

At Town of Newington, NH CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, May 10, 2018

- Call to Order:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop called the May 10, 2018 meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- Present:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop; Co-Chair Weiner; Commissioner Liz Durfee; Ann Morton; James Tucker; Alternate Jane Kendall and Town Planner, Gerald Coogan
- Absent:** Alternates Sandra Devin and Bill Murray
- Public Guests:** Dr Alix Laferriere with The Nature Conservancy; Chris Gagnon with MSM Engineering; Paige Dickey with Civil Works New England

Town Planner, Gerald Coogan opened the meeting by introducing newly appointed Commissioner Liz Durfee who was a professional planner with experience in natural resources and James Tucker, a retired police officer.

1) NHDES Permit Requests: 2.5-acre Great Bay Oyster Reef Restoration at Woodman Point by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the University of New Hampshire (UNH)

Dr Alix Laferriere explained that 80-95% of the oyster reefs in Great Bay had disappeared and that TNC and the University of New Hampshire had been collaborating on restoring 19.7 acres since 2008. She explained that the oysters played an important role in filtering and denitrifying to improve the quality of water for eel grass and other species.

Ms. Lafferiere said that the oyster spat was raised at UNH's Jackson Lab and were laid down on quarantined clam shells. She added that they were hoping to restore two or more acres to the native reefs on both Nannie Island and Woodman Point. She said there would be no digging and Doug Grout with New Hampshire Fish and Game would preside over the video assessment, along with Dr. Ray Grizzle and Krystin Ward at UNH to determine if there were native oysters there and to be sure no eel grass was present.

At Town of Newington, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, May 10, 2018

Ms. Lafferiere stated that this was the first time that TNC was identified on the permit and they had already received approval by the Natural Heritage Bureau and cleared by the Newington Historic District Commission.

Co-Chair Weiner asked if the three-year death problem had been solved. Ms. Laferriere replied that the two diseases, Dermo and MSX had not been fully resolved, but fortunately the native reefs hadn't contracted the diseases and were still reproducing. She said Nannie Island had not done well, but the Woodman Point and Lamprey Reef in Newmarket both did well last year. She added that Dr. Ray Grizzle from UNH took samples on May 2 and it appeared that the population had survived the ice piles over the winter and the densities were.

Co-Chair Hislop asked what they were doing about the invasive green crabs that had learned to open the oysters. Ms. Laferriere replied that a local fisherman had been trapping green crabs in Hampton and UNH Sea Grant was considering green crab fishing as had been done successfully in Italy, adding that the crabs preyed heavily on oysters. Co-Chair Hislop added that some local chefs had been serving them when their shells were soft shell.

Ms. Laferriere went on to say that they were experimenting with what size of oyster spat that the crabs were opening and were considering cotton bags or coconut bark that could protect them while small, then degrade by the time they get bigger and were safer from the crabs.

Ms. Laferriere noted that DES wetlands rules would be changing in December and the permit request was for five, possibly ten years if additional work was necessary. Mr. Coogan asked why their previous permit wasn't good for three years. Ms. Laferriere replied that they could continue the previous permit for Nannie Island so long as there was no change in the work, but the Woodman Point was new

Co-Chair Weiner moved to recommend the NHDES Permit requests by The Nature Conservancy and the University of New Hampshire for a 2.5-acre Great Bay Oyster Reef Restoration at Woodman Point. Ann Morton seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

2) Landscape Review:

- a) Proposal by **Anthony DiLorenzo** for a 100-room hotel at 2061 Woodbury Avenue, Tax Map #, Lot #

Chris Gagnon, project engineer for MSC Engineers appeared before the Commission, filling in for landscape architect, Rob Hoover to present the applicant's landscape proposal on the corner of Woodbury Avenue and Piscataqua Drive, site of the former Great Bay School.

At Town of Newington, NH CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, May 10, 2018

Mr. Gagnon stated that the focal point of the landscape would be an existing 48-inch beech tree. He said they designed the drainage around the tree and intended to keep the existing grading so as not to upset the roots. Mr. Gagnon said they hoped to keep some of the existing trees along Piscataqua Drive except one being removed for the access lane at the back. He said they hoped to install a kind of retaining wall tree wells, but the Town's review engineer, Eric Weinrieb suggested that they might need approval from the Board of Selectmen since they would be in the Town's right-of-way.

Mr. Gagnon added that other existing trees would be removed because they were not in good condition, but they would be transplanting a Japanese maple from the back and there would be a line of trees at the entry way on Woodbury Avenue, along with hardy, deciduous trees around the parking lot, as well as foundation plantings of deciduous shrubs and indigenous grasses, as well as a New England seed mix by the detention pond that would grow 6-24 inches high and be mowed once or twice a year.

Alternate Commissioner, Jane Kendall commented that it was important that they not bury any of the trees with loam or mulch as it would kill trees over time.

Co-Chair Hislop noted that the Conservation Commission required a year-round maintenance plan that would show what would be done during spring, summer, fall and snow removal. Co-Chair Hislop added that it was important that the trees were not hit by snow plows.

Co-Chair Weiner moved to recommend the landscape proposal by Robbie Woodburn Landscaping for Anthony DiLorenzo's 100-room hotel at 2061 Woodbury Avenue with the condition that a yearly maintenance schedule be provided with the final signed plan. Ann Morton seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

b) Proposal by Riverside Pickering Marine at 34 Patterson Lane

Paige Dickey with Civil Works New England passed out a copy of the landscape plan for the industrial lot beside a residential lot prepared by Robbie Woodburn Landscaping.

Ms. Dickey stated that the front of the lot would involve a nautical theme with landscaping around the stormwater pond and there would be a berm between the industrial and residential lots with Norway spruce and "Green Giant" arborvitae planted on top of the berm instead of a steel fence as was originally planned.

Co-Chair Hislop noted that the Norway spruce didn't seem as sensitive to the contagious fungus that was hitting the blue spruce, but suggested planting a third species to avoid a monoculture. She said there were several other species that were tolerant of planting near wetlands.

Commissioner Kendall expressed concern with deer browse and the height of the arborvitae making it susceptible to blow over from high winds. Co-Chair Hislop added that the tall arborvitae were not known for doing well with snow loads either.

At Town of Newington, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, May 10, 2018

Co-Chair Hislop added that a yearly maintenance update would be required along with the landscaper's licensed stamp on the final plan.

The application was continued to Thursday, June 14, 2018.

2) Mitigation and Conservation Easements:

a) Discussion of Fox Point Stabilization Workshop and Aquatic Resource Mitigation (A.R.M.) Proposal

Mr. Coogan stated that he had worked with Kirsten Howard from DES, along with Co-Chair Hislop's comments for the two-page proposal that was submitted on April 30, 2018.

Co-Chair Hislop asked when they could expect to hear about the A.R.M. grant and Mr. Coogan replied that he thought they would have a response in a month.

Co-Chair Hislop stated that Ms. Howard had also suggested applying for Coastal Resilience grants by July 6, 2018 to continue work at the same site at the Town docks. Mr. Coogan added that public access would not be required for restoration work.

Co-Chair Hislop asked Mr. Coogan what they would need to do differently for the Coastal Resilience grant and Mr. Coogan replied that they would need to obtain more exact data and costs from Ms. Howard.

Co-Chair Hislop noted that it would require a match and in-kind service. Commissioner Liz Durfee commented that she didn't think that the Coastal Resiliency grant would be a match for an A.R.M.'s grant. Co-Chair Hislop and Mr. Coogan replied that the Board of Selectmen had already stated that they would not be willing to match any grants for additional grants, except that they had some funds set aside for Fox Point. Co-Chair Weiner noted that he understood the Board of Selectmen had already committed \$5,000 to \$10,000 for the Moose Plate grant so he thought they would be agreeable to matching a different grant.

