

1 CONSERVATION COMMISSION
2 Boscawen Municipal Complex
3 April 16, 2024
4 Draft Minutes
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7 Present: Alan Hardy, Chair, Jeff Abbe, Aurel Mihai, Norman LaPierre, Betsey McNaughten,
8 Matthew Burdick, Member Ex-Officio, Gary Tillman and Charlie Niebling, Town Forester.
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10 Excused: Mark Kaplan.
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12 Staff Present: Rose Fife, Recording Secretary, Ruth Ashby, Planning and Community
13 Development Assistant and Kara Gallagher, Planning and Community Development Coordinator.
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16 **Regular Business:**

- 17 • Open by Chair at 6:30 pm.
 - 18 • Roll call by Recording Secretary.
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21 **Consent Agenda:**

- 22 • Accountant's Report –
- 23 • Review Draft Minutes –

24 A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. LaPierre, seconded by Mr. Mihai, and
25 passed by a unanimous vote.
26

27 **New Business:**

28 • 48 N. Water Street – Jeffrey Green, LLS for the Huckins family. This is a 120-acre parcel with a
29 barn and residential unit on the property. They want access to the rear of the property. He submitted
30 a copy of a plan. They will be requesting a subdivision. There is an area that was logged and the
31 logger crossed a wet area and they were cleaning it up. They want to do a DES crossing and put a
32 culvert in there. They are having a difficult time finding a wetlands scientist to do a wetland crossing.
33 PBN is what they are looking for and Chair Hardy explained they do not need to come to the
34 Commission for it. Mr. Green explained that his wetland person told him they cannot do a PBN, but
35 a Minor subdivision. They are trying to stay away from the brook that comes off North Water Street.
36 Ms. McNaughten asked if this is for a logging operation. Mr. Green explained it is for access to the
37 back 90 acres and to clean up what was left by the loggers. Mr. Abbe asked if DES would size the
38 culvert and the piping. Mr. Green answered that his wetland person will size the culvert and DES
39 would need to bless it. Mr. Green thinks the Commission will need to sign off saying they are okay
40 with the Huckins doing this. They are just doing a crossing where the loggers had gone and putting a
41 culvert in. They are trying to do it in the smallest area they can. Mr. Abbe asked if it were Tannery
42 brook. Mr. Green said no. He understands it is just drainage that comes down between the 70-foot
43 swale. It is just wetlands. Ms. Huckins explained there is no subdivision yet. Chair Hardy asked if
44 the subdivision requires access through this area? Mr. Green answered no, not to the back area. Ms.
45 Huckins added that there is an existing driveway already. Chair Hardy asked if the driveway is going
46 to continue into the back area. Mr. Green answered no. It is for a small crossing to access the backland.
47 Mr. Abbe asked if the subdivision would be a separate entrance. Mr. Burdick asked what type of
48 culvert they would be using. Mr. Green is looking at 24-inch culverts. It is wider, so they would
49 normally put 2 culverts in. Ms. McNaughten asked what the length would be. Mr. Green answered
50 about 22 feet total. Mr. Abbe asked if they considered a box culvert. Mr. Green answered that they
51 were very expensive. Mr. Abbe asked if they were okay with the Commission seeing the location.

52 They were okay with that. Ms. McNaughten asked if they were looking for a letter of recommendation
53 from them. Mr. Green appreciates the Commission's input.

54
55 • Town Forest Update/Discussion – Mr. Abbe reported. They need to schedule a cleanup day to take
56 care of the blown down trees. Weir Road is bucked up, but he is hoping to get a chipper in there. The
57 Village Town Forest is messy and needs to be cleaned up. Matt St. Onge would like to get the front
58 area cleaned up. Chair Hardy asked if they would be trimming trees or just cleaning up the dropped
59 limbs. Mr. Abbe would like to get some crews together to do some clean up. He spoke with Mr.
60 Hollins about chipping the debris. Forester Niebling thought allowing it to decay and go back into the
61 soil would be good as well. Mr. Abbe reported that all the forests need some clean-up of tree limbs,
62 etc. Mr. Abbe and Forester Niebling will work out a plan. Mr. Niebling suggested a light weight
63 electric chain saw for the Commission to bring along for walks/trail maintenance. Some discussion
64 regarding the safety and liability of people using a chain saw. Mr. Abbe reported the chestnut trees
65 are doing well; they are budding.

66
67 Chair Hardy asked how they wanted to proceed with the building at Walker Pond. Mr. Mihai asked
68 how they would demolish that building. Chair Hardy received information from Mr. Hollins that it
69 would be around \$10,000 for the rental of equipment and some gravel to finalize it. Taking the building
70 down is not difficult. He did not see the total project cost exceeding \$50,000. The dry hydrant is an
71 unknown. Once the building is down, they will know more. Discussion regarding the dry hydrant and
72 the final placement. Mr. Burdick thought that it would good if they combined it with the knocking
73 down of the old Police Department. Mr. Mihai added that if they already had the equipment, what else
74 do they need? Chair Hardy noted that they have the approval, but are waiting for Mr. Hollins to have
75 the time. Forester Niebling was asked if they would need a wetland scientist as the building sits in the
76 middle of the existing parking lot; they are not changing anything. Chair Hardy was concerned with
77 the tower that is there. The Fire department is not using that right now. Do they need to notice that it
78 is coming down? Ms. McNaughten suggested they donate it to the fire school. Chair Hardy asked Mr.
79 Burdick to bring it to the Select Board for approval to proceed. A **motion** to have Mr. Hollins/DPW
80 take down the building as soon as equipment available was made by Mr. Tillman, seconded by Mr.
81 Mihai, and passed by a unanimous vote.

