



LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
APRIL 8, 2021 - 6:30 PM
REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE

-
- 1. Call to Order**
 - A. Review of meeting procedures and NH RSA 91-A "Right-to-Know" requirements.
 - B. Election of Officers - Chair and Vice Chair
 - 2. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. March 11, 2021
 - 3. Permit Review**
 - A. None
 - 4. Study Items**
 - A. Proposed Recreation Use for Two Rivers Conservation Area
 - B. Volunteer Program Update
 - 5. Committee Reports**
 - A. **Reports from other committees:**
 - Conservation Lands Monitors (Various Members) (10 Minutes)
 - Lebanon Biodiversity Group (D. Lacey) (10 Minutes)
 - Workshops & Educational Opportunities (Various Members) (10 Minutes)
 - 6. Other Business**
 - 7. Future Agenda Items**
 - A. None
 - 8. Open to the Public**
 - 9. Adjournment**

The order of agenda items is subject to change.

Due to the current situation with the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of Lebanon is offering its meetings via Microsoft Teams. Members of the public are encouraged to attend by going to LebanonNH.gov/Live where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the Microsoft Teams software or by phone. Please visit LebanonNH.gov/Live for full details.

THE AGENDA, IN ITS ENTIRETY IS AVAILABLE ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE AT LEBANONNH.GOV

**Agenda
Conservation Commission
April 8, 2021**

**Agenda Item #2A
Approval of Minutes**

March 11, 2021

DRAFT

**LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
[LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/live)
Thursday, March 11th, 2021
6:30 PM**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Johnson, 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.
- Chair Oidtmann appointed Barbara Hirai as a regular voting member in place of Christopher Johnson.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 11th, 2021

Mr. Heistad MOVED to approve the February 11th, 2021 Minutes as amended and presented in the March 11th, 2021 agenda packet.

Seconded by Ms. Riley.

Amendments: The Commission would like the minutes to reflect that the agenda was taken out of order due to the presenter for a permit review arriving late.

Roll Call Vote:

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

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

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

A. Election of Officers-Annual Election of Officers-Chair and Vice Chair: Chair Oidtmann asked if the election of officers could take place in April? Mr. Goodwin said there was some confusion over this. One document said it should take place during the annual meeting and then the Commission started to do the vote in March when the council representative was appointed to the Commission. Chair Oidtmann said his document said it should be done in April. Mr. Goodwin suggested that they hold the election this evening and that he would work with staff to have the procedures updated to have the elections take place

1 in January. Vice Chair Riley said she looked back in past minutes and saw that the elections of officers
2 had taken place in the past in March.

3
4 Ms. Hirai asked City Manager Mulholland if he knew when the election of officers should take place?
5 City Manager Mulholland said it was up to the Commission to decide that. The City did not have a policy
6 on the election of officers.

7
8 Mr. Goodwin agreed to skip the election of officers until April. The Commission discussed when to hold
9 the elections from now on and they all agreed to hold the elections in April. Mr. Goodwin will change the
10 Rules of Procedures to reflect the election of officers will take place in April.

11
12 **4. PERMIT REVIEW:** None

13
14 **5. STUDY ITEMS:**

15
16 **A. Proposed Recreation Use for Two Rivers Conservation Area-**Mr. Paul Coates from the Recreation,
17 Arts, and Parks Department gave a presentation to add recreational fields to the Two Rivers Conservation
18 Area. He explained that the Department has been a steady partner with the Conservation Commission in
19 the past. Examples he gave were the Annual Cleanup Day as well as being involved in tree protection
20 and plantings in various locations. They have also helped to maintain park trails and been involved in
21 education projects such as Wild About Lebanon.

