

FINAL

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Remote Via Microsoft Teams

[LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/Live)

October 13, 2022

6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Riley (Chair), Bruce James (Vice Chair), Erling Heistad, Donald Lacey, Chris Johnson, Sean Dittrich (Alt.) (remote), Barbara Hirai (Alt.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ernst Oidtman, Susan Almy

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator)

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Ms. Hirai was appointed to sit for Ernst Oidtman.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 8, 2022

Mr. Lacey MOVED to approve the September 8, 2022 minutes, as amended.

Seconded by Ms. Hirai.

- *Remove Bruce James from the meeting attendance and subsequent votes*
- *Remove Darla Bruno from the meeting attendance*
- *Under Study Items, A. – amend to read “this land ranks as supporting habitat...” and strike “to Signal Hill”*
- *Page 1, Line 25 – strike “through a conservation easement”*
- *Page 1, Line 26 – change “City” to “Commission”*
- *Page 2, Line 11 – “the Signal Hill easement” and “but such a provision could be added to the easement if the proposed property is added to the Signal Hill easement.”*

**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (6-0-0).***

3. OPEN TO PUBLIC

None at this time.

4. PERMIT REVIEW

A. None

5. STUDY ITEMS

A. Strategic Plan Prioritization

Mr. Goodwin explained that the City Manager has requested that the Commission whittle down the list it submitted for Strategic Plan items. The Commission should be reviewing items in terms of a one-year operating plan. If items are already in the Master Plan, these are likely already on the City’s radar. Ideally, items should be included that action can be taken on this year.

Ms. Hirai suggested removing the Wild About Lebanon item, as this is dealt with directly by the Commission. She noted that some items on the list are not included in the Master Plan and asked if they could be placed on it.

Mr. Goodwin suggested that the Commission remove the item “Continue to support volunteer stewardship for conservation lands,” as it is handled in-house.

Mr. Lacey stated that the item regarding contacting a forester regarding a plan for the Ticknor property is a specific item which could be accomplished in a year. Updating maps is also an item which could be accomplished this year. Other long-term items that could at least begin this year, include resurrecting the trail behind the Route 12A properties, and working on the Market Street wastewater treatment road item. Mr. Goodwin agreed that the Route 12A item is good one for the Strategic Plan because it involves more than just the Commission. He stated that he believes the forester one could be done in-house.

Mr. Goodwin noted that the Commission should likely include 6-7 items. Ms. Riley noted that other groups have included more than that. Mr. Johnson suggested that, if the Commission includes too many items, this may weaken the strength of some of them.

Mr. Johnson suggested that all items listed as agricultural be removed because they are not yearlong projects. Ms. Riley noted that she would then like to see some of these updated in the Master Plan.

Ms. Hirai stated that her primary item to include is to create a Climate Action Plan for the City. The Commission agreed this is a high-priority item.

Mr. Goodwin stated that, regarding the updating maps item, he can only think of two property maps that need be updated and included. He questioned if this item needs to be included on the list. Ms. Riley stated that she believes visibility of the maps on the website could be better. There are other maps that also need updating.

Ms. Riley stated that she believes the item “Expand awareness of and access to natural and conservation areas” is important. This item requires the coordination of other groups in the City, such as the DPW for mowing. The Commission agreed to keep this on the short list.

Ms. Hirai suggested that all items under the invasives management section could be included under a new item to, “Coordinate with the DPW to manage invasives.” The Commission agreed to keep this on the short list.

The Commission agreed to leave an item regarding, “Encourage the nature economy,” on the short list.

Mr. Goodwin suggested that the Commission could choose one specific property or project to include from the land conservation items section, but should not include broad, vague items.

The Commission broke down the list into Tier 1 and Tier 2 items, as follows:

Tier 1:

- Encourage the nature economy of the Market Street floodplain
- Encourage the nature economy by reactivating the trail behind 12A businesses
- Encourage Lebanon to become a municipal partner in the Soak Up the Rain program
- The riverkeeper item
- Incorporate aquatic organism passage and wildlife-friendly designs into City-wide culvert replacement projects, in line with the New Hampshire Stream Crossing Initiative
- Incorporate green infrastructure and wildlife crossings into the Exit 18 redesign
- Examine the applicability of a Vernal Pool Overlay District
- Examine the impacts of potential future water uses and sources on aquifers and on existing wells
- Work with DPW to reduce road salt use near sensitive habitat areas

Tier 2:

- Create a Climate Action Plan for the City
- Encourage the nature economy by reclaiming the lower parking lot for nature paths and riparian habitat
- Coordinate invasive management between the Conservation Commission and DPW
- Update subdivision regulations to incorporate stormwater retention practices
- Enforce or otherwise increase compliance, with an understanding of water use restrictions
- Review existing lighting standards and modify as needed to minimize skyglow and glare, in line with the Dark Sky program
- Reduce exterior light energy consumption at, and light pollution from, all municipal buildings

B. Memorial Tribute Process

The Commission discussed the potential of creating a policy to review additional memorial tribute proposals, such as benches.

Mr. Goodwin stated that these requests should be handled at an operational level, not on a case-by-case discussion at a meeting, as these can often be sensitive topics for families involved. He often scrutinizes these requests to make sure that materials and locations are appropriate.

Ms. Hirai suggested that a policy could state that requested memorials, such as birdhouses and benches, could be considered for placement in ecological areas by the Commission, as not all areas are appropriate for this.

Ms. Riley suggested that the Commission may want to be more in the loop regarding these requests in the future, at least at a broad level. Mr. Goodwin stated that he would still recommend being the point person for the families of these requests. This is the first time he has brought a request forward to the Chair for a review of the process.

The Commission agreed to keep the process as it has been, with Mr. Goodwin as the point person for these requests.

Mr. Johnson MOVED to extend the meeting for 15 minutes.

Seconded by Ms. Hirai.

*** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (6-0-0).**

The Commission agreed to discuss how to inform and educate people that remove natural items, such as Princess pines, from conservation properties at a future meeting.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Reports from other committees:

--Conservation Lands Monitors (Various Members)

Ms. Hirai stated that there was a workday at East Wilder Conservation Area on September 10th. This was very successful. She noted that DPW cleared the campsites which were at Two Rivers Conservation Area. As part of the Connecticut River's Source of the Sea program, she and Ms. Riley participated in a cleanup effort for some of the nearby trails.

Ms. Riley noted that trail work has been completed at the Ticknor property. A new trail has been built with a bridge that she was unaware of. She believed the Commission was still in discussions as to what kind of a trail network it wants on this property. She believes a site visit is in order. The Commission agreed to discuss this item further at its next meeting.

Ms. Riley noted that the next Wild About Lebanon will be held on the 29th 10am at Goodwin. She suggested a workday the week before to take apart the old fire ring and wooden structures and pull buckthorn along the Link Trail.

Mr. James stated that the bridge proposal across Great Brook previously prepared for the Recreational Trails Program was fully funded at \$67,000. This has to be built between June and December and will likely be completed by outside parties. He suggested outside parties, such as an engineer and contractor, to help shepherd this project along.

--Lebanon Biodiversity Group (D. Lacey)

--Workshops & Educational Opportunities (Various Members)

This item was not addressed at this time.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – these items were not addressed at this time.

A. Continued Review of Chapter 52 – Conservation Land Regulations

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

9. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude
Recording Secretary