

FINAL

**LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
Thursday, February 11th, 2021
6:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ernst Oidtmann (Chair), Sarah Riley (Vice Chair), Erling Heistad, Bruce James, Donald Lacey, Susan Almy, Chris Johnson, Barbara Hirai (Alt.), Darla Bruno (Alt.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Suellen Balestra (Alt.)

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator)

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

- Mr. Mark Goodwin reviewed the meeting procedures for remote meetings and NH RSA 91-A “Right to Know” requirements. A Roll Call of Commission Members who participated remotely are listed above.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 28th, 2021

Ms. Almy MOVED to approve the January 28th, 2021 Minutes as amended and presented in the February 11th, 2021 agenda packet.

Seconded by Mr. Heistad.

Amendments:

Page 2, Line 13 Replace “there could be something done to slow the traffic down such as signs educating the public as to why they should not speed in that area.” With “education could be done on that topic.”

Page 2, Line 21 Replace “putting islands in on Route 120.” With “narrowing the roadway by putting in grass strips between the bike lanes and the roadway itself.”

Page 4, Line 5, Add “additional” after “having”

Page 4, Line 8, Change “Tichner” to “Ticknor”

Page 4, Line 38, Change “bog” to “log”

Roll Call Vote:

Ernst Oidtmann, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Donald Lacey, Susan Almy, Bruce James, Darla Bruno, Barbara Hirai. and Chris Johnson all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

**** The Vote on the MOTION was approved (9-0).***

The agenda was taken out of order while the Commission waited for the permit presenter.

4. STUDY ITEMS:

A. Election of Officers-Chair and Vice Chair-There was confusion as to when the election of officers should take place. Rules and procedures from 2008 say the elections should take place at the annual meeting in April. No elections took place this meeting.

B. NH DOT Route 120 Multi-Modal Project-Conservation Commission Recommendations-Vice Chair Riley said she thought this agenda item encompassed two separate items. One was from an e-mail by David Brooks who sent out an e-mail from NH DOT about guardrails going in along Route 120 in Lebanon and asking if the Conservation Commission had any mitigation thoughts or suggestions for the DOT. The second item was about the DOT Study from Exit 18 to Etna Road.

Mr. Lacey suggested that there were a lot of invasive plants along that roadway, especially wild parsnips. It would be great if the DOT could do some work on the invasive species while they were putting up the guard rails. Mr. Heistad said he would like to see the guardrails moved further out from the center line giving more room to pave and perhaps allow for a bike path on the roadway.

Vice Chair Riley pulled up the City of Lebanon's GIS map and applied the wetlands layer to it. Along the entire south stretch of the roadway at least half of it was involved in the Great Brook drainage, tributaries or within the high-end wetland value buffer.

It was decided that the subject of the guardrails on Route 120 would be put on the next meeting's agenda items for discussion.

Next, the Commission discussed the Route 120 Multi-modal Project. Mr. James sent a packet to the Commission members which contained a memo that he drafted for DOT, a postcard that Mr. Heistad had received in the mail, and an article from the Valley News on the topic. Mr. James took feedback from Chair Oidtmann and Vice Chair Riley and he prepared a draft memo. It was also mentioned that the Commission members could take part, individually, in a survey about Route 120 by DOT and the Commission, as a whole, could also send a memo of their concerns to the NH DOT.

Mr. James listed five areas of concern for the Route 120 project, Traffic Noise Levels and Speed, Wildlife Habitat and Corridors, Mass Transit, Pedestrian, and Cycling Option, Landscaping the Median from Exit 18 to Hanover Street, and Protecting Existing Wetlands.

The first topic discussed was mitigating noise levels and traffic speed. Mr. Bruce suggested that the DOT take action to reduce noise due to businesses, schools, and residences along the corridor as well as needing to reduce speeds for those reasons as well. Chair Oidtmann suggested a lane being designated for multi-passenger cars during rush hour. Mr. James pointed out that putting in a HOV lane could infringe on wetlands. Ms. Hirai thought adding another lane of traffic would make that area more confusing and dangerous. Ms. Almy did not think an HOV lane could work. Mr. Heistad agreed. Mr. Lacey said he felt the Commission should concentrate on wildlife and conservation, not another lane being added. Mr. Goodwin said he did not think the DOT meant to add another lane, just use an existing lane as an HOV lane. Ms. Bruno felt that the light timing at the bridge was causing the back up of traffic on Route 120 near Exit 18.

The next topic discussed was wildlife habitat and corridors. Mr. James comments were to build and upgrade wildlife corridors under Route 120. Vice Chair Riley had some comments about the size of those corridors. Mr. Heistad said that the water table in that area was really close to the surface. Chair Riley felt it was important to highlight the Commission's recommendations from the 2016 Wildlife Corridor study. Mr. James said he could study that document and put in more specific recommendations in the memo to the DOT.

The third item was mass transit, pedestrian, and bicycling. Mr. James said that eventually they hoped that the DOT could put in sidewalks and bike lanes. Ms. Almy would like the DOT to put a narrow, grassy strip between the bicycle lanes and the roadway of Route 120. It would make the road look narrower, slow down the traffic, and make biking safer. Mr. Johnson said that the Commission could mention that they are encouraging biking and pedestrian walking as an alternative to driving cars.

The fourth topic was landscaping the median strip from Exit 18 to Hanover Street. This could help to slow down the traffic and it would look better. Mr. Heistad said the softer the image made on the road, the calmer the traffic would be. This could also make it safer for wildlife to cross.

The last item discussed was existing wetlands. Mr. James said there were a lot of wetlands going all the way from Hanover Street to Etna Road. He thought the Commission should make the point that they needed to be protected and not have more lanes put in.

Mr. James will make another draft of the memo to DOT. Mr. Goodwin said the Commission did not need to vote on the memo. It was decided that Mr. James would revise his memo, sign it, and send it to Chair Oidtmann for his signature and to send to DOT.

***Ms. Riley MOVED to extend the meeting until 9:00PM.
Seconded by Mr. Heistad.***

Roll Call Vote:

**Ernst Oidtmann, Christopher Johnson, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Donald Lacey, Bruce James, Barbara Hirai, Darla Bruno, and Susan Almy all voting Yea.
None voted Nay.**

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (9-0).***

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Conservation Lands Monitors-Vice Chair Riley and Ms. Hirai walked the property at the south end of the airport. They could not figure out where the boundaries were, but people have marked out trails through there. Ms. Hirai said she felt that the Commission needed to figure out what to do with the piece of property in conjunctions with tonight's presentation. Chair Oidtmann asked to put the property in question on as a future agenda item.

3. PERMIT REVIEW: City of Lebanon-Review and Comment on NHDES Wetland Standard Dredge and Fill Application (Minor Impact) to fill in 9,133 square feet (permanent impact) of forested wetlands in connection with its planned phased development of the Airport B Lot CC2021-01 NHDES #2020-00237. Mr. Rick Van de Poll reviewed the project with the Conservation Commission

and highlighted the different changes that took place with the plan from November until now. He explained what was done to the plan was to reduce the wetland impacts to less than 10,000 square feet. They moved the roadway; they uncoupled any kind of tertiary drainage into the wetland B ditch and sent that drainage off each parking lot down to the detention pond. They put in a plan for a short retaining wall at the end of the edge of the wetland they will cross to minimize the footprint and moved a joint driveway for Building 4 and Building 5 slightly, to miss Wetland E. The project will cover 11 acres of the 48-acre lot and will be done in 2 phases. Building 1, 2, and 3 will be done in the first phase and buildings 4 and 5 in the second phase. The drainage would be kept intact relative to the existing drainage and the stormwater runoff would be intercepted by a series of bio retention basins, 1 for each building and a larger basin closer to building 3. There will be five buildings, 5 parking lots, and 4 driveways. The runoff rates have been calculated to be less, with the retention basins, than they are now.

Vice Chair Riley asked if this was the only project that they needed to look at or were there more projects planned at that site? Mr. Van de Poll thought that was the only project for that site. He went on to say that the design standards were for a 100-year storm event for infrastructure and 50 years for the basins. They made sure that on-site infiltration exceeded the runoff coming from the impervious surfaces. They wanted to make it a net gainer in terms of runoff going down to Route 12A.

Ms. Hirai asked if there was going to still be access on the Hall School House Road at the North end near 3 wetlands? Mr. Van de Poll said the road would have public access on the east side, inside the airport fence. More questions and answers took place between Commission members and Mr. Van de Poll.

Vice Chair Riley asked about the southeast corner of the lot and whether the City would be interested in conserving that portion of the lot? Mr. Van de Pol said extending a conservation restriction on to the 11 acres was a possibility but was not sure who would be able to do that.

Ms. Almy MOVED to extend the meeting by 15 minutes.

Seconded by Ms. Riley.

Roll Call Vote:

Ernst Oidtmann, Christopher Johnson, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Donald Lacey, Bruce James, Barbara Hirai, Darla Bruno, and Susan Almy all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (9-0).***

Ms. Almy left at 9:00PM. Ms. Barbara Hirai was appointed to replace of Ms. Susan Almy.

Mr. Lacey MOVED that the Conservation Commission recommends that the New Hampshire DES approve the NHDES Wetland Standard Dredge and Fill Application (Minor Impact) to fill in 9,133 square feet (permanent impact) of forested wetlands in connection with its planned phased development of the Airport B Lot. CC#2021-01 NH DES File #2020-00237.

Seconded by Ms. Riley.

Roll Call Vote:

Ernst Oidtmann, Christopher Johnson, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Don Lacey, Barbara Hirai, Bruce James all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

*** *The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0).***

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS CONT.:

B. Lebanon Biodiversity Group-Nothing new to report since the last meeting.

C. Workshops and Educational Opportunities-Mr. Lacey reminded everyone that they may want to sign up for the Harris Center's workshop on amphibian crossings. Mr. Johnson spoke about an e-mail the City of Lebanon sent to sign up for training for Welcoming Lebanon.

D. Stewardship Program: Vice Chair Riley gave an update on the forms that have been created. The forms are as follows: a sign-up form for volunteers, an incident form, and a form for Stewards of the trails to fill out on the work they have accomplished on their trail. Now, they are just waiting for the forms to go on-line.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Heistad MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 PM.

Seconded by Ms. Riley.

Roll Call Vote:

Ernst Oidtman, Christopher Johnson, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Don Lacey, Barbara Hirai, Bruce James all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

*** *The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara R. Higgins
Recording Secretary