22
23 Mr. Coates was hoping, in this presentation, to address a city-wide issue and hoped to achieve a mutual
24 benefit at Two Rivers Park. A screen share of an aerial view of the Park with a rough sketch of proposed
25 playing fields was shown. The sketch showed three new playing fields plus a small parking lot being
26 built on the property. He explained that currently the City of Lebanon had run out of fields to play on and
27 the fields that they do use never have a chance to rest because they must be used every season, all season
28 long. When the fields are overused it breaks down the turf which forces the Recreation Department to
29 find ways to control weeds and grubs in the grass. That makes it unhealthy for the users of the fields.
30 The Recreation Department would like to create a healthy grass root system without using any chemicals.

31
32 The sketch showed 3 playing fields concentrated near where development and impact have already been
33 present. There was already a lot of pollution within Two Rivers from asphalt dumping that was going on,
34 unwanted invasive species, and other pollutants. In the design he showed the Recreation Department
35 wanted to stay away from both rivers. They would like to build recreational fields and work to cleanup
36 the property by getting rid of invasive species plant life, reestablishing the trail system, and promoting
37 native plant growth.

38
39 Mr. Coates explained that he investigated the deed for the property and one of the suggested uses in the
40 deed was playing fields. He also saw that in some old Conservation Commission minutes such a project
41 was suggested a while ago.

42
43 Mr. Goodwin explained that the first hurdle that would need to be overcome was to look at the deed and
44 see what it said about the kind of project that was being proposed. He noted that the deed for the property
45 was a very permissive easement. Mr. Goodwin said he had spoken with Mr. Jim Kennedy from Hanover
46 to see what his thoughts were on the project. Mr. Kennedy told him that he would not say no to the

1 concept that was being proposed by the Recreation, Arts, and Parks Department. The project could be
2 contingent on improvements to the rest of the property.

3
4 Mr. Coates also mentioned that back in 2003 the Rotary Club presented a String of Pearls project to the
5 City Council and working on Two Rivers was one of the specific parks they proposed to work on. It was
6 proposed that it would be a natural conservation area as well as a place for people to come and enjoy. Mr.
7 Goodwin pointed out that Two Rivers was a wetland mitigation for the Powerhouse Plaza and therefore
8 he was not sure what that meant in relation to the use of the property.

9
10 Chair Oidtmann asked what was happening with the Timken property? He thought it offered a lot of
11 potential with all the flat land that was there. Mr. Coates replied that the Recreation Department had been
12 actively pursuing evaluation of the property for the last 2 ½ years. Since then, they have all but walked
13 away from that property to be used as playing fields. The most recent wetland survey updated the map
14 for the whole parcel and the number of wetlands on the property was quite large. From both an ecological
15 and a cost-effective standpoint it made no sense to continue with any pursuit of the property. The
16 Recreation Department also would have had to create a driveway across the Mascoma River Greenway.
17 He also explained that building a bridge would have cost about \$1 million.

18
19 Mr. James said he liked the multiple use idea with young athletes and young families being brought
20 together. There may be some educational opportunities for the families. He asked how much
21 impermeable surface would be created and where it would be in the project? He was worried about
22 runoff, soils, and wetland impact. Mr. Coates pointed out that the smaller, yellow rectangle on the picture
23 was representative of the parking lot and would be about 40 spaces. He said it was the furthest point
24 away from the river. He was not sure how many square feet that it was, though. They were also hoping
25 to use some of the plaza's parking lot. There would be no additional impervious area.

26
27 Mr. James asked if there were going to be night games that needed to have lights? Mr. Coates said they
28 were not envisioning needing lights; they were just looking at the fields being open from dawn to dusk.

29
30 Mr. Heistad asked what the situation was with the Bagley property? Mr. Coates replied that back in the
31 2000s the Recreation Department pursued development on the piece of property. At the time it was
32 rejected for development for many reasons, one being access to the property and another being the
33 residents along Spencer Street effectively killed the project. There are wetlands at Bagley to deal with as
34 well.

