

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING  
September 11, 2019

PRESENT: Bob Boynton, Chairman, David McTigue, Vice Chairman, Karen Miller, Michael Bara, Jack Messe, Kleta Dudley (SoRLAC Rep), Bert Hamill ( Selectmen's Liaison) Lori Rautiola, Secretary  
ABSENT: Matt Oliveira

The meeting was called to order at the Town Office on September 11, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

The August 14, 2019 meeting minutes were reviewed. Bob noted to remove the second sentence under Old/New Business. On the last page change the word "smart tv" to the web. Bob made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Jack seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Committee Reports:**

**Trails:** Bob stated the Williams Property should be the Commission's focus in the near future. Fixing the signage and trail markers for the trails. Members discussed the types of signs they could use. Kleta noted the mailbox at the entrance to the property was empty and should be refilled with trail maps. Bob stated the maps are online and can be printed out to fill the box. David noted it would be a good idea to color code the map with the trail markers.

**Lands:** Bob noted the Meizner's property has been sold and was concerned the new owners may not be aware of the easement on that property. Bob will send a letter to the new owners to ensure they are aware. A matrix of "Lands which the Town and/or Commission has protection responsibilities" was distributed. The Commission discussed who the primary and secondary monitors were for each of the properties (see attached). Bob mentioned the town has no land protection fund, which means if an easement gets violated, the town would be liable to pick up the legal costs.

The names of the Conservation properties were discussed. Bob stated occasionally the company holding the easement will change the name of property. Example: New England Forestry Foundation changed New Ipswich Mountain to be called New Ipswich Town Forest.

**Water Resources:** Bob reported he spoke with someone at the State regarding the culvert on Timbertop Road that was installed without a wetlands permit. The Town had submitted a permit to the State last year, adding the "after the fact" permits have no urgency as far as accomplishing the work, however the Town is still required to replace the culvert with the correct size. Bob was concerned the work will not get done. He explained the process for determining a prime wetland. He also noted the wetland is typically larger in size and has a list of certain criteria to be met. The land has to be acknowledged by a certified wetland scientist who then sends his reports to the State. Once the State approves it as a Prime Wetland it comes back to the Town. The Town must then vote to make it a prime wetland. Both the Town and State need to accept it as a prime wetland. Bob added the reason a town would want to make it a prime wetland would be to protect the natural resources. Bert questioned why the urgency in creating a prime wetland. Bob responded the main reason would be to protect the natural resources. Karen questioned if the timing would be good to have a natural resource inventory done during the process of determining a prime wetland. Bob responded not necessarily and a natural resource inventory is very costly.

Kleta responded to Bert's question on urgency stating, the Merrimack incident with the PAFA's (which is a Teflon coating) that got into water and recalled the city having to put in several public water supplies. She added people still can't drink their water. Bert mentioned the Planning Board is considering a commercial/industrial district off of Sharon Road behind the dump. Jack stated that is the location of a very large aquifer. Bob added, another reason to have it be considered a prime wetland.

Bob demonstrated an online monitoring form which members will be able to use when monitoring the properties. This form will streamline all the details needed when members are in the field conducting a monitor report. You will be able to access all the available documents of the property such as the deed, old map, easements, reserve rights and restrictions. The link to the website is still in BETA mode and Bob stated he does not want to give access at this time. As soon as it is available he will make an announcement. Several files need to be uploaded and staff is limited. There was discussion on the amount of documents and the process of getting them uploaded. Lori mentioned she scans them to Bob and he uploads to the site. The Currier property is the only property that has an online file at this time, but the goal is to have all the properties stored and backed up online. There is a considerably large amount of documents to scan/upload and that takes time. Bob stated it is important to have these documents stored online in case something were to ever happen to the building.

Bob stated in the past the Commission has not been very good at conducting monitoring reports; adding it is the Commission's responsibility to monitor the properties and it is very important to do so. Members discussed which properties to start monitoring this fall. Kleta and Karen will do the Williston property. Kleta will come get the hard copy document for monitoring before she and Karen go out in the field. Bob noted for members to go in groups of two, adding fall is a good time to monitor and it is easier to see when the leaves are off the trees.

The annual meeting will be October 9, 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola