

Conservation Commission Approved Minutes January 10, 2013

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

January 10, 2013

7:00PM Council Chambers

Members Present: Drew Kiefaber (Chairman), Bruce Fecteau (Vice Chair), Jeff Goldknopf, Fred Pearson, Stephanie Coster (Alternate), Jessica Veysey (Alternate), Bob Gazda (Alternate), Janice Rosa (Planning Board Rep), Dan Wright (Town Council Rep)

Members Absent: George Hilton, excused

Called to Order: 7:02 PM

Agenda Items:

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Drew Kiefaber nominated Stephanie Coster as a voting member in the absence of George Hilton. Drew Keifaber welcomed Bob Gazda to the commission and thanked him for agreeing to serve as an Alternate.

3. Public Comments

Ellen Snyder (26 Johnson Drive) addressed the Conservation Commission to inform them of recent developments to host a public forum on the state of Great Bay. She attended PREP's State of Our Estuaries conference in December which addressed the broader issues facing the state's waterways. Considering the upcoming warrant article for the Newmarket waste water treatment plant, she and Drew Kiefaber feel that the timing is perfect to host a forum that addresses the specific issues facing Newmarket and the Great Bay. Ms. Snyder has begun scheduling speakers for February 19th. She approached Peter Wellenberger (Great Bay-Piscataqua Waterkeeper) who has agreed to participate. He recommended Michelle Daley from UNH who has conducted extensive point and non-point nitrogen testing throughout the Great Bay. She confirmed that the Town Hall will be available and that it can be broadcasted on Channel 13. She is looking to the Conservation Commission to help host and promote the event. Jessica Veysey asked that, when she speaks with Michelle Daley, to verify that she will be able to speak specifically to the issues facing the town of Newmarket and that the material be presented in a way that was understandable to the public. Ms. Snyder agreed that the focus should be on Newmarket and would confirm that with Ms. Daley. Jessica Veysey suggested that the Education sub-committee could take a lead on promoting the forum. Bruce Fecteau asked if surrounding towns would be invited to the forum and Ms. Snyder responded that the emphasis would be on Newmarket but other towns are welcome to attend. She explained that other forums are being held in other towns which will speak more broadly to water quality in the Great Bay. Bruce Fecteau suggested reaching out specifically to the towns that are up river from Newmarket, such as Lee or Epping. Jeff Goldknopf suggested the Town Council take a role in promoting the forum since their meetings are generally well attended by the public. Dan Wright agreed as he expects most, if not all members, to attend. The Conservation Commission unanimously agreed to host the forum and Jessica Veysey will be the commission contact for Ms. Snyder.

Bruce Fecteau asked if recreational activity on the Great Bay has been discussed. Ms. Snyder explained that there are various environmental indicators measured and some recreational activity may be included in that but it doesn't appear that they have a specific indicator for recreational activity. Jeff Goldknopf asked about the format for the forum. The format has not been finalized yet but she is considering giving each person on the panel a few minutes to speak, followed by an open Q&A session. There will be one more Conservation Commission meeting before the forum and most of the details will be worked out by then.

4. Approval of Minutes

December 13, 2012: Jessica Veysey requested a change on p. 2:14 and on p. 3:25.
Action

Motion: Janice Rosa made a motion to approve the minutes as revised.

Second: Fred Pearson

Vote: All in favor. Bruce Fecteau abstained due to absence at the meeting.

5. Treasurer's Report

Jeff Goldknopf distributed the financial report but there was no activity for the month, other than interest earnings. Bruce Fecteau asked about payment for the pontoon boat rental and Jeff Goldknopf confirmed it had been paid in the previous month. Drew Kiefaber reported that he submitted two check requests to the town for contract payment for Hilton Easement monitoring and membership in the NH Conservation Commissions.

6. Committee and Sub-Committee Reports

- Town Council Report – Dan Wright reported that most of the activity has been focused on the upcoming warrant article for the waste water treatment plant.

- Planning Board Report – Janice Rosa reported that the Planning Board voted to move forward with the recommendations to expand the mixed use functions within the downtown area. It is being sent to the Town Council.

- Dam Removal Subcommittee – Nothing to report.

- Sub-Committee Reports

§ Policy and Process – Nothing to report.

§ Land Protection – Nothing to report.

§ Trail Maintenance – Drew Kiefaber talked with Gary from Great Bay Snow Rollers and they are happy to help remove the old bridge on Wiggin Farm. They will need more information on the exact location of the bridge but work will likely not commence until the spring. There may be an opportunity for the Conservation Commission to work with the Snow Rollers on common trail interests down the line.

§ Education and Outreach – Nothing to report.

7. Chairman's Report – Nothing to report.

8. Old/New Business

- Easement Monitoring – Piscassic-Loiselle

Report is complete and submitted to DES and LCHIP

- Easement Monitoring – Wiggin Farm

Report has been written and submitted. The letter to the abutter still needs to be drafted.

- Easement Monitoring – Smith Sisters/Audubon

Report has been written and submitted.

- New Roots Farm

The monitoring report needs to be submitted by the end of January so Drew Kiefaber is looking to schedule the site walk as soon as possible. Drew Keifaber will contact the owners and ask them if they have a preference for either Sunday, Jan. 13th or Jan. 20th. Once he has confirmed the date and time, he will notify everyone. Anyone who is interested and available to join the site walk is welcome.

Bruce Fecteau asked that the scholarship be added to next month's agenda. Drew Kiefaber said he has been contacted by two teachers who plan to submit funding requests for conservation related class projects and/or field trips and he expects to see those come through shortly.

- Action Item List

- Complete easement monitoring reports; done no further action
- Create education outreach plans about nitrogen removal from the Great Bay; in process
- Think about creating a trail on the Hayden property in conjunction with Fish and Game; delayed until better weather
- Continue invasive species removal; nothing to report but planning should begin soon for a coordinated effort in the spring
- Continue to investigate the addition of Follett's Brook to the prime wetlands and/or review amended application in Concord (Policy & Process subcommittee); in process pending a trip to Concord
- Develop a process for identifying when land has changed from current use for tax purposes (Policy & Process subcommittee); nothing to report
- Create a Prime Wetlands Map (Jeff); Draft copies of the Prime Wetlands Maps were distributed. Discussion ensued around recommended changes to the formatting and appearance of the maps and whether or not to show the buffers on the maps. Drew Kiefaber asked that we follow standard protocol on whether or not to include the buffers. Jeff Goldknopf

will recommend adding the RSA to the index page as well.

- Finish connector trail at Piscassic/Loiselle; delayed until better weather
- Amend Wiggin Farm management plan to move mowing to after Sept 15; the management plan has not been formally changed but the mowing has been getting done after Sept 15
- Remove defective snowmobile bridge from Wiggin Farm & arrange meeting with Snow Rollers to discuss mutual interests (Drew); in process

Stephanie Coster said “delayed” actions will remain on the list so that they do not get lost.

9. Adjournment Action

Motion: Bruce Fecteau made a motion to adjourn.

Second: Janice Rosa

Vote: All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:02PM.
The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 2/14/13 at 7PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky LaPense