35
36 Ms. Almy said she was looking at the park's founding documents, and she saw on Pages 2 and 3 of the
37 deed that taking the land from the interstate project came with certain rights that were reserved in another
38 document. In the middle of Page 3 it also said that reference should be made to the covenant that is in the
39 Grafton County Register of Deeds and to look there for a more specific description of the convenience
40 pertaining to the premises. She thought the documents should be looked at to see what would be allowed
41 and not allowed before the project was investigated much further. She also wanted to make sure that
42 fishing would still be allowed at Two Rivers along the riverbanks. She said that the fields making a
43 buffer to trash and other pollution made the project attractive to her.

44
45 Mr. Lacey asked if Parcel 2, referenced in the deed, was the property on the other side of the interstate?
46 Mr. Goodwin said he was not sure, but if it was, nothing was being proposed over there. Mr. Lacey asked
47 if the Recreation Department was prepared to put money into the cleanup up of invasive species and

1 pollution that was on the property? He also wondered if the snow removal would need to be changed for
2 the plaza to allow access to the trail system in the wintertime. Mr. Coates said that he viewed the project
3 as a three-way partnership with the Conservation Commission and the K-Mart property landowner. He
4 was hoping they could work together to create a project that took into consideration the fields and
5 conservation efforts. He would like to move quickly on the project because he would like to apply for a
6 grant called the Land Water Conservation Fund. He believed the project could be very attractive for the
7 grant. Mr. Lacey thought it was a good opportunity to take advantage of the limited deed restrictions on
8 the piece of property.

9
10 Vice Chair Riley asked if the grant looked at just active recreation or if it looked at passive recreation as
11 well? Mr. Coates said the grant focused on outdoor recreation but did not try to narrowly define what that
12 would be. The City has been awarded other Land Water Conservation Funds for other recreational areas
13 in Lebanon. Vice Chair Riley said that Two Rivers had been neglected for a long time but had a lot of
14 potential. She said one of its most unique features was that it was in an uncommon location and that it
15 was a recovering flood plain forest. There were a lot of tree and plant inventory in there. It provided
16 habitat to a wide array of animals. She thought that there should be more human activity in Two Rivers,
17 but more active management such as hikers, cross country skiers, and bird watchers. She said she would
18 need to be convinced to use this land for recreational fields.

19
20 Mr. Lacey thought this was an opportunity to get the work done that needed to be done. He agreed that it
21 was a great flood plain area but felt that this project was going to be a good trade off with the Recreation
22 Department who could get a grant and help to restore at least part of the area. Vice Chair Riley said she
23 thought that there was someone in the City who could help find grants. Mr. Lacey said there was a need
24 to have a shovel ready project for a grant.

25
26 Ms. Hirai said that she has walked the property often and enjoyed exploring it. She said that when she
27 was on LEAC there was a City employee who helped with grants. She thought that a City employee
28 could help with a grant to protect the property as a conservation area with passive recreation and not with
29 recreation fields being put in. More discussion took place among the Commission members about the
30 property and what needed to be done with it.

31
32 Mr. Coates spoke to the Conservation Commission's concerns. He said he believed the efforts between
33 the two parties were symbiotic. He thought this project would be a way to help keep the area clean and
34 protect the land from un-wanted behaviors. He said that this was a big project and that grants were a lot
35 of work and that he was able and willing to put the work into this project. He also said that there were
36 matching dollars that would need to be put into the grant he was looking at, which the Recreation, Arts
37 and Parks Department would be able to do.

38
39 Chair Oidtmann asked how involved the Upper Valley Land Trust was? Mr. Coates replied they would
40 need to very involved in it, at the very least, to review the project and offer their blessings. He had not
41 made them aware of the interest in the property at this time.

42
43 Ms. Almy said she was not sure how the project could be up for a grant this year since all the covenants
44 of the property would need to be reviewed and cleared first. She believed that would take enough time
45 that the grant would not be able to be applied for this year.

1 Mr. James said he thought that this project was a very good opportunity for a disturbed eco-system such
2 as this one. He liked the multi-use concept. He gave an example of the hiking trails behind the Norwich,
3 Vermont farmer's market. He reiterated his support for the concept at Two Rivers and thought that there
4 could be many ecological and human benefits from the project.

