



TOWN OF
NEWMARKET
NEW HAMPSHIRE

Conservation Commission

September 8, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ellen Snyder (Chair), Melissa Sharples (Vice-Chair), Cris Blackstone, Jeffrey Goldknopf (Planning Board Rep.), Sam Kenney, and Julianna Tyson.

Members Absent: David Bell and Colin White (Town Council Rep. – *ex officio*)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

[time on DCAT 4:42]

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

3. Public Comment

No members of the public were present this evening for comment.

The Chair wanted to amend the agenda this evening to add two items: (#9) a discussion of the October 15 event after Land Stewardship (#10) and a request for a wedding ceremony at Heron Point Sanctuary. The Chair also moved the Minute Approval (item #4) to later in the meeting and moved the agenda forward to the Finance Report without objections.

5. Finance Report

The Chair reported that the ConCom did receive an increase in the General Fund budget for FY23. There were no major expenses for last month except for the Heron Point kiosk. The balance in the Conservation Fund as of 8/1/2022 is \$129,846.64 and the Schanda Park Fund is \$4,764.46. The budget proposed by the ConCom for FY24 has been submitted by **Bart** to the Town Manager.

6. Schanda Park: Permit Application

[time on DCAT 7:31]

Mr. Jerry Collins submitted an application for the use of Schanda Park to store the 'pocket' of Chick's Weir from October 2022 to June 2023. He has made this request annually.

Action

Motion: **Melissa Sharples** moved to approve the permit for Mr. Jerry Collins to use Schanda Park for the storage of the 'pocket' of Chick's Weir for October 2022 to June 2023.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Discussion: None

Vote: **Approved 6-0-0**

7. Guest Speaker- Emma Tutein

[time on DCAT 11:25-1:36:00]

Emma Tutein, Natural Resources and Land Conservation Field Specialist with UNH Cooperative Extension, has agreed to review best easement monitoring practices for the members before the easement monitoring in Newmarket begins this fall. The Town currently holds seven easements that the ConCom is responsible for completing or sub-contracting the annual monitoring. The members all received handouts to go with the presentations. For the monitoring workshop, Ms.Tutein is using the Smith Sisters Conservation Easement which is land owned by NH Audubon (another conservation organization vs. an individual landowner) on Rt. 152. Ms.Tutein went through the entire history and process of monitoring easements. You may download a complete monitoring guide by following the link provided: [How to Monitor Conservation Easements: Training Guide | Extension \(unh.edu\)](https://www.unh.edu/conservation-easements-training-guide) . The Chair has changed the basic monitoring report form to enable uniformity. The Chair has also prepared a 'Field File' for each property. Most Field Files include a baseline report (what the property looked like at the time of the original easement granting) and previous monitoring reports. It is important to plan your route to include areas of high conservation value, where violations may be likely, and features and issues in previous reports were noted. Use a survey map, aerial photo map or topographical map. Contact the landowner before monitoring and invite them to join you, if appropriate. The landowner may know what changes may or may not have occurred. Look at the list of what to bring along in your backpack. Note any violations and document with pictures. Things to remember – don't monitor with snow on the ground and be aware of the hunting seasons. Be safe and, if you go alone, please let someone at home know your plan. Be sure to check for ticks and know what poison ivy looks like! A good plan might be to change your cell phone message to tell people where you are going and when you expect to return just in case you take a tumble and you and your phone get separated.

Easement Property	Monitor(s)
Bald Hill	Jeff Goldknopf and Julianna Tyson
Hilton	SELT (paid by ConCom each yr: \$300)
Smith Sisters	David Bell (<i>we hope?</i>)
Nostrum Farm	Jeff Goldknopf and Melissa Sharples
Gaziano Tract	Ellen Snyder and Julianna Tyson
Schneer	Ellen Snyder and Julianna Tyson
Silverman	Ellen Snyder and Julianna Tyson
Piscassic River/Loiselle	Sam Kenney (report sent to LCHIP)

The Chair discussed asking SELT to monitor Nostrum Farm and Piscassic/Loiselle along with the Hilton Easement. We do not have money in our General Fund this year, so the consensus was to wait until next year to discuss spending additional money from the Conservation Fund. Regarding Bald Hill: the open space is owned by SELT and their markers are already posted. We plan to post our easement signs near their signs to make it clear to all who walk out there.

The Chair handed out the Field Files, extra nails, boundary signs, and extra flagging material (thank you for that donation of 10 rolls **Jeff!**). The Chair requests that, if possible, the reports be completed in a pdf format.

The Chair moved to agenda item #4.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes – August 11, 2022

[time on DCAT 1:51:07]

The Chair had one editorial correction.

Action

Motion: Ellen Snyder moved to approve the minutes of August 11, 2022 as drafted.
Second: Melissa Sharples
Discussion: None
Vote: Approved 5-0-1 (Cris Blackstone abstained)

The Chair returned to the agenda.

8. Land Stewardship

[time on DCAT 1:52:22]

a. Sliding Rock Conservation Area – stewardship issues

The Chair, Patrick Reynolds (LRAC Rep), and Aimee Gigandet (Rec Director) walked the site to note the present conditions of the area. Boats are chained to trees and sprinkled around the property, the sandy beach is eroding, and the boat launch may need improvement. There are at least six hazard trees which need to be removed. Patrick mentioned improving some conditions at Sliding Rock would be an appropriate ask for the small grants program with LRAC. Aimee would like to see another kayak rental rack at this location. It would be a nominal rental fee to help care for the racks (i.e. hauling them in and out of the area). The Chair will speak with Aimee and put together an application. **Melissa** noted that we are slowly working toward the goal of consistency across all of our conservation properties.

b. Other

i) The 'Conservation Conversation' event scheduled for October 15 is proceeding. There will be three speakers at 8:45 AM in the Town Hall Auditorium: 1) a bird watching talk by Richard Lutz, 2) Kelsey Meyer, a Ph.D. student at UNH, will speak about her dissertation research on green crabs as they are an invasive species in Great Bay, and 3) the Pollinator Pathways folks from Kingston end the morning session. After the morning event, there will be a work afternoon with the help of Nature Groupie volunteers and others at the Piscassic River-Loiselle property beginning around 1:00 PM. Projects include cleaning out a handful of bluebird nest boxes, install two 4x4 trail sign posts, put up trail signs, close unmapped trails, and brush out trails as needed. Rec vans are available again to transport volunteers to the site. **Cris** volunteered to be at Heron Point to engage visitors about our recent improvements over the last year. **Julianna** agreed to write up a description of migrating birds to be seen at the Neal Mill properties.

[time on DCAT 2:11:12]

Action

Motion: Sam Kenney moved to approve the expenditure of \$250 for the Oct. 15 event.
Second: Melissa Sharples
Discussion: None
Vote: Approved Unanimously 6-0-0

ii) **Melissa** reported that she is still waiting to hear back from NHDOT about the placement issues with the road sign for Piscassic River-Loiselle. **Jeff** checked out the deed and the property begins back by the stone wall, so he believes that our current little sign is in the DOT right-of-way. **Melissa** has checked out a rough cost for the sign and estimates it might be \$450-\$475. The Commission still waits for the response from NHDOT.

9. Committee/Board Reports

[time on DCAT 2:25:52]

Planning Board: **Jeff Goldknopf** had no report this evening.

Town Planner: **Bart** reported the 1st reading of the proposed zoning ordinance changes regarding Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) requirements will be at the next Planning Board. The proposal forms for the CIP have been submitted and **Sam** been asked to speak next week. He is planning to apply for funds to hold a design charrette for the Riverfront at the end of September addressing issues like: How could we connect to Heron Park? How do people re-imagine or reconfigure Schanda Park? How do people use the Riverfront now and how would they like to use the park in the future? If members have questions to include in the application, please feel free to contact him. He is also applying for a grant from InvestNH for additional funds to prepare the Master Plan (\$25,000) and another \$100,000 for rezoning efforts in the north end of Town. **Bart** and **Ellen** will be meeting with LRAC to discuss a possible natural resource inventory for the area of Follette's Brook since we don't have very much information about the area. **Bart** is also working on a plan for a regional network of trails connecting Durham, Lee, and Newmarket. This plan could connect trails that may be beneficial for urban/rural transportation. In regards to this topic, **Cris** thought we might consider inviting Shannon Rogers, Ph.D., who serves as the State Specialist of Nature Based Economic Development on the Community and Economic Development Team to make a presentation to the ConCom. Trained as an ecological economist, she focuses on how people use and value the environment and natural resources. As such, she is currently leading several applied research projects on topics such as how communities can connect downtowns with natural assets to create vibrant economies and an effort to better understand the value and cost of New Hampshire's water resources. **Cris** has agreed to invite her to speak to us as soon as we have an opening.

Town Council: **Colin** was not present this evening.

Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee: **Sam** mentioned that the next meeting will be September 9.

10. Permit Requested for Heron Point

[time on DCAT 2:26:24]

Emily Norton contacted us to seek approval to use Heron Point Sanctuary for her wedding coming up on September 24 at 1:00 PM. She completed the Schanda Park application as it was the only application form online. There will be approximately 30 people present (10 are children), no chairs, no alcohol, no signs, and no balloons. They plan to car pool to the lot in approximately 5 cars. They plan to leave right after the ceremony lasting about ½ hour. **Ellen** spoke with her and informed her that we don't issue a permit for this property, but we appreciated her asking.

Action

Motion: **Ellen Snyder** moved to approve the application for Emily Norton to use Schanda Park by permit on October 24 at 1:00 PM for her wedding for 30 minutes.

Second: **Melissa Sharples**

Discussion: None

Vote: **Approved Unanimously 6-0-0**

Ellen will contact Emily and advise her that she has permission to use Schanda Park. If she would like to use Heron Point Sanctuary, that is fine and she will just review the rules with her.

11. Adjourn

[time on DCAT 2:35:00]

Action

Motion: Sam Kenney moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 PM.

Second: Melissa Sharples

Discussion: None

Approved: Approved 6-0-0

The next meeting will be held on October 13, 2022 at 7:00 PM
in the Town Hall Auditorium

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary

DCAT:

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHOVHAvKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos