FINAL

CONSERVTION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
August 11, 2022
6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Sarah Riley (Chair), Bruce James (Vice Chair), Erling Heistad, Susan Almy, Darla Bruno (Alt.) (remote)**

MEMBERS ABSENT: **Donald Lacey, Chris Johnson, Ernst Oidtmann, Barbara Hirai (Alt.)**

STAFF PRESENT: **Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator), and Shawn Mulholland (City Manager)**

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1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM

Darla Bruno sat for Donald Lacey in his absence.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 14, 2022**
Mr. Heistad MOVED to approve the July 14, 2022 minutes, as amended.
Seconded by Ms. Almy.

Under those present: Councilor Wilkie is the alternate City Council rep, and Megan Smith is no longer an alternate member of the Commission.
Page 2, Lines 1 and 5 – change to "Kelleys" and "Kelley"

**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved by roll call Sarah Riley – aye; Sue Almy – aye; Bruce James – aye; Erling Heistad – aye; Darla Bruno – aye; (5-0-0).***

3. PERMIT REVIEW
A. None

4. STUDY ITEMS
A. Review and Discussion of Draft Lebanon Strategic Plan

Shawn Mulholland explained that the City has annual outcomes, which are developed annually by departments and presented to the City Council at a workshop. This is the beginning of the budget process for the ensuing year. The Strategic Plan process is a bit different. This will have particular outcomes with associated boards/groups to accomplish them. The process began in May, with departments providing input on an ideas board that is listed on the City Manager's website. The process has now moved on to accepting comments from boards/commissions, which will hopefully wrap up in September. This Plan will focus on functional areas and boards/commissions have a role in those. The City is seeking input from as many people as possible, in as many functional areas as possible. The intention will be for the Council to approve the Strategic Plan in May 2023.

Mr. Heistad stated that he believes Sections 4.5 - 4.7 of the Fort Collins draft Strategic Plan are important areas for the group to focus on for the City's Strategic Plan.

Chair Riley listed some suggestions from Councilor Wilkie such as, under the Environmental Justice sub header: protecting natural resources for future generations and establishing programs that represent underrepresented communities. Also, under the Rec, Arts & Parks section: expand awareness of and access to natural conservation areas.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the group could review the summary table it's been working on to see what in it could be used to inform the Strategic Plan.

Mr. James suggested that reviewing this item could be a homework item for Commissioners for next month. There are also a number of missing Commissioners who would likely want to have input. Chair Riley stated that she will compile ideas from Commissioners in a document for the group to review at its next meeting.

B. City of Lebanon Surplus Property Evaluation & Comment

Mr. James explained that this item is regarding a property off Old Etna Road, Map 50, Lot 31. The soils on the lot are almost all poorly drained, leading to this property being a wetland. A wetland down the hill from Mt Support Road should not be considered a surplus property. This property could be important for flood control and biodiversity. This area is a wetland drainage area; it will be important for the City to hold this and keep it from being built on.

Mr. Heistad MOVED to recommend to the City Manager that parcel Map 50 Lot 31 be retained and is not surplus because it contains approximately 90% poorly drained hydric soils, characteristic of a wetland and is important to keep in the City's ownership. The property has flood storage and wildlife habitat value, retards groundwater and overland flow to the Mascoma River, and thus performs a valuable service to the City and benefits the public in these capacities.
Seconded by Ms. Almy.
**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved by roll call Sarah Riley – aye; Sue Almy – aye; Bruce James – aye; Erling Heistad – aye; Darla Bruno – aye; (5-0-0).***

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Reports from other committees:

--Conservation Lands Monitors (Various Members)

Mr. Goodwin stated that the Ranger is out of town this week, but he has been active at Farnum Hill and the Jackson property. There are new engraved signs that have been placed at the Farnum Hill property.

Ms. Almy expressed concern regarding the water table and vernal pools on the conservation properties.

The group discussed raking, a wooden ladder, and additional rope swings at Alana Cole. Mr. Goodwin stated that the Ranger left a note on the rake for it to be removed. Chair Riley suggested adding more signage regarding not raking trails.

Chair Riley noted that a letter went out to direct abutters of East Wilder Road regarding the conservation easement in the area. A September 10, 2022, from 10am-12pm workday at the East Wilder Conservation Area is scheduled and abutters were invited in the letter.

--Lebanon Biodiversity Group (D. Lacey)

Chair Riley stated that Mr. Lacey has been targeting Japanese knotweed at Two Rivers.

--Workshops & Educational Opportunities (Various Members)

Mr. James stated that next week Novo Nordisk volunteers will be working on Wednesday and Thursday morning at Ticknor along the Al Merrill Trail and Ticknor Road. These volunteers will work on trimming and brushing out the areas.

The group discussed other potential trails on the Ticknor property and an additional parking area near the cemetery.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Riley stated that the Commission received information regarding the Glen Road hydroelectric project. The proposed study plan has been filed and there will be a webinar regarding the plan on September 7, 2022, 9am-12pm.

Chair Riley stated that she attended the webinar regarding the airport project. The FAA is requiring certain items for safety reasons, including clearing any obstructions near the runway. The deed gives the City the right to cut down any trees that are causing obstructions. A wide swath of trees is planned to be removed due to them being future obstructions. There are also some wetland impacts proposed along the edge of the taxi ways. The proposal also includes the clearing of some trees on an adjacent privately owned property. This project will likely need to go before the City Council. Chair Riley asked if there is another way to achieve the safety needed, while preserving the trees.

There was discussion regarding treatment of ash trees in the City against emerald ash borer.

The Commission was copied on an FYI regarding a property on Eastman Hill Road. This was a violation of some State regulations and was for information purposes only.

Chair Riley stated that Mr. Oidtmann and Ms. Hirai led a Wild About Lebanon paddle along the Connecticut River in July.

Ms. Bruno noted that she will not be reupping her seat on the Commission.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – Not addressed at this time.

A. Continued Review of Chapter 52 – Conservation Land Regulations

B. Continued Review of the Con Com's Rules & Procedure

8. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – None at this time.

9. ADJOURNMENT:
Mr. Heistad MOVED to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Ms. Almy.
**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved by roll call Sarah Riley – aye; Sue Almy – aye; Bruce James – aye; Erling Heistad – aye; Darla Bruno – aye; (5-0-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude
Recording Secretary