5
6 A straw vote was taken of the Conservation Commission members. The question posed to the
7 Conservation Commission was if the members thought they should keep talking about this project in the
8 future or not?

9
10 Chair Oidtmann said he was interested in the project.

11
12 Vice Chair Riley said she would be interested in a much scaled down version with perhaps only one
13 playing field and not a sport's field, but rather a natural playground.

14
15 Ms. Almy said she would like to see two fields on the site and in general she was open to the concept.

16
17 Mr. Heistad said would like to have the discussion continued but was not sure he could support the entire
18 package as it stood. He thought there were a lot of options that had not been discussed yet.

19
20 Ms. Hirai was concerned about the proposal but was willing to continue discussing the project.

21
22 Mr. James said he was in favor on finding out more about the proposal and, if appropriate, would be
23 interested in a joint meeting between the Conservation Commission and the Upper Valley Land Trust. He
24 also wondered if some land could be acquired to add to the property to mitigate for the fields, perhaps
25 some property across the Mascoma River?

26
27 Mr. Lacey felt the project was worth looking into. He would like to see a more detailed opinion from Jim
28 Kennedy on the ecological possibilities of the project. He encouraged Mr. Coates to keep looking into the
29 project.

30
31 Mr. Goodwin said that the next step that needed to be taken was to look at the restrictions on the property.

32 33 **6. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

34
35 **A. Conservation Land Monitors:** Chair Oidtmann asked if the Commission members were still
36 interested in building bog bridges at Boston Lot? He wanted to order the boards and needed to know if
37 the project was still going forward and how much wood he needed to order. Mr. Goodwin said that the
38 number of bog bridges was correct, but that the wood order needed to be corrected. He said that there was
39 still interest in the project, but he needed to have an amount of money for the lumber order and that
40 depending on how much it would cost, they might have to adjust the number of bridges that are put in.

41
42 **B. Lebanon Biodiversity Group:** Mr. Lacey said that a wonderful piece on the Big Night crossing was
43 in the Lebanon newsletter. Vice Chair Riley said there was also a revamped page on the Lebanon
44 Conservation Commission's website on the Big Night crossings, as well. She explained what a person
45 would see when they went to the website such as tips for safety during the crossing and how to report
46 their findings.

47
48 Ms. Darla Bruno arrived at 8:27 PM.
49
50

Vice Chair Riley told the group that Mr. Lacey, Ms. Hirai, and herself met with the Hanover group about removing garlic mustard. They are working on creating a draft outline of what needed to be done and where the work needed to be performed. This will be a topic of discussion during the Conservation Commission meeting in May.

Chair Oidtman asked if the forms for the stewardship of the trails were on the website yet? Vice Chair Riley said that the forms were up and ready for use on the website. Mr. Goodwin suggested that the whole volunteer program overview could happen at the Commission's next meeting.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

Vice Chair Riley asked if the Commission needed to talk about the Route 120 guardrail project at this meeting? It was not on the agenda for discussion. She said that Mr. Lacey pointed out that the guardrail project might be the time to have some invasive species removed from the side of the road. Mr. Goodwin said he conveyed to Rebecca Owen the 2 or 3 points that were made from the Conservation Commission's last meeting about invasive species and such. He said if the guardrail project impacted wetlands to the degree that it triggered mitigation, then DOT would come before the Commission for wetland impact review.

Mr. Goodwin talked about the Wilder Dam relicensing process. He said that there had been talk about the owner's making mitigation agreements with the area and he said that it would be helpful if the Conservation Commission endorsed the City Council to have a conversation to find out what opportunities may be had because of the Wilder Dam relicensing. It was decided that a memo would go to the city Council from the Commission asking them to investigate possible mitigation ideas for the relicensing process.

Mr. Heistad MOVED to extend the meeting by 15 minutes.
Seconded by Ms. Riley.

Roll Call Vote:

Ernst Oidtman, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Donald Lacey, Bruce James, Barbara Hirai, and Susan Almy all voting Yea.
None voted Nay.

