



Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

Community Development Department

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Planning - Zoning - Economic Development - Conservation

MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MAY 21, 2018

MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was held on Monday, May 21, 2018 at 6:35 p.m. in the Merrimack Memorial Conference Room.

Chair Gage Perry presided:

Members of the Commission Present: Cynthia Glenn
Gina Rosati
Tim Tenhave, Alternate Member

Members of the Commission Absent: Matt Caron, Vice Chair
Michael Boisvert

Also in Attendance:

PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

APPOINTMENTS - None

STATUTORY/ADVISORY BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Grater Woods Ecological Inventory - Moosewood Ecological

Chair Perry noted ecological inventories have been done on the Horse Hill Nature Preserve (HHNP), Gilmore Hill, the Patterson parcel on Continental Boulevard, and MVD has had their parcel done. He spoke with Jeff Littleton, Moosewood Ecological, regarding the level of detail that has been provided in the past, and the size of this property (800 acres). He relayed to Mr. Littleton that he would look to understand the will of the Commission in this regard. The rough estimate provided was \$35,000.

Chair Perry remarked the level of detail provided in previous inventories highlights the number of hours and effort dedicated to the project. This parcel has a great deal of diversity given its vast topography. Commissioner Rosati commented that type of information could have been useful when preparing the application for the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund.

Commissioner Tenhave noted additional parcels (100+ acres) have been added for which the Commission has no data. When asked if the project could be done in phases, Commissioner Tenhave referred to the inventory as capturing a moment in time.

The Commission supported requesting Mr. Littleton provide a plan for the work and identify timing.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Grater Woods Bypass Road -** Discuss Department of Environmental Services' (DES) response to ARM Fund application

Commissioner Tenhave stated the suggestion included in the response received from the initial submittal would send the Commission in a different direction. It is his opinion there is not sufficient time to gather the data necessary to submit an appropriate application (June 22nd deadline). The letter was from the Bureau of Trails, and the suggestion would require opening up the property for certain kinds of trail use. They would provide construction money, but it would come with certain strings that would have to be understood. He believes it essentially means the property would have to remain open for those kinds of activities.

Commissioner Rosati questioned if the Commission could continue with an application to the ARM Fund if making it known it is not amenable to the trails remaining open.

Commissioner Tenhave stated the response did not indicate that the Commission was not approved for grant funds, it simply said it does not look like an appropriate project. The option remains for a full submittal providing information that counters that belief. He believes the only counter would be to have a Wetland Scientist state the current road is in the wetland. The wetland would be restored by eliminating the road and providing a bypass. He is uncertain the Commission has proved the point that part of the road is in the wetland. He would prefer funds be expended to have a Wetland Scientist determine that or request Mr. Littleton evaluate and provide his professional opinion. Although not a Certified Wetland Scientist, were Mr. Littleton to recommend not pursuing that part of the roadway as a wetland, he would accept his opinion and not look to pursue it.

Chair Perry questioned if the opinion of DES is that it is scientifically not wetland soils; just flooded property. Commissioner Tenhave responded the letter states "It would be hard to provide when the existing road is not currently in wetlands and has no square footage of wetland area is being restored." It is not believed the project would restore wetland and is not believed the current roadway is in a wetland even though we know it is flooded for months out of the year.

Commissioner Rosati questioned if the Commission is aware of a Wetland Scientist that could visit the site before the deadline and was informed the last Wetland Scientist the Commission worked with was Tracy Tarr, Senior Project Manager, GZA GeoEnvironmental. Chair Perry noted there would be a fee incurred, but the Commission could reach out to her for an opinion, and if believing it is worthy of investigation, to provide a proposal for the work.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO REQUEST THE CHAIR CONTACT TRACY TARR, GZA GEOENVIRONMENTAL, AND AUTHORIZE HIM TO PAY A FEE OF UP TO THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$300.00) FOR AN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT WAS FORMERLY SOUTH GRATER ROAD, AS A WETLAND SOURCE OF FUNDING IS FUND 53

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-0

Commissioner Tenhave noted the letter indicates there to be \$1.7 million available in the ARM Fund and \$4.7 million in requests. He commented if any work is to be done in the area, the Commission needs to understand where the wetland boundary is, if it is truly a wetland.

2. Chapter 111 Update - Plans & Support needed to move forward

Commissioner Tenhave stated, at its May 10th meeting, the Town Council approved the process by which Chapter 111, Conservation Areas, of the Merrimack Town Code may be revised. Phase I is ready to begin. Phase I is the investigation phase; start with a list of all properties (pulled from Assessing Department), narrow down to potential properties the Commission would want to include under the revised Chapter 111. The process outlines the criteria.

