**Approved Minutes**

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
January 8, 2014
7:00 PM Auditorium

Members Present: Drew Kiefaber (Chairman), Jeff Goldknopf (Treasurer), George Hilton, Stephanie Coster (Alternate), Bob Gazda (Alternate), and Jessica Veysey-Powell (Alternate).

Members Absent: Bruce Fecteau (Vice Chair) *excused*, Fred Pearson *excused*, Janice Rosa (Planning Board Rep) *excused,* and Dale Pike (Town Council Rep) *excused because of the Town Council this evening.*

Called to Order: 7:05 PM

Agenda Items:

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call

With two absences, **Drew Kiefaber** appointed alternates **Jessica Veysey-Powell** and **Stephanie** **Coster** as voting members for this meeting.

**Drew** **Kiefaber** asked to move the agenda forward to accommodate guests from NH DOT to discuss the shoulder widening project on Rt. 108. There was no objection.

**8. Old/New Business**

Wetlands Permit – NHDOT 108 Shoulder Widening Project: **Drew** **Kiefaber** reviewed the background information for the Commission. The CC received a corridor-wide wetlands permit from NH DOT. Ronald Grandmaison and Marc Laurin from NHDOT agreed to come to our meeting. Ronald Grandmaison made the presentation. The entire project extends approximately 3.7 miles north from just south of Bay Road in Newmarket to the intersection of Mill Pond Road in Durham. Project A (13080A) is to span 500 ft. north of Stagecoach Road and continues 1.6 miles to Hamel Brook. This project goes to bid on April 1, 2014 and covers the ‘center’ section between Durham and Newmarket with work beginning June 2014. This portion is expected to be completed by summer 2015. Project B covers the two end sections and goes to bid April 7, 2015. Work is to begin as early as June 2015 and will be completed by summer of 2016.

Rt. 108 is considered a critical link in the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization bike network, and is heavily used by the UNH bike community. The existing roadway is narrow and inadequate for bicycle use with 24 ft. of pavement and virtually no shoulders. The travel ways will become 11 ft. wide with a 4 ft. shoulder. This should slow the traffic speed. Six inches of new pavement will be added to smooth everything out and no sidewalks are included in Project A. Project B (13080B) will also include bus stops and formal sidewalks: (1) Bay Road north to the Town line on the left and right, (2) Town line north to Stagecoach Road on the right, and

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(3) Durham Point Road north 900 ft. on the right. The environmental concerns sent forward from the CC to NHDOT included: (1) Wildlife connectivity - threatened and endangered species of turtles (Blanding’s and Spotted). NHF&G has requested larger pipes to increase connectivity as well as new pipe locations for wildlife. Additional box culverts were determined to be beyond the project scope and the limited funding. (2) historic properties/districts along the way, (3) stone walls that are impacted by the work will be reconstructed on or near the right-of-way, and (4) wetland and shoreline impacts.

The wetland impacts will include: 18,637 sq. ft. of temporary impacts, 44,988 sq. ft. of permanent impacts, for a total of 63,635 sq. ft. of impacts. There will be no wetland creation with this project. They will make a payment to the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund of $139,996.25 of the DES so that they may purchase other properties for restoration. The NHDOT mitigation package was approved on July 18, 2013. An additional ARM Fund payment of $105,000 will also be sent to DES for the mitigation package.

He provided a list of all the culvert upgrades to be completed. Many of these upgrades were requested by Fish & Game, but project funding was an issue in completing all that were requested. They couldn’t fix the whole problem when high flood waters occur, but they are trying to meet somewhere in the middle with their mitigation efforts.

The Chair thanked the NHDOT for the presentation. The CC discussed the positive environmental aspects of the project and the improved safety. **Drew** **Kiefaber** will draft a letter and send it around to members for comments before sending it to DES.

1. Public Comments

No public comments.

1. Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes to approve at this time. There is a request to hire a new recording secretary.

1. Treasurer’s Report

**Jeff** **Goldknopf** reported that the $300.00 for minute taking was credited to the general fund account for recording secretary salary. There is also a charge of $23.96 for mileage for the recording secretary to travel to get the DVD.

1. Committee and Subcommittee Reports

**Stephanie** **Coster** reported that she was in contact Duane Hyde, the Land Protector Director of the South East Land Trust, about the contract with the CC to reach out to a list of people to assess their interest, without regard to funding, for potential conservation of their properties. He has contacted all on the list and several are interested in setting a meeting. He is requesting a six month extension of the contract that ended at the end of 2013 so that they could follow through with these meetings.

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 **ACTION**

**Motion**: **Jessica Veysey-Powell** moved that we extend the contract with the SE Land Trust

dealing with potential conservation projects for six months until June 2014

**Second: Jeff Goldknopf**

**Vote:** Approved unanimously 5-0

1. Chairman’s Report
* *Rose Trimming Letter* – The Chair reported that he has not had an opportunity to draft the letter. He will send a copy to CC members once completed.
* He received a copy of the SE Land Trust newsletter which is available at their web site: <http://www.seltnh.org/index.php/news-and-events/newsletter> .
* We have received a letter and application from Chris Keeley from NH Sea Grant and Amanda Stone from UNH Coop Ext. asking the town to apply for selection as one of two communities to be chosen for the no-cost assistance for coastal flood planning and climate change impacts. The CC discussed it and decided not to apply.
* The Planning Board will have a meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2014 and will have a public hearing on an application for the sub-division plan for the Rockingham Country Club by Chinburg Builders.
* The CC also received a letter from the SE Land Trust. They have completed the 2013 monitoring of the Hilton conservation easement last fall and found the property to be in good condition. They presented the board with a bill for services of $167.33.

**ACTION**

**Motion**: **Jeff Goldknopf** moved that we pay the SE Land Trust the sum of $167.33 for monitoring services for the year 2013 on the Hilton easement.

**Second: Drew Kiefaber**

**Vote:** Approved 4-0. George Hilton abstained.

* **Jeff** **Goldknopf** prepared a letter to the abutter of the Piscassic River-Loiselle property. There were no objections, so the Chair will sign the letter and send it on.
1. Old/New Business

We received information about the proposed Rockingham Country Club development meeting in December. **Jessica** **Veysey-Powell** attended the meeting. Based on Mark West’s report, the road and lots will be moved slightly as a compromise to increase the buffer of the wetlands. The CC

believes that this compromise is somewhat better, but they would like to provide some additional input to the PB before January 21. **Jessica Veysey-Powell** will prepare a letter to the PB stating the areas that should be marked to avoid clearing. The HOA Covenants should reflect this as well and she will reference our previous letter.

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Easement Stewardship Monitoring:

*Piscassic River-Loiselle* – The report is complete and has been sent to the Land and Community Investment Program (LCHIP) and DES.

*Audubon/Smith Sisters* – **Bruce** **Fecteau** is working on this project.

*Silverman-Schneer* – The property has been walked and only needs the report written.

*New Roots Farm* – **Drew** **Kiefaber** has started the report and will finish before the deadline at the end of January. The report will then be sent to the Natural Resource Conservation Services in Durham.

*Wiggin Farm* – The report is complete and has been sent to LCHIP and DES.

Action Items:

* The refurbishment of the ‘no water removal’ signs-the red color has faded and the signs still need to be replaced.
* Add links to the town website regarding invasive species. The website is being updated right now so we may have to wait to do this.
* Work will Ellen Snyder regarding a Macallen Dam information session.
* **Bruce Fecteau** will check on the pontoon boat for the Heritage Festival in May.
* Turtle signs are ready to put up in the spring.
* The CC will review the New Roots Farm survey. **Jeff** **Goldknopf** feels that we need the services of a professional surveyor. **Drew** **Kiefaber** will get in touch with Jeff Cantara at New Roots Farm and try to clarify what we would like to mark. We would want to mark the external boundary and then mark the public access lines. We may have information in our files from the Doucet Survey.
* Removal of the defective snowmobile bridge at Wiggin Farm could be difficult. We need to determine a good time based on the season. We could put the wood on the burn pile if it has not been treated. Currently, our burn piles are not large enough to burn this year.
1. Adjournment

**ACTION**

**Motion**: **Jessica Veysey-Powell** moved that the meeting be adjourned.

**Second: Drew Kiefaber**

**Vote:** Approved unanimously 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick

Recording Secretary