

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH

April 11, 2019

7:00 PM Council Chambers

Members Present: Patrick Reynolds (Chair), Marianne Hannagan (Vice Chair), Sam Kenney, Melissa Sharples, Drew Kiefaber (Alternate), and Casey Finch (Town Council Rep – Ex-Officio)

Members Absent: Cris Blackstone and Sarah Finch (Planning Board Rep)

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Drew Kiefaber was appointed as a voting member this evening.

3. Public Comments

Kristine Groleau, 323 Ash Swamp Road, is in attendance this evening to address an issue currently under consideration by the Planning Board. Her complete statement is attached as an addendum on page 4 of these minutes.

4. Approval of Minutes

March 14, 2019

Action

Motion: **Sam Kenney** moved that the minutes of March 14, 2019 be approved.

Second: **Melissa Sharples**

Vote: Approved 4-0-1 (Marianne Hannagan abstained)

Action

Motion: **Drew Kiefaber** moved that the Notes from the Non-Public/Confidential Session of March 14, 2019 be approved.

Second: **Melissa Sharples**

Vote: Approved 4-0-1 (Marianne Hannagan abstained)

5. Treasurer's Report

There was no report this evening.

The Chair asked to revise the agenda to accommodate an item from Old/New Business.
There was no objection.

8. Old/New Business

Christian Matthews – Trail Maps for Conservation Properties: Christian Matthews is here this evening to help the CC with methods to create trail maps of conservation lands using smart phone apps. Christian is the Transportation/GIS Analyst for the Rockingham Planning Commission and lives in Newmarket. He worked

with Epping last year to prepare GPS trail maps and wanted to offer his help to Newmarket. GPS trails are created with an apps that ping every 2-3 seconds as you walk along a trail. It is very easy with any cell phone. His preferred app is OSMTracker which is an offline GPS tracker designed for collecting points of interest (POI) to be added to the map and for recording GPX tracks. POIs can be marked using shortcut buttons, voice, text, or by taking a picture. OSMTracker data is exported in GPX format with waypoints, making it suitable for import into the JOSM (Java OpenStreetMap Editor) map editor. One can also directly upload waypoints when one uploads tracks. OSMTracker is also highly customizable, allowing advanced users to create their own buttons and layouts. The second app which can be used is OpX Tracker. Anyone can do this! Why should this be done? - 1) to update conservation property maps, 2) to expand public access and and increase public knowledge, and 3) to stay current with digital trends. After collecting the data, it would be time to upload to the website using 1) All Trails (<https://www.alltrails.com/us/new-hampshire>), 2) Trail Finder (<https://www.trailfinder.info/>) from UNH, 3) OpenStreetMap (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=4/38.01/-95.84> by Google maps and/or 4) the Town of Newmarket website. He recommends that one should 1) collect the data now (no leaves to interfere with satellite signals), 2) collect each trail at least four+ times, 3) Strafford Regional Planning is a great resource and they can use QA/QC (quality assurance and quality control) to check and send the maps to other resources. This might be a great opportunity for in internship. **Drew Kiefaber** asked about smoothing out the multiple trails. It has to be done manually, but is quite easy to learn. **Melissa Sharples** will learn to create trails and do some posting on the Conservation Commission Facebook page. The members thanked Christian for coming this evening and teaching everyone how to create and post trail data for the benefit of all who enjoy walking the trails in Newmarket.

The meeting returned to the agenda.

6. Committee and Subcommittee Reports

Planning Board: **Sarah Finch** is not present this evening. The Chair circulated the proposal for Norton Lane from the Planning Board that was commented on during Public Comment by Kristine Groleau, 323 Ash Swamp Road. Information on proposed project may be seen in the March 19 minutes of the PB (<https://www.newmarketnh.gov/node/2003/minutes/2019>).

Town Council: **Casey Finch** reports that the Heron Point Gate will be completed in time for the clean-up day on April 20. The Energy and Environment Commission is excited to report that the transfer station is now collecting compost in a new pilot study!

7. Chairman's Report

Funding Request from the 8th Grade at Newmarket Jr/Sr HS: The Chair received a formal request from the 8th grade class for CC funding of their end-of-the-year school field trip (approximately 60 children) to the Boy Scout Camp (Hidden Valley Camp and Griswold Scout Reservation) for 3 days and 2 nights of environmental and outdoor education and team-building exercises.

Action

Motion: **Marianne Hannagan** moved that Conservation Commission expend funds of \$1,000 for the Newmarket 8th grade end-of-year Spring Field Trip.

