

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

August 13, 2020

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Patrick Reynolds (Chair), Melissa Sharples (Vice Chair), Cris Blackstone, Sarah Finch (Planning Board Rep), Sam Kenney, Ellen Snyder (Treasurer) and Drew Kiefaber (Alternate).

Members Absent: Excused members this evening were: David Bell and TBA (Town Council Rep – Ex-Officio).

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comments/Permits

No comments from the public this evening.

3. Guest Presentation

Greg Jordan, Forestry Field Agent for Rockingham County and UNH Cooperative Extension, was invited to the meeting this week to describe his recent visit to Heron Point Sanctuary with **Ellen Snyder** to assess the current state of the property. He and **Ellen** visited the site at the end of June and his presentation included both historical maps, current maps, and photos.

Points of Interest to Note:

- * 2018 photo showing the outstanding features of the property including a long undeveloped frontage along the river.
- * Fish & Game Action Plan map clearly demonstrating the really wonderful wildlife habitat areas.
- * The coast line is moderating the temperatures around Newmarket. A big storm with high winds, however, could make the shore at risk of a tree wipeout necessitating a timber salvage plan.
- * The butternut tree on the property near the parking area has been suffering from Butternut Canker. (<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/butternut-canker/>). The tree does have a healthy crown.
- * There are at least 20 northern native species as well as southern species.
- * A 1992 aerial photo of the property showing that it was surveyed for a 1989 subdivision. From his research he speculates that the property was used as sheep pasture from 1810-1850 and then dairy from 1850 to at least 1900.
- * There are 150 year old oaks with large crowns. The oak which marks 'Lot 21' is approximately 75 to 100 years old.
- * The beaver activity near the water cleared some small pockets which promotes tree diversity regrowth.
- * Soils on Heron Point include Chatfield-Hollis-Canton soils, Canton soils, and Hollow soils to ledge, and Boxford soils that are silty loams and slow draining clay. He observed pockets of invasive plant species including Oriental Bittersweet, Japanese Barberry, European Barberry, Multi-Flora Rose, Autumn Olive, two species of invasive Honeysuckle, Common Buckthorn, and Glossy Buckthorn.
- * Invasive insects included: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Elongated Hemlock Scale, Emerald Ash Borer, Native Ash Borer, and Ash Rust.

Greg suggest that the top priority for the CC should be to clear as many invasives as possible in order to create pockets to promote diverse regrowth. **Melissa Sharples** asked about the invasive Norway Maple tree. Jim mentioned that they are prolific seed producers and love shade.

https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000988_Rep1134.pdf

<https://extension.unh.edu/search/google/Fact%20sheets%20on%20removal%20of%20invasive%20species>

He is willing to write up a summary of his discussion with us this evening and he firmly believes that every property needs a stewardship plan.

Action

Motion: Ellen Snyder made a motion to seek estimates for a (new) management plan for the Heron Point Sanctuary for the next ten years.

Second: Melissa Sharples

Vote: 6-0-0

Ellen will work with Greg to put together a scope for the project and she will seek some estimates for the next meeting. The Chair and members mentioned planning work days with identification training and what to do with invasives after removal. All members thanked Greg very much for his valuable time and effort in walking the property and in preparing a wonderful report for us on Heron Point Sanctuary!

4. Approval of the Minutes

June 11, 2020:

Action

Motion: Patrick Reynolds made a motion to approve the minutes as written for June 11, 2020

Second: Ellen Snyder

Vote: 3-0-3 (Melissa Sharples, Cris Blackstone, and Sam Kenney abstained)

5. Treasurer's Report

Ellen Snyder reported that the current balance in the Conservation Fund is \$240,878.54 (which takes into account the expenditure for the Tucker Property). The Chair mentioned an invoice received from SELT for \$985.78 for the Tucker closure. SELT paid this for us and is seeking reimbursement.

Action

Motion: Patrick Reynolds made a motion to authorize expenditure of funds in the amount of \$985.78 to SELT for costs incurred during the purchase of the Tucker Property.

Second: Cris Blackstone

Vote: 6-0-0

Ellen also mentioned the Schoppmeyer Park Fund has a current balance of \$6,633.88.

6. Committee and Subcommittee Reports

The Chair has not heard from the TC about an assigned representative for 2020-2021.