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

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Vice Chair Riley said that the Commission talked about dedicating a large amount of time to walk the members through the volunteer stewardship program. The next meeting would also be in the middle of amphibian crossing season so there may be time to talk about the crossings. There may also be a possible, further conversation about Two Rivers.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Heistad MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM.
Seconded by Ms. Riley.

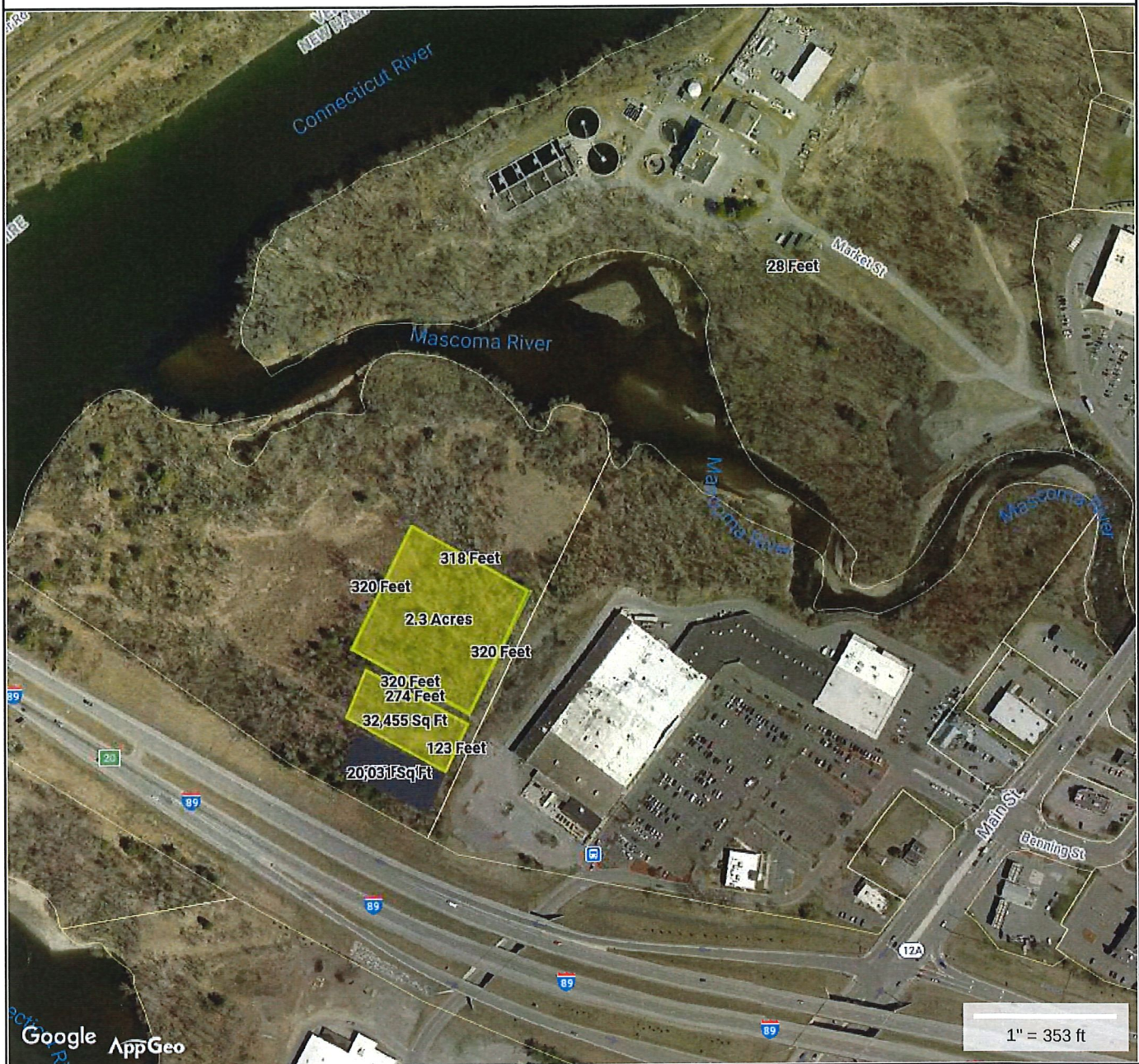
- 1 **Roll Call Vote:**
- 2 **Ernst Oidtmann, Susan Almy, Donna Bruno, Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley, Don Lacey, Barbara**
- 3 **Hirai, and Bruce James all voting Yea.**
- 4 **None voted Nay.**
- 5
- 6 **** The Vote on the MOTION passed (8-0).***
- 7
- 8 **The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 PM.**
- 9
- 10 Respectfully submitted,
- 11 Barbara R. Higgins
- 12 Recording Secretary

