

# Town of Newington, NH

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, March 15, 2018

- Call to Order:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop called the March 15, 2018 meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- Present:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop; Co-Chair Weiner; Commissioners Sandra Devin; Ann Morton; Alternate Jane Kendall and Town Planner, Gerald Coogan
- Absent:** Bill Murray
- Public Guests:** Kirsten Howard, Coastal Resilience Coordinator for the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Coastal Program; Jim Nelson; Wayne Wood

*This meeting was rescheduled from the March 8, 2018 meeting that was cancelled due to weather.*

### 1) **Fox Point Stabilization Workshop:**

Kirsten Howard, Coastal Resilience Coordinator for the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Coastal Program based at Pease appeared before the Commission to discuss the Fox Point Stabilization project and workshop that Mr. Coogan, she and a few other partners put together for March 26, 2018, beginning with a carpool at noon from Town Hall to several Fox Point site walks and return to Town Hall at 2:30 p.m. for a presentation on bank stabilization and work session until 4:30 p.m.

Ms. Howard went on to say that they would begin by meeting at the Hiatt property on Little Bay Road. She said the Hiatts' rip rap project had been permitted, but the barge to bring in the boulders would cost in the range of half a million dollars, so they were exploring other opportunities. Ms. Howard said she and Mr. Coogan, Tighe and Bond Engineers and David Price from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services had reviewed what had been done so far so that they would not have to start from scratch.

Ms. Howard said project resources for stabilizing the natural landscape of living shorelines came from regional grant in partnership with the University of New Hampshire and Great Bay Wildlife Refuge. Ms. Howard went on to say that a lot of experts in New Hampshire were familiar with on stabilizing salt marshes and dunes, but not steep banks. Ms. Howard added that she thought the meeting would be a good opportunity to connect with additional funders and bring together involved parties and outside experts, including Lori Sommers, Aquatic Resource Mitigation Coordinator with the New Hampshire

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Department of Environmental Services and Seth Wilkinson from Orleans, Massachusetts, to discuss cutting edge approaches for steep shorelines with severe erosion, plantings, core matting of coconut fibers using woody debris and rocks and terracing.

Ms. Howard said the group would then go to the Town property on Fox Point to observe the erosion on the steepest side and then they would return to the Town Hall for the presentation by Mr. Wilkinson and Dr. David Burdick from the University of New Hampshire, followed by a work session.

Commissioner Sandy Devins asked if Ms. Sommers would advise on what to include in the two-page A.R.M. proposal and Ms. Howard said she would.

Co-Chair Hislop asked Ms. Howard if she would consider doing a synopsis for the Commission's annual Spring for the Bay community education series and Ms. Howard said she would be happy to do so.

Ms. Howard also informed the Commission that she would be doing a presentation for municipal board members and staff on April 18, 2018 from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Hugh Gregg Coastal meeting room at Great Bay Wildlife Refuge and recommended RSVP's by April 16, 2018.

### **2) Mitigation and Conservation Easements:** Update of proposed conservation easement on property owned by John and Meg Ripley, located at 50 Old Post Road, Map 17, Lot 15

Town Planner, Jerry Coogan stated that there were no updates regarding mitigation funding from Eversource's "Seacoast Reliability" transmission expansion, but Planning Board Chair, Denis Hebert attended their most recent meeting and felt that the project would be moving ahead.

Co-Chair Weiner said they would present a request to renew the Warrant Article request for the easement funding from the previous year at the next Town meeting the following Saturday.

### **3) Wetlands Rules and Regulations**

Mr. Coogan informed the Board that NHDES was working on completing modifications and changes to their wetlands rules and that he had asked Town wetlands consultant, Mark West to review the changes and share his thoughts with the Commission.

### **4) Top Ten A.R.M.'s Projects**

Mr. Coogan passed out a draft list for review and discussion.

Co-Chair Hislop commented that she was told that NHDES said they could assist the Commission with creating a conservation easement on Fox Point that would protect it from development in the future. Mr. Coogan said they also talked about having a third party hold the easement with public access restrictions. Commissioner Kendall added that legally the Town could not hold their own easement as it would be considered a conflict of interest, but

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the issue was that there was apprehension with having a third party holding the easement out of concerns for public access.

Mr. Coogan also discussed culverts and aquatic passages that were impaired and could use improvements. Co-Chair Hislop noted that the list of culverts needed updating.

Co-Chair Hislop also suggested adding cleanup of the Town Forest dump and creating an easement as well.

### 5) Revitalization of Newington Garden Club

*This item was delayed to hear the following item first.*

### 6) Updates: Town Planner Report

*This item was taken out of order.*

Discussion ensued regarding the development activity on Michael Patenaude's lot on Nimble Hill Road and concerns with protections for the wetlands. Co-Chair Weiner asked Mr. Coogan to send the Town building inspector over to check the site to be sure that they were not encroaching on the wetlands buffers.

Mr. Coogan also noted that there was some concern regarding the clear cutting in close proximity to wetlands on River Road and Shattuck Way. Co-Chair Hislop suggested that Mr. Coogan contact the building inspector to be sure silt fences were being used to prevent spring runoff.

Mr. Coogan added that he thought an Alteration of Terrain permit for a disturbance of over 100,000 square feet still might be required for logging.

Mr. Coogan shared recommendations on storm surge for the Master Plan that were written by Julie LaBranche with Rockingham Planning Commission. Co-Chair Weiner praised with her thorough, yet succinct report. Commissioner Kendall said her report might be added as an appendix initially and then content could be added in the Master Plan itself later.

### 5) Revitalization of Newington Garden Club

*This item was delayed to hear the previous item first.*

Co-Chair Weiner informed the Commission that a few residents posted an interest in a garden club on the Unofficial Newington Residents Facebook. Co-Chair Weiner said that suggestions for involvement ranged from casual meeting discussions and plant swaps, to working on their own properties, or getting involved with Town projects. Commissioner Kendall added that it was suggested that there might be interest in two different garden clubs, one that was private for those meeting in their homes for discussions and plant swaps and another that could be sponsored by the Commission for Town projects.

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Co-Chair Weiner went on to say that several beautification projects in Town were currently being maintained by the Fire Department, but the Commission and Town could take feedback on interest and funding, adding that the Commission's Beautification fund had been cut by a third three years ago, but former Selectmen Jan Stuart and Cosmos Iocovazzi had said that the Commission could request an increase if needed.

Co-Chair Weiner added that the Carter's Rock would be a good sight for a beautification project with low growing plants or a few shrubs. He noted that the new sign was now up, but the stone fireplace had not been removed, the fence had not been repaired and the area had not been cleaned up, which could also be a project.

Co-Chair Weiner also suggested the possibility of gutting the Old Stone School and planting apple trees or having a community garden in the space behind the Old Stone School. Co-Chair Weiner said something needed to be done with the school to prevent it being returned to the State.

Co-Chair Hislop commented that the Historic District Commission had not been happy when the Commission planted trees in the Town Forest at one time. She suggested that that the town consider tearing the school down and using the stones for a recreation facility with a game room instead of rehabbing the existing school. Commissioner Kendall replied that demolition alone would be costly, and the problem was that many residents objected to the expenditure of expanding the Langdon Public Library, which had space for community activities as it was.

### 5) Other Business and Additional Discussions

Jim Nelson, owner of property at 84 Little Bay Road appeared before the Commission to discuss the management of trees on the lot he recently purchased.

Mr. Nelson said he wanted to remove the trees that had been identified as dying hazards, but his neighbor, Brian Haberstroh had called the Town and NHDES, so he needed to show compliance with the 25-count rule.

Mr. Nelson passed out drawings to show that he was in compliance with the 25-foot setback after he had Town wetlands consultant, Mark West survey the lot. He added that he had also sent copies to Dave Price with NHDES.

Mr. Nelson said he had been on the Bow Conservation Commission for four years and had read the regulations, but Dave Price also recommended that he take photos.

Mr. Nelson added that there were many tall trunks on the cliff that were threatening to pull the cliff down. Mr. Nelson to leave the root base of any trees he cut to prevent erosion. Co-Chair Weiner added that he could cut trees if they fell on his property, but he would have to call the State if they fell on the beach.

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Co-Chair Weiner introduced Wayne Wood of Newington Road. Mr. Wood stated that he had purchased the 20-acre lot behind his property that had a lot of wetlands on it and was landlocked. Mr. Wood said he hoped to build a house for his son on the abutting lot and wondered if the Town might consider a swap where he could put part of the wetlands into a conservation easement and acquire enough of the Town owned lot at the end of Airport Road for to gain access to the buildable area on his lot.

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Co-Chair Weiner recommend that Mr. Wood contact Town Planner, Jerry Coogan to arrange for Town wetlands consultant, Mark West to survey the wetlands to determine if the proposal was possible.

Co-Chair Hislop commented that she had no idea on what the Board of Selectmen would say, but possibly the Commission could make a recommendation for a wetlands easement.

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Co-Chair Weiner informed the Commission that a discussion on airborne needle cast disease was spreading through town and wondered if the Commission might make a recommendation. Co-Chair Hislop said she would talk with the pathologist where she worked for the U.S. Forestry Service and see what recommendations they had.

**6) Correspondence**

Co-Chair Hislop shared a note from Southeast Land Trust celebrating the preservation of Trickey's Cover for 15 years.

**Minutes:**     *Co-Chair Weiner moved to approve the Minutes for the February 8, 2017. Sandy Devins seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

**Adjournment:**     *Co-Chair Weiner moved to adjourn. Ann Morton seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.*

**Next Meeting:**     April 12, 2018

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

*These Minutes were approved and adopted at the April 12, 2018 Conservation Commission Meeting.*