Co-Chair Hislop added that they could also applying for assistance with netting to protect the eel grass from geese and green crabs.

Mr. Coogan reminded the Commission that DES had pointed out that the Board of Selectmen needed to update their rules and issue a notice that the long-time practice of private dock storage needed to be removed on the Town shoreline as it would destroy the shoreline grasses. Commissioner Kendall asked Mr. Coogan to update the Board of Selectmen and have Town Administrator, Martha Roy send out letters to dock owners and post a notice on the Town website. Co-Chair Hislop added that they could add that they were informed by multiple DES officials and include the DES number.

At Town of Newington, NH CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, May 10, 2018

- b) Discussion on Conservation Easement proposal on property owned by **John and Meg Ripley** located at 50 Old Post Road, Tax Map 17, Lot 15

Co-Chair Weiner stated that after a review with Mr. Coogan of the discussion during the last meeting, he realized that it would be up to the Ripleys to determine if they wanted to wait for the \$80,000 wetlands impact mitigation funds from Eversource to purchase the entire ten acres or if they wanted to negotiate a lesser amount sooner, and any further negotiations would need to be done in closed session.

Mr. Coogan noted that the Seacoast Reliability Committee would conduct their hearings next week and although they could come up with a final decision in 60 days, but he thought that might be optimistic.

Co-Chair Hislop noted that negotiations and funding on conservation easements usually took three years as was the case with the DOT's mitigation of the Hislop and Saba properties and Southeast Land Trust's funding of the Baird easement.

- c) **A.R.M. Project Possibilities**

Co-Chair Hislop stated that this item had already been discussed during the previous meeting and nothing new had come up.

3) **Nominations:**

Co-Chair Weiner moved to nominate Jane Hislop as Co-Chair. Jane Kendall seconded the motion, and all were in favor with Jane Hislop abstaining.

Jane Hislop moved to nominate Jim Weiner as Co-Chair. Jane Kendall seconded, and all were in favor with Jim Weiner abstaining.

4) **Updates:** Town Planner Report

Mr. Coogan passed out samples of styles of conservation easement and wetland buffer posting markers that the Town could sell to property owners. Co-Chair Hislop requested cost estimates.

Co-Chair Weiner suggested using lime green as a visible color. Co-Chair Hislop agreed and said orange flagging disappeared among yellow birch in the fall.

Mr. Coogan noted that the Commission would need to decide on what spacing would be required for the postings. Commissioner Kendall suggested contacting Town wetlands consultant, Mark West. Co-Chair Hislop suggested that Southeast Land Trust might be another good group to contract.

At Town of Newington, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, May 10, 2018

Commissioner Kendall commented that some applicants had already received approvals that required markers some time ago, but none were available yet, so it would be good to get going on the order.

5) Other Business and Discussions:

Co-Chair Weiner commented that some people from out of town were shoveling for clams down along the shore of Fox Point instead of using rakes

Co-Chair Hislop informed the Commission that she had received from Jim Nelson who was building along Little Bay that his plan wasn't finished so he would return for his permit recommendation in June. She added that Mr. Nelson's plan would need to be finished before his inlet would be available as an entrance to move the excavator in for neighbor, John Wendell's hardscaping.

6) Invoice:

Jim Weiner moved to approve an invoice in the amount of \$227.50 from Rockingham County Conservation District for work that Tracy Degnan did in December 2017 for the Moose Grant application. Ann Morton seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Minutes: *Ann Morton moved to approve the Minutes for the April 12, 2018. Jane Hislop seconded, and all were in favor, except for new members that abstained*

Adjournment: *Jane Hislop moved to adjourn. Jane Kendall seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.*

Next Meeting: June 14, 2018

Respectfully

Submitted by: Jane K. Kendall, Recording Secretary

These Minutes were approved and adopted at the June 14, 2018 Conservation Commission meeting.