Town Council: No TC rep appointed to date.

Planning Board: Sarah Finch had nothing to report for this meeting.

7. Chairman's Report**Correspondence Received:**

State Division of Forest & Lands: They will be doing some timber harvesting at the Crommet and Lubberland Creek Wildlife Management area and wanted to alert us that they will be transporting the timber through Newmarket. <https://wildlife.state.nh.us/maps/wma/great-bay-crommet-lubberland.html>

Town of Newmarket –Public Works Permit: The Town has submitted a permit request to NHDES for the Macallen Dam construction. They plan to lower the impoundment beginning on September 1 continuing until October 31. They will not exceed 6" per day so that they do not harm the habitat of fish, wildlife, and invertebrates- giving them time to adapt.

Permit Application for Chick's Weir Storage: Mr. Jerry Collins have submitted an application to store the weir for the winter at Schanda Park from October 2020 to June 2021. The members would like to consider

this and would like to ask him to join the next meeting in case they have questions.

NHDES Newsletter:

<https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/newsletters/en/documents/2020-sep-oct.pdf>

Great Bay Matters Newsletter: <https://www.greatbay.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/GBM-Winter-2020-ID-CC.pdf>

8. Old/New Business

Neal Mill Road Parking: The Chair mentioned the parking issues along the right side of the road at the end of Neal Mill Road. He worked with Chief True, Rick Malasky, and Steve Fournier to find a solution. Rick went right to work with PW, graded to widen the road below the pottery studio, laid down some gravel, and painted some white parking lines. There should not be any further issues. Big thanks to all who solved the parking issues so quickly!!!

Political Campaign Signage: No signage should be placed on Town land. Private land is okay with permission of the owner. Conservation land is less certain. The Chair found a political sign in front of the Tuttle sign. He spoke with Chief True and Mike Hoffman about this as the police are responsible for removing illegally posted signs. Mike Hoffman thought we should have an approved motion to secure our position. Members agreed.

Action

Motion: Patrick Reynolds made a motion that the Newmarket Conservation Commission does not permit any political candidate signs or advertisements promoting political events be placed on conservation properties in the Town.

Second: Cris Blackstone

Vote: 6-0-0

Lamprey River Swimming: The Chair was contacted by residents who were worried about people swimming in the Lamprey River getting coated with green, slimy algae when they got out of the water. They have contacted an expert at UNH, Professor Jim Haney in the Dept. of Biological Sciences, who studies ecotoxicology (among other subjects). The sample showed a non-toxic material that sticks to algae which then sticks to people. It is called Aufwuchs (German "surface growth" or "overgrowth") which refers to the collection of small animals and plants that adhere to open surfaces in aquatic environments, such as parts of rooted plants. He does not believe that this is a health issue. Cris will ask LRAC if anyone is testing the overall water quality. The largest concern is if this develops into something more harmful such as cyanobacteria and cyanotoxins. More information about Dr. Haney's work may be found at:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/James_Haney2

Heron Point Sign: Ellen Snyder reported that she and Drew Kiefaber will try to get back out to Heron Point sometime soon to work on the trail map again. She will discuss a timeline with the foresters for a management plan.

Schoppmeyer Management Plan: Ellen Snyder will be working on the management plan (the responsibility of the Conservation Committee) and have some information for the next month. Most of the information is available to be pulled together. A discussion needs to take place between Rick Malasky and Steve Fournier about the Town-side contribution to the annual necessary maintenance. Richie Shelton, Chair of the Schoppmeyer Park Committee, has overseen many important projects with volunteer workers.

Schanda Park Fence: The Chair needs to get more estimates for the fence – hoping to get the price point lowered. He hopes to have something new to report in September.

Future Guest Speakers to the Conservation Commission: The members considered several people to invite for the Fall meetings including a number of wildlife habitat specialists from UNH Extension and elsewhere.

Everyone is excited about these informational discussions for members as well as the Town.

Continue with Zoom or go to the Auditorium? The Town Manager has offered the use of the Town Auditorium for our meetings. The members discussed this and decided to continue with zoom meetings.

9. **Adjourn**

Action

Motion: Patrick Reynolds moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Second: Ellen Snyder

Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary