

FINAL

**LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
6:30PM THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Riley (Chair), Bruce James (Vice Chair), Barbara Hirai, Erling Heistad (City Council Rep.), Ernst Oidtmann, Donald Lacey, Chris Johnson (REMOTE), Brandon Hill (Alt), Susan Almy (Alt.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sean Dittrich (Alt.)

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Mr. Johnson said he was attending remotely because he is feeling ill.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES August 8,, 2024

A MOTION was made Don Lacey by to approve the August 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes as amended. The Motion was seconded by Erling Heistad.

Amendments:

Page 1 Header: add Alt to Susan Almy

Page 1 Header: Add Brandon Hill to Members Absent

Page 2 Line 7: Change “Mr. Barrows” to Barros Street

Page 3 Line 39: Strike Line 39

Page 3, Line 43: Change to read “There will be a Sustainable Lebanon Green the Ground Event at Baker’s Crossing on Saturday, September 14 from 10am to noon. This event will focus on meadow management and plant diversity.”

Page 3 Line 47: Change to read Howe Library

Page 3 Line 48: Change to “part of the Seeing the Forest for the Trees Program”

Page 4, Line 4: Edit to read “Hirai contacted people from Hypertherm.”

Page 4 Line 6: Change to “Point in Time Homeless Count”

Page 4, Line 30: Change “Barbara” to “Ms. Almy”; Add just before that sentence: “The authors were quite open to following up on this and issues of wetland and shale that make plans for trails along 120 rather difficult.”

Page 4, Line 33&41: Change LEAC to Con Com.

Page 4 Line 43: Change to read: “Mr. Goodwin mentioned that the City is looking for a Conservation Commission representative for the Housing Task Force that is being formed.”

Page 4 Line 46: Change to read “Ms. Almy said she will be the Con Com representative to the working group.”

Page 4 Line 50: Change “member” to “members”; Change “Saturdays” to “Fridays”

Page 5 Line 2: Change last paragraph to read: “Work was done on Northwest corner of Boston Lot on Friday. The team consisted of three Con Com members as well as 15 people from Hypertherm. They worked on the east side of the lake. They will do this work again with a team from Hypertherm on August 30.” Add a new paragraph: “Ernst said that the Mascoma River Cleanup on July 27 was sponsored by Con Com and the Rotary Club.

Page 5 Line 21: Change “Mr. Goodwin” to “Mr. Heistad”

Roll Call Vote:

Voting in Favor – Ms. Hirai, Mr. Heistad, Mr. Lacey, Ms. Riley, Dr. Oidtmann, Mr. Johnson, Mr. James

Voting Against – None

***The MOTION was approved (7-0).**

3. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No one from the public spoke.

4. PERMIT REVIEW – None

5. STUDY ITEMS

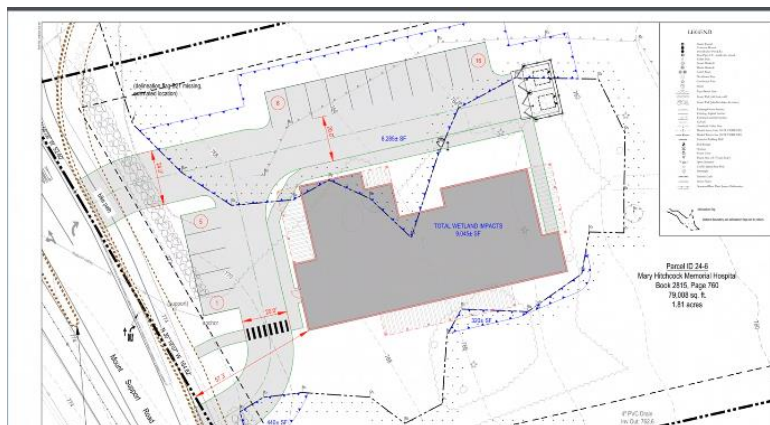
A. Conceptual Review of Potential Wetland Impacts of 424 Mount Support Road

Mr. Tom Sullivan (Family Flourish New England), Nik Fiore (Engineering Ventures), Sue Cobb (Red Bird Consulting), Mark Montany (Black River Design), and Jennifer Reardon (GM2) were present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Sullivan said the intent of the proposed facility is as a place of recovery for women and children in association with Dartmouth Health. He gave a brief overview of the project.

Mr. Fiore said the purpose of this conceptual review is to get the Commission’s first impressions and feedback on the proposed site. He gave an overview of the potential wetland impacts on the proposed site on Mount Support Road.

He shared a map of the proposed project on the site, noting that the areas outside the blue dotted line are considered wetland areas. He said, in the proposed project design, the parking areas would cause the most impact to the wetlands.



Mr. James noted that the wetland area most impacted on the site is where the parking lots would be located. He asked how to prevent permeable surfaces being placed on wetlands and asked if the parking areas could be relocated on the site. The group discussed snow removal on permeable surfaces and whether the project building could be elevated (for example, “on stilts”).

Mr. Lacey asked if any rare plant species are on the site. Ms. Reardon said there are some that are similar to the plants growing near the nearby proposed roundabout project. She said most of the plant population is near the rear of the parking area to the north of LeHaye Drive, but she said a good portion of the population is not affected by the parking lot.

Ms. Hirai asked if off-site parking could be used. Mr. Fiore said off-site parking is not allowed in the R-1 district, and a variance would be difficult to obtain.

Ms. Almy noted that it seems like water would run off the parking lot surface and to the east into the wetlands. She said it is harder to treat once it is in the wetlands. Dr. Oidtmann asked if a roof could be put over the parking lots to reduce the amount of snow that needs to be plowed and/or treated with chemicals. He said he is concerned that 9,000 square feet of wetlands will be impacted by this current design.

Mr. Hill asked if the parking area could be located directly against the building structure. Mr. Fiore said that would require disturbing the wetlands to build the needed the stormwater treatment for that. Mr. Hill asked if the parking area could be located to the south of the building and Mr. Fiore said an outdoor open space/recreation area was planned for that area.

Mr. James suggested installing rain gardens for stormwater management and Mr. Fiore said they were open to that idea, but DES doesn’t allow digging up wetlands to put in rain gardens, so they would have to be located outside the wetlands.

The Commission made several suggestions to redesign the plans to reduce the impact to the wetlands areas:

- Build a taller building with a smaller footprint
- Choose another site
- Rotate the building 90 degrees
- Locate office space at another site
- Redesign deck areas

Chair Riley said she shares the other Commission members’ concerns that projects like this one would chip away at wetlands areas, which is costly to the City.

Mr. Fiore noted that the site is particularly ideal because of its proximity to DH, so they want to try to use it for this project.

Mr. Sullivan said he and the team would research all of the Commission’s suggestions and come back at a later date with information they have learned.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Biodiversity Group (Invasives)

Mr. Lacey said he has been treating Japanese knotweed in the following locations:

- Baker's Crossing
- Ticknor
- Mill Parcel
- 2 Rivers

He said the ideal time to treat knotweed is the first few weeks after August 1.

Ms. Hirai said she and a team of volunteers pulled honeysuckle on August 30 at Honeysuckle Loop.

B. Stewardship

Mr. James said he has a new group of volunteer stewards, but has had some trouble contacting them. He said he has been out patrolling trails.

Mr. Hill said on August 30, a team of 6 Hypertherm volunteers and 3 Commission members gathered to work on the following:

- Pulling honeysuckle
- Moving lumber to northeast corner of Boston Lot Lake

He said now that the lumber has been located on the site, the wood will be cut and assembled into bridges.

Ms. Hirai said a good short-term project for volunteers could be clearing areas of 2 Rivers. Chair Riley noted that the mowing that Mr. Lacey has done has transformed the property and made trails more accessible.

Ms. Almy noted that, on August 27, she noted that there were two tree falls on the lower part of Linell Loop on the Goodwin Trail.

Mr. Hill said he has spoken with the Upper Valley Mountain Bike Club about one trail on Burnt Mountain that is half owned by the City and half by the UVMBC. He said they were in agreement that the trail could be closed.

He said he also discussed the installation of signs (that Ranger Tietjen has been creating) for the following:

- Burnt Mountain Trail
- Burnt Mountain Bypass
- Burnt Mountain Cutoff (sign has not yet been made)

He said the UVMBC is upgrading all of its signage and agreed to take down old signs to put up new ones. He said one sign that indicates the start of Boston Lot property is actually located on the Club's land, but he said they were okay with it remaining.

Mr. Hill noted one sign with information about camping and permits is located in an unusual place. He said he would like to make these rules, as well as the rules about fishing, clearer on signs on the trails.

Mr. Hill said that the tent that has been on Boston Lot for about six weeks is still there but seems to be abandoned. Chair Riley said it can be removed.

C. Wild About Lebanon

D. Amphibian Crossing

E. LUCT/Current Use

F. Other Subcommittees

Chair Riley said the Tree Advisory Board is compiling a list of locations for street trees and has indicated initial sites are the Advance Transit bus stops. She said there will be a Tree Walk this Saturday at Pine Knoll Cemetery.

Chair Riley would like to talk with Ms. Almy regarding environmental justice issues at the state level.

Ms. Hirai said she and Mr. Heistad will attend the Class VI Roads meeting on Thursday. She said the discussion will be about signage on trails/roads.

Ms. Almy said she joined the Housing Task Force.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

A. FYIs

Chair Riley said the Commission received a letter from two residents expressing concerns about the residential housing project proposed near the Densmore Brickyard site. The group discussed the project at length and discussed with Mr. Goodwin ways to express the Commission's concerns to the Planning Board.

Mr. James volunteered to write a draft of a letter to provide to the Planning Board. Mr. Hill said the Planning Board has found that letters or requests that ask them to take particular action (for example, to ask the developer to provide specific information to allay concerns) to be most helpful. Mr. James said he would try to have a draft of the letter ready by the next Conservation Commission meeting.

The group discussed if they should create a subcommittee to work on reviewing the letter. Mr. Hill said he can advise the Commission of when the project will next be on the Planning Board Meeting agenda and Commission members can plan to attend as citizens to express the Commission's concerns.

A. Follow Ups

Chair Riley said she sent the Commission members a link to a video on the water quality certification process associated with the licensing of the Wilder Dam.

Chair Riley said that DES approved the permit by notification for the City to install monitoring wells for the alternative drinking water project at these locations:

- The Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 2 Rivers

Chair Riley asked if the Conservation Commission and/or Upper Valley Land Trust should be notified when actions are happening on Conservation Land. Mr. Goodwin said he would look into this notification about the wells.

Chair Riley said the Wetland Permit was approved for the Barrows Street project.

B. Workshops and Educational Opportunities

Chair Riley said the Sustainable Lebanon Green the Ground workshop will be on Saturday at 10am at Baker's Crossing. She said Jim Kennedy will talk about meadows.

She reminded the group that the Tree Advisory Board would hold a tree walk at the Pine Knoll Cemetery at 1:00pm with Liz McKinley

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

9. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Erling Heistad to adjourn the meeting to 8:45pm. The Motion was seconded by Susan Almy.

Roll Call Vote:

Voting in Favor – Ms. Hirai, Mr. Heistad, Mr. Lacey, Ms. Riley, Dr. Oidtmann, Mr. Johnson, Mr. James

Voting Against – None

****The MOTION was approved (7-0).***

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Roux
Recording Secretary