chair

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Weiner agreed, and said it would be a great idea for a student intern do a low cost, low tech video that a student intern could do.

Chair Hislop added that they could also do a video of the Baird property, Fox Point, and the Hislop/Saba conservation areas to be given to the library, and posted for public education.

E) Invasive Species Management

Vice-Chair Weiner reminded the Commission that he was concerned with the presence of bittersweet vines that were wrapped around trees on Fox Point Conservation area across from his house, and expressed interest in using funds for removal.

4) Updates and Announcements:

Mr. Krebs informed the Commission that the City of Portsmouth Water Department would be presenting a Dredge and Fill application in December 2020 for a water main replacement across Great Bay, and he would send out a summary and maps early next week for review.

6) Minutes: *Jim Weiner moved to approve the Minutes of October 29, 2020 with corrections as discussed. Ann Morton seconded, and the motion passed with all in favor.*

Adjournment: *Chair Hislop moved to adjourn. Jim Weiner seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.*

Next Meeting: Second Thursday of each month, 2020

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