He questioned how the Commission wished to proceed. He volunteered to narrow the list and to include detail in a spreadsheet form explaining why a particular parcel was or was not chosen. Chair Perry noted Paul Micali, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director, has requested a copy of the parcel detail so that it may be retained. Commissioner Tenhave spoke of the level of support that was expressed during discussions with staff; Kyle Fox, Director, Public Works Department (PWD) volunteered the GIS system as a means of collecting data, the Library Director contacted him indicating a desire to discuss what portions of the project the Library can assist with, e.g., data gathering.

Commissioner Tenhave offered to set up a meeting with the Library Director and her staff to go over what he believes the project to encompass. Commissioner Rosati volunteered to participate.

When asked for clarification of the types of conditions that would qualify/disqualify a property, Commissioner Tenhave commented property having a municipal building on it would not qualify, a pre-determined use like the future library parcel would likely not be included, every parcel owned by the Commission would be included (initially), etc. Then it is a matter of looking at their location, e.g., lot of back lots and small pieces of land. He will make notes on the parcels so that the Commission can consider them. He suggested targeting the 2nd meeting in June to review the list.

Commissioner Tenhave stated the need for the Commission to reach agreement on the initial list. From there, the Commission would submit the list to the Town Manager and her staff for review and feedback. After their review, the research aspect will begin, e.g., pulling of deeds, easement information, etc. That is where he is hopeful the Library will be of significant help.

3. 2018 Seedling Give-Away - Update & Ideas for next year

Chair Perry commented on the events that lead up to the Commission having a good deal of the Buttonbush. Three hundred seventy-five trees were purchased, and 12 Buttonbush remained at the conclusion of the event.

The event continues to grow in popularity. Commissioners expressed how pleased they were with how the event was conducted. The types of seedlings chosen were well suited for the demand.

Commissioner Tenhave commented on the positive outcome of an increased level of advertisement, e.g., newsprint as well as social media.

4. Sklar Riverfront Cleanup - 2 June Workday / Discuss plans & Support / Purchase of Supplies (Trash Bags, Water, No Motorized signs, etc.)

Chair Perry stated the cleanup day is scheduled for June 2nd. The PWD will provide support, e.g., machinery to help move debris. Commissioner Boisvert reached out to Bridgestone. They have a free tire removal service. The PWD has agreed to bring tires pulled from the site to Bridgestone on Amherst Street and drop them off.

Some supplies will be needed for the workday, e.g., trash bags, water. Chair Perry questioned the will of the Commission regarding no motorized signs.

When asked, Chair Perry stated the organization that expressed interest in assisting has indicated a desire for the work to be done on a weekday. The June 2nd workday has already been coordinated with the Town and Town departments. There is always an opportunity for a second workday.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO APPROVE AN EXPENDITURE OF AN AMOUNT UP TO ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00) FOR THE PURCHASE OF BOTTLED WATER, TRASH BAGS, AND OTHER ASSOCIATED SUPPLIES FOR THE JUNE 2nd SKLAR RIVERFRONT CLEANUP. SOURCE OF FUNDING IS FUND 53
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GLENN
MOTION CARRIED

4-0-0

Chair Perry questioned the will of the Commission relative to “no motorized” signs. When last posted, the signs were removed. The Commission was in support of re-signing the property. The belief is if the area can be turned into something attractive, that behavior will be self-limiting.

The thought was to have the signs in time to post during the clean-up event on June 2nd. Not knowing where the signs would come from or at what cost, Chair Perry indicated he would look to ascertain the information.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Sub-committee Updates

Wildcat Falls

Commissioner Rosati questioned the status of the no-hunting sign. Commissioner Tenhave responded he has one and will put it up. The new map will be posted at the kiosk. Commissioner Tenhave spoke of expecting additional literature for posting.

Commissioner Rosati relayed a request of a sub-committee member to post information at Wildcat Falls concerning bears. Commissioner Tenhave remarked he does not see the need. Commissioner Glenn agreed.

Commissioner Rosati questioned the status of the PWD and erosion repairs. Chair Perry indicated the information was forwarded to the department and he was informed it is on the list. The PWD will also look into where they will be regrinding pavement to see if materials will be available and will look to identify the source of the cable discussed during last month’s meeting.

Horse Hill Nature Preserve

Commissioner Glenn questioned the status of the map purchase. Chair Perry stated he has communicated with Papergraphics. They expressed a desire to pursue the same arrangement they initially did (waiving printing fees). They will be printing the maps (1,000).

Chair Perry spoke of the gate on the road going into the Eversource property (off Naticook) commenting it is substantial. It is locked from the bottom.

PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES

Merrimack Conservation Commission. May 7, 2018

The following amendment was offered:

Page 2, Line 24; replace “understanding” with “understand”

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Tenhave informed the Commission he has been appointed by the Town Council, after being nominated by the Planning Board, to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GLENN TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

The May 21, 2018 meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan