

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
October 12, 2017

7:00 PM Council Chambers

Members Present: Drew Kiefaber (Chair), Patrick Reynolds (Vice Chair), Andrea Sellers (Treasurer), Jeff Goldknopf, Julia Sinclair (alternate), Rose-Anne Kwaks (Planning Board Rep), and Casey Finch (Town Council Rep-Ex-Officio)

Members Absent: Marianne Hannagan and Ann LaFortune are excused.

Called to Order: 7:03 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

The Chair appointed **Julia Sinclair** to serve as a voting member this evening.

3. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

The Chair asked to revise the agenda for a guest to make a presentation. There was no objection.

8. Old/New Business

Piscassic River/Loiselle Property Kiosk: The Chair wished the email information and comments to be included in the record. The comments are attached at the end of the minutes. Ellen Snyder, Ibis Wildlife Consulting, is here to finalize the text and images for the kiosk final design before printing. She has incorporated the suggestions of members. The members discussed the management plan and Town ordinances that pertain to this property. To be a good neighbor to the adjoining Audubon Property, it was suggested that the CC place a sign at the stone wall to indicate that dogs must be leashed at this point before entering their property. Ellen is hoping to hear from Phil Brown from Audubon by the end of the week with his comments.

Action

Motion: **Drew Kiefaber** moved that Ellen Snyder provide the text and images to Infinite Imaging (<http://www.infiniteimaging.com/>) and request that they prepare the graphic design to put on an appropriate sized panel for the Piscassic River/Loiselle Kiosk and provide a quote for services rendered including printing.

Second: **Rose-Anne Kwaks**

Vote: Approved 6-0-0

The proof will be available for final approval and funding next month. Thank you very much Ellen!
(see addendum pages 5-9)

The meeting returned to the agenda.

4. Approval of Minutes

September 14, 2017:

Action

Motion: **Drew Kiefaber** moved that the minutes of September 14, 2017 be approved as amended.

Second: **Patrick Reynolds**

Vote: Approved 5-0-1

5. Treasurer's Report

Andrea Sellers, Treasurer, reviewed the copy of the financial report with the members. Contracted Services includes the money spent on easement monitoring of the Hilton Property by the SELT annually.

6. Committee and Subcommittee Reports

Town Council: The Chair announced that the Town has created (by RSA) a new committee called the Energy and Environmental Advisory Committee. They are seeking a member from the Conservation Commission. Membership on the Committee shall include one member from the TC, one member from the CC, one member from the PB, and four members at large (serving three year terms). The goal of the new committee is to "recommend best practices in the area of municipal buildings, facilities and operations, fuels, vehicles, and transportation; responsible purchasing; energy sources; air quality; and climate change. The committee shall include policies that the Town has already adopted, identifies and recommends voluntary actions, projects and programs to the citizens of Newmarket; and recommends actions, projects and programs to the Town Council for funding." They would be meeting once per month. After discussion, the Chair appointed **Jeff Goldknopf** as an alternate until the CC can select another representative when the regular meeting schedule is determined. The members agreed with a 5-0-1 vote. Thank you Jeff!

Casey Finch reported on the last meeting of the TC. They reviewed the CIP report/recommendations with Diane Hardy and discussed the audio concerns in the chamber. Rewiring will be necessary, but the funds will come from an old fund set up a decade ago. The TC made two appointments to the Energy and Environmental Advisory Committee.

Planning Board: **Rose-Anne Kwaks** reported that Kyle Pimental, Strafford Regional Planning, presented the Setting SAIL Report - Coastal Risk and Hazards Commission. He said that they do not have the authority to designate historical district. They have concerns about several culverts in town. The well at Moody Pt., which currently suffers from salt water intrusion, is also of concern.

Trail Sub-Committee: **Jeff Goldknopf** will look into the signage needed for the intersection of the PRL and the Audubon properties. **Rose-Anne Kwaks** has a sign from Audubon that will work and will drop it off for Jeff at work.