82
83 Mr. Mihai looked at the kiosks at the town forests. He thought it looked good but needed to be updated.
84 Sam Niebling is willing to do the updates and make them additional kiosks that are identical to what
85 they have. He was getting a quote. Chair Hardy thought it makes sense that they look similar. Mr.
86 Mihai will update the Commission as it goes along. He would like to hold off on Walker Pond's until
87 they have more information. Chair Hardy asked if they had any vandalism there. Mr. Abbe answered
88 they had not really. Forester Niebling has not had any issues at the Village Town Forest or the Weir
89 Road trail head. When final costs and design are decided they can move forward.

90
91 Website update – Mr. Mihai is working on it. He has made updates today. If anyone has any content,
92 he is happy to do it. He would like some photographs. He has been taking some photos. He would
93 like some photos of the rail trail and the boat launch on the Merrimack River. Chair Hardy believes
94 Ms. Easler has some photos of the boat launch at the Merrimack County location. As soon as it looks
95 somewhat complete, he would like to transition it over to get a new domain name. He wanted to know
96 what the Commission would like to do with the current site? The town website can link directly to the
97 new site. He can transition the old content over to the new site. Chair Hardy believes it needs the town
98 logo. Mr. Burdick added that as of now, the town logo is still the same. Chair Hardy would like Ms.
99 Gallagher to get a logo to Mr. Mihai. Mr. Mihai asked if the logo should be stand alone or into a
100 header. It was agreed it should stand alone. If they register a domain name, can he use the town office
101 address. It was agreed he would use the town office address. Mr. Mihai asked if they wanted Minutes
102 and Agendas on the new site. Chair Hardy thought it should be in both sites. Mr. Tillman suggested

a link to them on the new site. Mr. Burdick suggested a link to the official area with Minutes and Agendas.

Forester Niebling asked about the Snowmobile club's trails. Are the trails available for non-passive non-motorized use. Mr. LaPierre answered that they close in April. Forester Niebling asked if the agreement they have with private landowners allow pedestrians to use it in the summer time. Forester Niebling thought they should not reference those trails for public use or public access.

Chair Hardy noted they had a Walker Pond Facebook page that is not highly active. There are no criteria. He suggested they discuss how valuable the Facebook page is. Ms. McNaughten added they should decide which site they will post event items, etc. consistently. It is difficult to maintain both accurately. Chair Hardy believes it will serve a purpose short term. Mr. Abbe asked who maintains the Facebook site. Mr. Mihai thought they should start fresh with a new group that has more to do with Conservation. It could be an official page for this Commission. Mr. Burdick added that he could link to the town's official Facebook page and link to their website. Mr. Mihai can do websites better than social media. He cannot do both. Much discussion ensued regarding maintaining of the Facebook page vs. the website, etc. Discussion about different projects at Walker Pond. Ms. McNaughten added that they have 3 town forests and trails all over 2 of them. She suggested they leave Walker Pond wild. It is not just for people and trails; it is also for wildlife. They are still working on resolving the dam issue. Forester Niebling noted that they had a report done on the dam and it is not going anywhere. Ms. McNaughten agreed. Chair Hardy noted that they needed to put the dam on the map. The town can own the structure, but not the land.

Turtle Sign Placement – Ms. McNaughten did not receive any suggestions from Josh on where to place the signs. Mr. Abbe put out 6 stakes for tentative locations for these signs. Corn Hill Road, Queen Street and River Road. That would add up to 6 signs. Mr. Abbe thought that they should post them soon. Mr. Hollins has the posts for them. Mr. Mihai thought 3 out of 4 locations would be a good start. A **motion** to put the signs up in the places Mr. Abbe has marked out was made by Ms. McNaughten, seconded by Mr. Tillman, and passed by a unanimous vote. Mr. Mihai asked if there was any way to record or close the loop on how many turtles, they are savings with these signs. Ms. McNaughten will ask Josh, who has some information on that. Mr. Mihai thought it would be nice to show that these signs are doing something.

- UNH Research Site Request – Michael Thompson, Research Scientist – Project to Build a Database of Tree Species Across the Northeast - Forester Niebling discussed them taking core samples from 15-30 species of trees and using an increment boar. It is not destructive sampling and will not hurt the trees. He asked Mr. Thompson to share the information with the Commission and he said he would. It sounded harmless and he gave him the 'go ahead.' He needs land owner permission. He is doing it on private and public land. He lives on Queen Street.

- Saving Special Places Conference Update – Mr. Abbe reported. There was much discussion on trails for people with disabilities. He went to a wetland program and an old growth forest program. They were both very good programs.

NH Granit's list of conservation lands. They need to update Boscawen. Ms. McNaughten reported there is a form on Granit for the Conservation Land. They need shape files for the property which was created at the time of the survey or tax map. Ms. McNaughten will send Chair Hardy a link to the form.

The Conservation Commission has a bunch of paper from over time that they have no place to put here in the building. Chair Hardy suggested that maybe they would like to own their own fire safe to put the paper in. Ms. Gallagher added it is scanned into the system as a PDF/A, which is un-editable. Mr.

Mihai asked if they need to keep the originals. Chair Hardy is unsure. Questions came up as to where they could store the cabinet. Chair Hardy will bring the information back to a future meeting. Ms. Gallagher thought it would be a good question for the Municipal Retention Committee, which Ms. Easler is part of.

Non-Public:

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A **motion** to adjourn at 8:11 pm was made by Mr. Tillman, seconded by Mr. Abbe, and passed by a unanimous vote.

Next Meeting: May 21, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*