

**TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
September 9, 2021 7:00 PM
Town Hall Auditorium**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Members Present: Patrick Reynolds (Chair), Melissa Sharples (Vice Chair), Ellen Snyder (Treasurer), David Bell, Cris Blackstone, Sam Kenney, Megan Brabec (Town Council Rep) and Jeffrey Goldknopf (Planning Board Rep)

Member Absent: Melissa Brogle (Alternate) was absent this evening.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

3. Public Comments

No public comments this evening.

4. Approval of Minutes:

July 8, 2021 – Draft Non-Public Session Notes

Action

Motion: **Melissa Sharples** moved to approve the Draft Non-Public Session Notes for July 8, 2021.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Vote: 5-0-2 (Jeff Goldknopf and Sam Kenney abstained)

August 17, 2021 – Draft Conservation Commission Public Hearing

Action

Motion: **Cris Blackstone** moved to approve the Draft Minutes of the Public Hearing for August 17, 2021.

Second: **Melissa Sharples**

Vote: 7-0-0

August 12, 2021 – Draft Minutes of August 12, 2021

Approval postponed until the next meeting on October 14, 2021.

5. Chairman's Report

Town Council Approval of Contribution to SELT to Purchase 75 Neal Mill Road:

At the most recent Town Council meeting, the Council approved *Resolution #2021/2022-07 - Request for Legal Interest in Gaziano Tract – 75 Neal Mill Road* and approved the \$75,000 expenditure from the Conservation Fund to SELT to help purchase the property. Congratulations to SELT for closing

on the property on September 1, 2021 as planned. Congratulations SELT! The Chair wanted to thank everyone for their help in this process – especially **Ellen Snyder** for being at the TC meeting to represent us.

Hazard Tree on Piscassic River-Loiselle: The Chair was contacted by a resident, an abutter to the Piscassic River-Loiselle Conservation Area, regarding a large pine tree in the stone wall near the southern boundary. The tree which is rotting grows in the middle of the wall and, should it fall, could possibly hit a small shed on the abutter's property. The Chair suggested that the abutter have a professional drop the tree so that it would fall into our forest to benefit the habitat. Members were concerned about liability, and a professional would carry the appropriate liability insurance. **Ellen Snyder** suggests that **Patrick Reynolds** contact Rick Malasky about the possibility of his crew dropping the tree.

6. Treasurer's Report

Ellen Snyder reports that the General Fund currently has \$2,401.10 remaining. The Conservation Fund has \$171,311.08 and this balance includes the Schanda Park fund of \$4,764.46. The real CF balance is \$166,546.62. We have several outstanding appropriations which would leave us with \$85,753.90. The Conservation Fellowship for this year has not been expended. There was discussion about this matter among the members. The Chair will reach out to the student awardee and find out if he plans to attend college this next year or wishes to defer to next year (based on the possible Covid-19 upset to educational attendance).

7. Committee and Subcommittee Reports

Ad-hoc Riverfront Advisory Board: Sam Kenney reported that the Town was not selected by NHDES for a 2021 Coastal Resilience Grant. He had worked with Diane Hardy, the Town Planner, to write the grant. Good news arrived shortly after that NHDES has a large grant program where they are hiring many environmental professionals to work on living shore lines and Schanda Park was selected! They wish to provide a design to the Town approximately 50% complete to set us on our way i.e. get past the conceptual design phase. There was a large meeting last Wednesday at Schanda Park with the full design team and **Megan Brabec** attended. They took measurements and photos and they were very excited about the challenge. It could be 6-8 weeks before we hear about their plans. Additionally, the Riverfront Advisory Board submitted a CIP request and are waiting to hear what will be the outcome for funding. The Chair asked about the Covid funding monies from the State. **Sam** thought that these monies were not clearly defined by the State. He believes that these were primarily earmarked for water, waste water, stormwater, and broadband – not really what we need for a Living Shoreline at Schanda Park. He also mentioned that the NHDES Coastal Resilience Grant program received many applications this year and funded about 40% of applicants. The Chair congratulated Sam for all of his hard work on the subcommittee for the Conservation Commission.

Town Council: **Megan Brabec** reported that the 75 Neal Mill Road purchase was the biggest item discussed. She is excited to report that the Town website is being updated to make it more user friendly. The second reading of the issuance of an RFP to ReVision Energy to head the solarized project will be next week. **Ellen Snyder** would like to know who to work with to add more info to the website about the Conservation Commission. **Megan Brabec** will check on that and get back to her.

Planning Board: **Jeff Goldknopf** reported that the PB has not met since our last meeting. He spoke a little about the proposal for Site Plan and Special Use Permit by Walter Cheney Jr for the lots

located at 50-56 Exeter Rd, Tax Map U4, Lots 11 and 15, M2A Zone. **Jeff** recused himself from the discussion.

8. Old/New Business

October 2 'Conservation Connections' Event:

Cris Blackstone began the discussion by showing everyone the special brochure prepared by Library. They are still looking for volunteers at the Recreation Center and also at all of the conservation sites chosen for walks. We don't have a guess about how many will be attending since the promotion is just beginning. Please spread information among your online friends. Kim Tilton at the Sunrise Center is spreading the word among her folks. **Melissa Brogle** is working on getting refreshments donated for the Rec Center in the am. This is also 'Get a Library Card' month, so, if you don't have a card, go by and get one! The Children's Librarian is putting together a display and some very cool books to connect children to the 'Conservation Connections' Day! Thank you!

Melissa Sharples is working on posting event information on several platforms and will work with Tim to get Channel 13 to scroll information for us. She will also see that information is included in the Friday Newmarket Newsletter. Thank you Melissa- you are a wizard with online platforms!

Ellen Snyder is working on the volunteer part of the day at Heron Point Sanctuary. She met with Rick Malasky this am. Rick is willing to go out before the event and excavate a rectangular area to the left of the kiosk and drop in larger stones. We would then relocate the path a little bit to the right. Rick has agreed to do all of this for us in-house. He will purchase the big rocks and hard pack for the path. This would really improve the drainage in that area. **Ellen** will get the wheel barrows/ buckets/shovels/tools from various sources. She will also go out to Heron Point to clearly mark the path. **Cris** and **Ellen** talked about posting the event on Nature Groupie.

Action

Motion: **Patrick Reynolds** moved to expend funds up to \$600 for the purchase of large rocks and hard pack materials for the phase of the trail work at Heron Point.

Second: **Melissa Sharples**

Vote: 7-0-0

Cris mentioned that other Conservation Commissions members and LRAC members are involved in the program. Thank you for all of your hard work!!!

Patrick Reynolds and Duane Hyde from SELT will be working on the history of the Neal Mill Road and greeting folks out there. **Jeff Goldknopf** has information back to the 1800's on ownership of the property and will pass it on to them.

Heron Point Tree Work: Jon Martin has submitted the final Forest Stewardship Plan for Heron Point Sanctuary. He will print a hard copy after it is approved and he gets paid.

Action

Motion: **Ellen Snyder** moved to approve the Forest Stewardship Plan for Heron Point Sanctuary as prepared by Jon Martin, Martin Forestry Consulting, LLC and to issue a payment check for \$2,500.

Second: **Melissa Sharples**

Vote: 7-0-0

Jon Martin is scheduled to return to do the hazard tree work on September 14. **Ellen** plans to get sandwich boards from DPW to warn that the area is closed for tree work. **Melissa Sharples** will greet Jon when he arrives. **Melissa** will also contact Dale Jones in the Heron Point Estates Mobile Home Park to spread the word about tree work and not walking through the trailer park into the sanctuary among the residents in the HOA.

Greg DiSanto is available either October 16 or 23 for another professionally led trail workday. He indicated that it might be up \$550 since the work may involve stonework.

Action

Motion: **Ellen Snyder** moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$550 to hire Greg DiSanto, Martin Forestry, to lead a voluntary trail workday at Heron Point Sanctuary.

Second: **Patrick Reynolds**

Vote: 7-0-0

Ellen will get back to Greg about the 16th which would leave the 23rd in case of rain. She will also let Amy Benson know that it would be best for her and the other scouts to work with Greg on the 16th. **Ellen** also spoke with Jon about the flagging of the riverfront hemlocks (the expense plan involving ultimate removal). **Ellen** decided to postpone that until later and the members agreed.

Neal Mill Road Property Parking: The Chair had a meeting with SELT and Rick Malasky regarding parking spaces. There are currently 8-10 spots. Rick's crew widened the road 4-5 ft and dug down 4-5 ft and filled it in with big rock before putting stone on top back in 2020. It drains really well in big rain events. The main problem is that there is no good area for large vehicles to turn around. They are considering carving a small area out of the Tucker property which is owned by SELT with an executory interest by Newmarket. Because of the original funding source, SELT is concerned and must review the laws regulating the setbacks from the wetlands. The solution for now is to change the parking to 'head in' parking instead of parallel parking which will give vehicles the necessary area to turn around. The Chair will keep the members apprised of any further action.

Ash Swamp Road Crossing: The Town is looking at a box culvert for Ash Swamp Road. There is no further information available right now.

9. Adjourn

Action

Motion: **Patrick Reynolds** moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: **Ellen Snyder**

Vote: 7-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

The next meeting will be held on October 14, 2021 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary