

FINAL

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Council Chambers, City Hall OR
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
April 13, 2023
6:30 PM**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sean Dittrich (Alt.), Susan Almy, Sarah Riley (Chair), Ernst Oidtman

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator)

1. CALL TO ORDER – Vice Chair Bruce James called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Ms. Hirai sat for Ms. Riley.

Mr. Lacey and Mr. Johnson stated that they were unable to attend the meeting in person due to medical reasons.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 9, 2023

Ms. Hirai MOVED to approve the March 9, 2023 minutes, as presented.

Seconded by Mr. Heistad.

** The Vote on the MOTION was approved by roll call: Bruce James – aye; Chris Johnson – aye; Barbara Hirai – aye; Erling Heistad – aye; and Donald Lacey - aye (5-0-0).*

3. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

None.

4. PERMIT REVIEW

None.

5. STUDY ITEMS

A. Jackson Property – Property Overview & Discussion

Mr. James explained that the Commission should review the property and discuss it broadly. The property was transferred in 2010 and an easement is held by the Upper Valley Land Trust.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the former owner of the property subdivided off the existing house lot and asked the City to endeavor to protect the rest of the open space. This was completed using LOST funds. The approximately 16 acres were maintained by the City, including some trails. A

neighbor of the property has been mowing it and reimbursed by the City. The trails and property boundary have been blazed. There is also an example of an existing pollinator garden on the property.

Mr. Heistad stated that bear and deer are quite common in this area.

Mr. Goodwin noted that one kiosk is planned for the Jackson property along Reservoir Road. A kiosk is needed for this area to educate the public that it is a City property.

Ms. Hirai asked the condition of the trail. Mr. Heistad stated that some of the trail has been severely washed out due to a lack of water bars. Mr. James stated that there is interest from the trail steward for the Jackson property to create some additional trails if the Commission approves it. Mr. Heistad stated that he believes someone has been creating additional routes on the property without permission.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the Forest Avenue trail has been eroding. Some neighbors asked about shifting this trail from the gulley to a drier area. Mr. Goodwin suggested that they flag the proposed trail, and this was completed. The City is also getting ready to build along Forest Avenue, including some new drainage. It has been indicated that there is a trail head in this area that needs to be maintained.

Mr. James noted that Ms. Riley expressed interest in promoting blueberry production. Ms. Hirai noted that there is interest in forming a blueberry workshop. Mr. Lacey noted that the UNH Cooperative Extension may have interest in helping with a workshop.

The Commission discussed the proposed housing development on the south side of Prospect Street Extension, close to this property. This may affect usage of the Jackson property.

Mr. Heistad noted that there is a stable vernal pool on the property. He noted that it is a nicely accessible property from the school for children to use.

Ms. Hirai noted that there is an 18-acre property to the north which could be acquired to add to the Jackson parcel. Mr. Heistad echoed this suggestion. The Commission discussed a possible grant to help with purchase of this property.

The Commission discussed a Conservation Commission walk or a Wild About Lebanon event of the property. The Commission could then better survey the area. The Commission agreed to continue to discuss this item in the coming months.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Biodiversity Group (Invasives)

Ms. Hirai stated that there was a meeting with people from Hanover who are doing garlic mustard work. It is too early yet to know whether bagging versus piling is a better option. Garlic mustard season has begun and pulling can begin.

**B. Stewardship
- Ranger**

Ms. Hirai stated that she and Chair Riley participated in a walk at the Alana Cole property and East Wilder Conservation Area with John Plummer, Society of Protection of NH Forests, who has been helping to maintain the property. The entire boundary has been flagged and blazed. At the top of the staircase, one neighbor has cleared the property for a view and some of this is recent clearing on the Commission's property. This needs to be addressed and other properties should be monitored for similar concerns. There are also some pressure-treated wood areas of the staircase that should likely be removed.

Ms. Hirai stated that she and Ms. Riley met with a couple of the County Foresters regarding the upcoming invasives workshop. It was determined that native plants will be included in this workshop. This workshop will occur on May 9th.

Ms. Hirai stated that, on March 23rd, the Connecticut River Commission had a meet-and-greet and six member of the Commission attended. This showed the Commission's interest in this cause.

Ms. Hirai stated that she received an email regarding environmental bills, including House Bill 2, to remove licensing for foresters. This bill is dead at this time. There was also information regarding letters of support from 25 Conservation Commissions throughout the State. She stated that this is an opportunity in the future for the Commission to weigh in on legislative items.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the new Ranger should be able to start work soon.

- Trail Coordinator**- Monitors and Stewards**

C. Wild about Lebanon – *This item was not discussed directly at this time.*

D. Amphibian Crossings– *This item was not discussed directly at this time.*

E. LUCT/Current Use– *This item was not discussed directly at this time.*

F. Other Subcommittees– *This item was not discussed directly at this time.*

7. OTHER BUSINESS**A. FYIs**

The Commission discussed the Goodwin Conservation Area bridge. Mr. Goodwin noted that this bridge will be designed by a 3rd party contractor. Information will be passed along to the contractor that the Commission would like to see a wooden bridge, if at all possible.

B. Follow Up– *This item was not discussed directly at this time.*

C. Workshops and Educational Opportunities– *This item was not discussed directly at this time.*

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

9. ADJOURNMENT:

***Mr. Heistad MOVED that the Commission adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm.
Seconded by Mr. Lacey.***

**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved by roll call: Bruce James – aye; Chris Johnson – aye; Barbara Hirai – aye; Erling Heistad – aye; and Donald Lacey - aye (5-0-0).***

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude
Recording Secretary