7. Chairman's Report

Is it a meeting?: The Chair asked for clarification from the Town Administrator's office regarding 'when is meeting a meeting'- especially email conversations. Wendy Chase responded with a flow chart to help the CC review the Right to Know Law. Four members gathering to discuss an issue is considered a quorum for the CC and, therefore, must be a noticed meeting. The same issue applies to email. Sending information to members in email is fine, but do not reply with comments back to "all". There was discussion among members and all felt that this was very useful. (see addendum page 10)

Request for use of Schanda Park: The Chair approved a request for use of Schanda Park on October 7, 2017 for a birthday party. Since the CC was between meetings, the Chair checked the calendar for conflicts, then approved the application on behalf of the CC and notified the applicant and the Police Department of the

approval. The Chair also advised the applicant of our standard requirements for use of the Park. **Patrick Reynolds** lead a discussion among members about the application process.

Membership in the NH Association of Conservation Commissions: The invoice for the FY2018 dues for the NH Association of Conservation Commission arrived in the mail. The dues are \$363.00 and include many benefits:

- Discounted rate at our **Annual Conference to be held on November 4th**;
- Representation in the state legislature and on state-wide commissions to make sure your voice is heard;
- Access to technical assistance and guidance on conservation funding, natural resource inventory, and many other issues;
- Educational opportunities focused on wetland permit review, conservation planning and wildlife habitat protection;
- Networking opportunities including roundtables, hikes, and potluck gatherings;
- Up-to-date publications from our E-newsletter and Legislative Updates.

Action

Motion: **Drew Kiefaber** moved that the Newmarket Conservation Commission become members of the NH Association of Conservation Commissions for FY2018 and pay the dues of \$363.00.

Second: **Julia Sinclair**

Vote: Approved 6-0-0

More information may be found at <http://www.nhacc.org/commissions/>. **Andrea Sellers** will submit the check request. The Annual Meeting will be held on November 4, 2017 at Pembroke Academy. The registration fees will be paid for any CC members who wish to attend.

Great Bay Matters: The newsletter from Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve was received:

<https://www.greatbay.org/documents/gbmfall2017.pdf>

NHDES Ground Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau Newsletter:

<https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dwgb/index.htm>

<https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/newsletters/en/index.htm>

Information Received from SOLitude Lake Management Co. in VA:

<http://www.solitudelakemanagement.com/>

Fall Newsletter from the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire:

http://seltnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/SELT_News_Fall17_web.pdf

8. Old/New Business (cont)

Schoppmeyer Park: **Jeff Goldknopf** reported on the recent meeting of the Schoppmeyer Park Committee. Green Monster Landscaping, a firm with an office in Barrington, was selected to build the garden area and seating wall. Work is expected to begin in the spring. The committee still hopes to officially open the Park in the spring. The garden plan, at this point, is considered fungible. There is hope to use pollinator shrubs in the plan. The NHDES wants to see a plan with the wetlands delineated and the placement of the dock before moving forward.

Dearborn Property Survey: **Drew Kiefaber** will redraft the letter for a request for quotes.

Heron Point Sanctuary: **Drew Kiefaber** will reach out to the TA to confirm the appropriate person(s) to contact in order to begin the conversation about the gate with the Heron Point HOA.

Annual Easement Monitoring:

Silverman –Schneer: **Andrea Sellers** agreed to do the monitoring on October 28, 2017 at 9:00 am. The property is located at 41 Neal Mill Road. **Drew Kiefaber** will send her the 2016 monitoring report for reference.

Piscassic River/Loiselle: The property is located at 270 Wadleigh Falls Road. **Jeff Goldknopf** and **Julia Sinclair** will do the monitoring on October 22, 2017 at 8:00 am.

Audubon/Smith Sisters: **Drew Kiefaber** will reach out to Phil Brown, Director of Land Management for the NH Audubon, to see if he would like to join the walk this year. **Patrick Reynolds** would like to participate. This property generally takes 2-3 hours to walk and is located at 356 Wadleigh Falls Road.

Mowing at Wiggin Farm: **Jeff Goldknopf** would like to thank Rick Malasky and DPW for holding off on the mowing of the field until this week which is well past the October 1 mowing target date. He also mentioned that the CC should go out early next year to set the stakes around the milk weed areas. The Chair reviewed the issue of mowing at the Wiggin Farm from the last meeting. Big thanks to Geoff Cunningham for bringing this important issue to the last meeting.

Conservation Commission Funded Field Trips for Newmarket Schools: **Jeff Goldknopf** would like to suggest that we look at the funding for conservation/natural resource-related field trips. **Andrea Sellers** will send the updated letter to members for comments and the CC will then proceed with promoting the funds to appropriate people within the school system.

Action

Motion: **Jeff Goldknopf** made a motion to bring the funding level currently available for natural resource related field trips for the Newmarket Schools up to a level of \$500.00 for this academic year.

Second: **Julia Sinclair**

Vote: Approved 6-0-0

Another special thank you to DPW for taking the turtle signs down and storing them again this year!

9. Adjournment

Action

Motion: **Drew Kiefaber** moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Second: **Andrea Sellers**

Vote: Approved 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 9, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary

Email Chain of Comments Regarding the Piscassic River/Loiselle Property Kiosk:

Ellen Snyder:

After my meeting with CC I made some revisions to the two maps and the text. Attached are all three.

Can you send out to full CC for final review?

Once you all sign off I can correspond with Infinite Imaging for a quote and they will then create proofs.

Julia Sinclair:

- I just received these from Ellen to review. She is looking for final sign off from us. I haven't had a chance to view yet but wanted to get them to you asap.
- Would you please review by Wednesday, September 27th and if you have any concerns, please cc whole group (so we can respond and continue to move this forward).
- If I don't hear from you by the 27th, I will assume you are onboard with these versions.

Casey Finch:

Only possible tweak... or something similar:

Dogs/Pets ~~are permitted but please:~~

- ~~must be kept~~ keep under control at all times
- pick up after your pet
- From April 15th through August 1st keep dogs on trails, out of fields, and out of wetlands

Julia Sinclair:

Thanks Casey! I agree, your tweak sounds nicer. What does everyone else think?

Also - with that, maybe the first bullet should be * keep pet under control at all times

Ann LaFortune:

The wording tweak is appropriate. Ellen's printed map and descriptive text of the Piscassic-Loiselle Conservation Area looks great. Thank you Julia.

Rose-Anne Kwaks:

Being out in the garden on my property all the time I see a lot of what the public thinks they can do on public land even when the postings say otherwise. I suggest:

Pets must be kept on a short leash
No golfing
No collecting/ foraging
No loitering
No campfires
No camping
No snowmobiles
Parking for visitors of park only

We have had several attempts of people walking the property with metal detectors and shovels, dogs running into nesting areas, people lounging for long periods of time out in the field, hitting golf balls and digging up the turf. The above are part of the restrictions posted on our property by NH Audubon.

Casey Finch:

I do agree with Rose-Anne about additions. That being said, in terms of readability for main sign (which is very wordy) perhaps we do a separate sign. I'd suggest one that is more simple/ graphic in nature to draw attention. Also, it would be harder to ignore.

A park near my work puts prohibitions on a separate sign like this:



Julia Sinclair:

I think we should be careful around being too negative. We would like people to feel welcome.

Jeff Goldknopf:

I have not been able to look at the management plan or deeds, but dogs are allowed off leash at this property. I am also not sure about loitering... I thought we encouraged people to spend lots of time out on our properties. I have sat for hours watching the vernal pool. We have to remember that this is multiple use property close to town. It is managed for wildlife and passive recreation. Soil disturbance like metal detecting and digging is actually not allowed at some of our properties and most likely not allowed at this one either.

That being said we cannot list everything people cannot do here. I say we list what the park is for and a few commonly violated rules. I was under the impression that this is what had already been done in the current version.

I worked in the backcountry teaching leave no trace for a few years and I will say that over signage is a huge problem. I quickly learned that educational signs were far more effective than regulatory signs. I got a lot of "tell me I can't, I don't think so" and "that's a dumb rule" so I worked on getting reactions like "oh, so that's why".

I would also add that we might be having a group discussion that we should not be having out of meeting. Maybe we can get around this by reading some into the minutes at our next meeting. I just did it too so I'm not pointing fingers! Just saying.

Rose-Anne Kwaks:

Hi Jeff,

You said you haven't read the management plan or deed, so where did you get the information about dogs off leash being allowed? Don't let that information be too well known because then we will have a dog park!! Believe me, I see visitors every day on this property and I can tell you that the public must be informed as to what they cannot do on these properties, not just listing a "FEW commonly violated rules". These parcels of land were put into conservation to preserve them in their natural state, not to be used by the public in any way that would be detrimental to their health.

Posting a complete list of regulations is not being negative but it informs the public of what is expected of them when they use these properties. It is like telling your child only a "few" of the rules that you expect them to do or not do in certain circumstances. I for one am not concerned with how negative posting rules might be but in safeguarding the properties put in our care.

Jeff Goldknopf:

I just remembered this looking into the subject years

back: https://library.municode.com/nh/newmarket/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH4AN_ARTIIDO_S4-30PRPACO

The Piscassic-Loiselle (Parcel R5 91-2) and Wiggin Farm (Parcel R6 21) properties allow dogs off leash per ordinance. We have traditionally asked they be kept on leash in the fields during certain seasons per the management plans as Ellen described in the text. I will stop by town hall to try to get a copy of the management plan tomorrow. I know there is a hard copy and I think a disc with a PDF.

Text Prepared by Ellen Snyder of Ibis Consulting:

Welcome to the Piscassic River -- Loiselle Conservation Area

A Town of Newmarket-owned conservation area open to the public

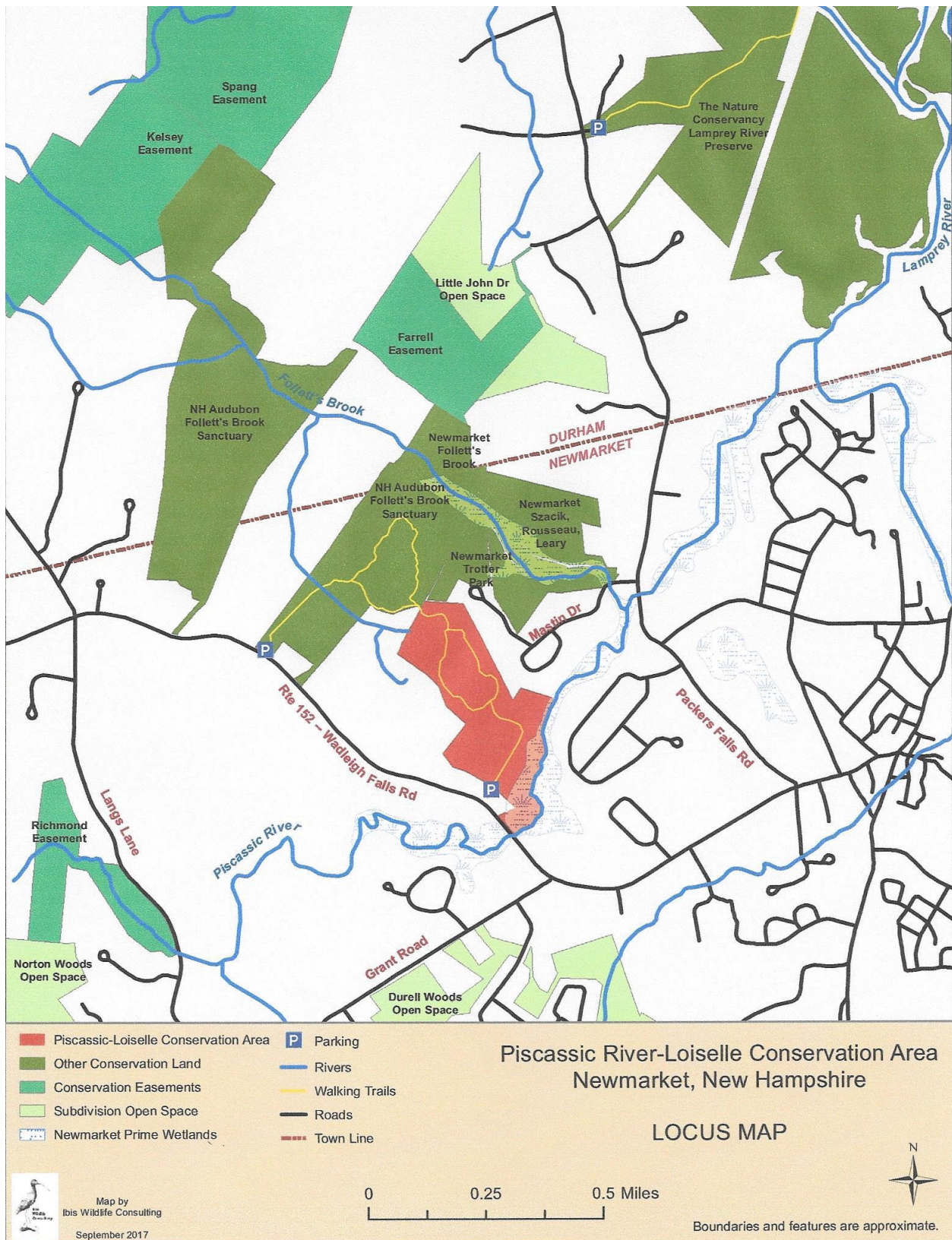
Please help us maintain this conservation area by treading lightly

- Open from dawn to dusk
- Permitted - Leave no trace (carry in/carry out)
 - Pedestrian activity including walking, snowshoeing, and x-country skiing
 - Hunting and fishing
 - Dogs/Pets
 - Keep dogs under control at all times
 - Pick up after your pet
 - From April 15th through August 1st keep dogs on trails, out of fields, and out of wetlands
- Prohibited
 - Wheeled vehicles (including mountain bikes)
 - Camping
 - Horseback riding
- Please help protect nesting birds and other wildlife

The Town of Newmarket purchased this 45-acre parcel in 2003 with funding from the Town of Newmarket Open Space Bond, Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Water Supply Land Grant Program. The property was sold to the Town of Newmarket for conservation purposes by the Loiselle family in loving memory of their parents, Robert M. and Estelle T. Loiselle.

The Piscassic River-Loiselle Conservation Area protects 1,900 feet of riparian habitat along the Piscassic River, an important tributary to the Lamprey River. The 11-acre hayfield is maintained and mowed a few times during the growing season by a local farmer. The field also offers an open vista as one enters the property. Tree swallows, bluebirds, chimney swifts, turkey vultures, among other birds forage for insects and other food over the field. The walking trail leads through the field and into an Appalachian oak-pine forest. From there the trail winds along stone walls and around several rock outcrops. The woods are lush with overstory oaks, hickories, and pines and an understory of native shrubs and herbaceous plants including alder, elderberry, dogwoods, blueberries, ferns, baneberries, and much more. Wetlands in the uplands and along the Piscassic River are home to many wildlife including wood frogs, salamanders, turtles, snakes, ducks, mink, deer, and dragonflies. For a relatively small property, not far from downtown Newmarket, the Piscassic River-Loiselle Conservation Area is a beautiful and diverse mix of field, forest, and wetland. The trail offers a relaxing respite after work or school or on the weekend. For an extended walk, continue on to New Hampshire Audubon's Follett's Brook Sanctuary.

The Newmarket Conservation Commission stewards the Piscassic River-Loiselle Conservation Area, with help from community volunteers to clear invasive plants and maintain the trail. The primary goals for the property are to protect water quality in the Piscassic River and wetlands, maintain wildlife habitat, preserve local agricultural opportunities, and provide for low-impact recreation. For more information about the Newmarket Conservation Commission visit the website: www.newmarketnh.gov/conservation-commission.



Right to Know Law