Second: **Sam Kenney**

Vote: 5-0-0

The Chair will respond to their request.

8. Old/New Business

Serve with Liberty 05/10/2019 – Schoppmeyer Park: The Chair reported that everything is in order for the Serve with Liberty Day. Eight or nine volunteers have signed up so far. The Chair will be in touch with Richie Shelton about the list of duties. The program will run from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm with a break for lunch. This day is also Newmarket Cares day so lots of people will be out working in and around the Town. The Nature Conservancy also has a Serve with Liberty group working that day on their gardens.

Heron Point – 4/20 Clean Up Day: Just a reminder that the Heron Point Clean Up Day is set for April 20 from 9:00 am to noon. Dale Jones prepared a flyer for the event and **Melissa Sharples** posted it on the website. **Casey Finch** looked at the property and found a few steps in need of attention and may need some caution tape. Casey will check on getting the bags and asks that everyone attending wear gloves for safety. DPW has agreed to pick-up the trash bags. **Drew Kiefaber** warns that everyone should take care to perform tick checks when they get home as the ticks are already out and ready to go!

Dearborn Survey: **Patrick Reynolds** reports that he received the survey at the end of March and will be preparing the letter shortly. He would like to seek advice on the letter format and language from Mike Hoffman. **Drew Kiefaber** wanted to make sure that the CC share the draft easement language with the State.

2019 Conservation Commission Photo Contest: **Melissa Sharples** reports that two weeks ago she and **Cris Blackstone** prepared a flyer, had some printed up, and posted them in various places around Town. **Casey Finch** reported that he has confirmed with Newmarket Rec that he could use the bus to take folks on a tour of the properties this July.

Annual Dues for the NH Assoc. of Conservation Commissions: The Chair received an invoice of \$425.00 for our annual membership dues to the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (<http://www.nhacc.org/members-welcome/>). The Chair will make sure that the dues come out of the appropriate line in the budget.

Action

Motion: **Patrick Reynolds** moved that Conservation Commission expend funds of \$425.00 to pay the annual dues for the NH Association of Conservation Commissions.

Second: **Marianne Hannagan**

Vote: 5-0-0

Time for the Turtle Signs: **Casey Finch** mentioned that a citizen reported an issue with some mesh used by the side of the road at a wash out sight near Ash Swamp and Grant Roads. The mesh is preventing the turtles from crossing the road and they are getting caught. The Chair will email DPW to put up the turtle crossing signs up as soon as possible. In the future, the Chair mentioned that the CC may need to invest in some salamander crossing signs as well. The members would need more information about the biology and crossing times for salamanders in this area.

9. Adjourn

Action

Motion: **Patrick Reynolds** moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Second: **Marianne Hannagan**

Vote: 5-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 9, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Frick, Recording Secretary

Conservation Committee Meeting Statement 4-11-2019

Kristine Groleau – 323 Ash Swamp Road

I am here to bring attention to the proposed development of a driving range and practice area at 10 Norton Lane, also identified as 344 Ash Swamp Road. The almost 600 feet of frontage on Ash Swamp Road is located across from the Tuttle Swamp and is located in the Aquifer Protection District. The plan includes an extensive clearing of the wooded area. Eighty-five thousand (85,000) cubic yards of earth will be removed over the course of 5 long years exceeding over 12,000 trips to and from the site. The plan includes a parking lot requiring 95 spaces. There was a continuance granted by the Planning Board on the April 9th meeting as a result there has not been additional discussion from the public since March 19th on the matter. There will be a site walk on the 24 acre property this Saturday, April 13th at 8AM. I am concerned about the effect the proposed development will have on the aquifer and the habitat of the Tuttle Swamp and surrounding areas. As I'm sure you're aware this area is home to endangered and threatened species. There are already several concerns for the neighbors when considering the existing gravel pits and the town dump in this area. According to the March 19th minutes of the Planning Board meeting, the developer plans on asking for a waiver for the requirement of a hydrogeological study. I am also concerned that the application was accepted even though it had deficiencies and was only deemed substantially complete and fully complete. The engineering design review also comments that there are missing pieces to the plan.

Thank you for your time.

Sources:

- Engineering Design Review – Underwood Engineers dates 4/9/2019
- Planning Board Town Minutes dated 3/19/2019
- Present at 4/9/2019
- Agenda for 4/9/2019
- NH Fish and Game Dept website – nongame and endangered wildlife program
- eBird for recent recorded sightings