

North Hampton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
(Approved with Correction)
June 11, 2019

Administrative: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Lisa Wilson (Chair), Kathy Grant (Vice-Chair), Frank Arcidiacono, Lauri Etela, and Andrew Vorkink. Phil Thayer joined the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Members of the Public Present: Residents Audrey Prior, Aimee Margolis.

New Business: Lisa Wilson welcomed Audrey Prior to the Conservation Commission who was appointed as an Alternate Member by the Select Board at its June 10, 2019 meeting. Audrey was not able to be sworn-in because the paper work was not yet available.

Discuss whether to engage SCA Corps to Build a Trail to the Little River Conservancy:

Members discussed whether to engage SCA Corps to build a trail to the Little River Conservancy. The Commission noted that the Select Board and the public support public access to the LRC conservation land, located approximately 4000 feet from Woodland Road. The trail to the land would include wetlands crossings. SCA Corps has the resources to complete a trail by a team of 6-7 people within 5-10 days. The approximate cost to complete the work for 2019 is between \$5,000 - \$10,000 excluding the cost for materials.

Resident Aimee Margolis, whose land abuts the conservation land off Woodland Road, expressed her concerns that sections of conservation land are muddy, that the entrance to the Town-owned conservation parcel is located on a dangerous curve, and that trees should not be cut down for parking. Ms. Margolis noted that the Commission might want to create an area for bicycles rather than create a parking area for vehicles.

The Chair replied that the Commission has not removed trees in the past to create gravel parking areas and that the Commission aims to maintain the natural surroundings of conservation land. If any trees or vegetation were to be removed, the Commission might consider additional plantings. Any potential gravel parking area would be designed to accommodate only a few vehicles at any given time to enable visitors to safely park off the road on town-owned conservation land, similar to parking areas located at other conservation parcels in Town. Commissioners have noted that because a number of conservation parcels in Town are located off curved roads with limited visibility, it is a good idea to provide for safer off-road parking where feasible.

The Chair noted that the construction of a well-marked trail would prevent the public from mistakenly wondering onto abutting private property. Two Commissioners expressed concerns about the future maintenance of a 4000 feet trail leading to LRC and felt that Commission should consider work that needs to be done on existing trails before expending funds to build another trail. After some discussion, ***a motion was made by Andrew Vorkink, duly seconded by Laurie Etela, to authorize the Chair to contact SCA Corps to ask whether a feasibility study is possible to include the estimated cost for materials and an approximate timeframe for completing the work.*** The motion carried.

Old Business:

Conservation Easement Update: It was the consensus of the Commission that to rely upon Conservation Commission members to maintain trails is not viable. The Commission discussed the need to adopt a trail maintenance plan to include an annual budget. Phil Thayer volunteered to chair a trail maintenance subcommittee. Resident Aimee Margolis and Alternate Member Audrey Prior volunteered to serve on the committee. After some discussion, ***a motion was made by Andrew Vorkink, duly seconded by Kathy Grant, to propose the creation of a Trail Maintenance Subcommittee, to nominate Phil Thayer to serve as Subcommittee Chair, and for Phil to come back with a work plan and proposed budget by the September 2019 meeting.*** The motion carried.

Trail Maintenance: Phil Thayer reported that the Old Farm Road trail was cleared by Shep and Owen Kroner this year and that the Eagle Scout project to clear a trail on the Dustin Farm has been approved. A signed contract from Donny Knowles for the agreed upon fee of \$1,600.00, for clearing an area on the Dustin Farm, is necessary to encumber funds at the June 19, 2019 meeting of the Select Board.

Water Quality Testing Update: On Monday June 10, 2019 the DES conducted both visual and water quality testing in Little River adjacent to Viano Island, Appledore Avenue, and the salt marsh in the rear of Huckleberry during yesterday's dry conditions. From visual inspection, the overall condition of the surface waters appeared to be normal with a health supply of mummichogs and naturally occurring organic matter. However, a section of Little River, south of a home on Appledore Island raised some red flags due to a discoloration of the water. Lisa Wilson, Kathy Grant, and Travis Murray, North Hampton Building Inspector, accompanied the DES at the testing sites. Test results should be available in approximately three days. The Chair will report back to the Commission next month.

Conservation Land Monitoring Update: Kathy Grant accompanied the SELT on the June 5, 2019 monitoring visit for Little River conservation land and Forest Hills Farm. SELT will send a report of any findings to the Conservation Commission.

Correspondence: Email dated June 3, 2019 from Lisa Wise, Climate Adaption Program Manager, UNH Extension and NH Sea Grant, to inform the Conservation Commission of the June 14 Climate Assistance application deadline. As a citizen, Lisa Wilson requested that the Select Board encumber funds to engage the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) to complete a Natural Inventory (NRI) for the Town of North Hampton. The NRI, now outdated, was last completed by the RPC in 1993. The updated plan will include a climate resilience section, a conservation plan consistent with the 2016 Coastal Conservation Plan to include all relevant maps and up-to-date natural resource information. The Select Board must have a signed contract by June 19 to encumber the funds from the Conservation Commission budget.

A motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Andrew Vorkink, to authorize the Chair to draft a preliminary scope of work to engage the RPC to complete a NRI for the Town of North Hampton, to request that the Select Board encumber funds for a NRI by the June 19 deadline from the Conservation Commission budget not to exceed \$8000, and to authorize the Chair to apply for the NH Sea Grant (Climate Change Assistance) Program by the June 14 Deadline. The motion carried.

Email dated May 31, 2019 from Rue Teel, Summer Intern, SELT, to ask whether the Chair of the Conservation Commission was free to attend a monitoring visit at Forest Hills Farm and 57 Woodland Road/Atlantic Ave on Wednesday, June 5 at 8:00 a.m. Kathy Grant, Vice-Chair, replied that she will accompany Ms. Teel on the monitoring visit.

Email dated May 28, 2019 from NH DES: Land Resources Management File # 2018-02284. 3 Ocean Boulevard, North Hampton: Tax Map 1, Lot 1-12. After analysis of photographs provided by the landowner and aerial images, review of the septic system plan prepared by Altus Engineering Inc., dated March 21, 1997, and after consultation with the State Coastal Ecosystems Specialist, the NHDES has concluded that a portion of the fence on the subject property has been erected in sand dunes. By June 28, 2019 the owner must provide evidence that the fence was removed or must have submitted a completed permit application.

Email dated May 28, 2019 from NH DES: Land Resources Management File # 2019-000669, 41 & 45 North Road, North Hampton: Tax Map 17, Lots 78 & 79. The NH DES Land Resources Management Program has received a complaint about the above referenced property. The complaint alleges that either the property owner or an agent has filled in wetlands without a permit or proper authorization from DES. The DES requires that the owner of the property respond to the complaint within 20 days of the date of the letter.

Other Business:

Philbrick's Pond Drainage Evaluation: Frank Arcidiacono offered to contact Select Board member Larry Miller to help find a solution to remedy the Philbrick's Pond drainage problems.

Land Use Summit Meeting: Kathy Grant will be attending the June 12 meeting. The two main topics for discussion are preserving North Hampton's water quality and conservation land use and trail maintenance.

Mowing of Community of Garden: Phil Thayer will ask Walter Nordstrom for a note/contract to mow the Community Garden field. ***A motion was made by Phil Thayer, duly seconded by Kathy Grant, to engage Walter Nordstrom to mow the Community Garden field for a fee of \$400, but not to exceed \$450.*** The motion carried.

Approval of May 16, 2019 Draft Meeting Minutes: ***A motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Frank Arcidiacono, to approve the May 16, 2019 minutes as written, with Phil Thayer and Laurie Etela abstaining.*** The motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Moore
Recording Secretary

"These minutes were prepared within five (5) business days as required by NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by the majority vote by the Commission."