**Agenda
Conservation Commission
April 8, 2021**

**Agenda Item #4A
Approval of Minutes**

Proposed Recreation Use for Two Rivers Conservation Area

Two Rivers Park



**MAP FOR REFERENCE ONLY
NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT**

City of Lebanon, NH makes no claims and no warranties, expressed or implied, concerning the validity or accuracy of the GIS data presented on this map.

Geometry updated 10/23/2018
Data updated 11/18/2018

=====

I agree. It sets a very bad precedent to convert natural habitat on conservation lands to recreational fields. If Lebanon needs more playing fields, the city must buy property for that use.

Suellen Balestra

From: Robin <robbobwk@vermontel.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:54 PM
To: City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]riverside forest

Please don't put athletic fields on the riverside forest conservation area. It would be such a mistake. Lebanon has developed so much of that area and now its an eyesore, plaza's everywhere. there is not much left next to the river that plants and animals can call home.

Three fields or one will ruin all. look at that ugly hotel next to the ugly bus station across from the old Landers restaurant. there must be somewhere else. r watkins

=====

Your First Name Katherine

Your Last Name Hood

Contact Email Address Kithood3@gmail.com

Contact Phone Number 6034436339

Please enter your comments: Two Rivers Conservation area must NOT be used for fields and parking.
It is needed as a riparian area. It is often flooded in times of spring runoff or heavy rains from hurricanes. It is important to wildlife and recreation.

Playing fields should be nearer the middle school to save gas and the

environment. They would be less likely to be damaged by flooding.

Please know that this area should remain for recreation and wildlife only! Better Signage could make its use wider know.

Kit Hood
Landowner In Lebanon

Do you need to attach a file?	No
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Your First Name	Andrew
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Your Last Name	Kebalka
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Contact Email Address	andrew.kebalka@gmail.com
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(Section Break)

Which board or committee do you wish to contact?	Conservation Commission
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Please enter your comments:	Dear Lebanon Conservation Commission,
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I write to you as I am concerned with the proposal to develop upon the two rivers property. The basis of my concern is that first, conservation land should continue to be conserved for natural preservation. Much of the city has been built up by private land development and invalidates the need to also do so as well upon our public lands.

I am extremely familiar with this land. It serves as a nesting refuge for both our delicate population waterfowl and other wildlife and in my opinion serves as a buffer between industrialized Lebanon and a valuable waterfront that much of the upper valley has failed to maintain. We have the opportunity to maintain it by not moving forward with any proposal other than to keep it as is.

One thing I will guarantee will happen if this land is built into any number of recreation fields is an onslaught of goose droppings. Not something that makes for a healthy environment for our youngest residents.

I have voiced myself enough here. Please do your job in conserving our public lands and suggest alternatives (Seminary Hill, etc.). I have an enormous amount of respect for Paul Coates and understand his need. However, this property is not the answer.

Thank you!

From: Robin <robbobwk@vermontel.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:08 PM
To: City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]hi

locally it would be nice if surrounding towns let lebanon use there athletic fields as they use Lebanon to do most of their shopping.
Saving the environment is very important

=====

Dear fellow Con Com members,

I just received this email from Laurel Stavis and wanted everyone to be aware of her concerns. As you know I am reluctant to destroy a portion of the unique floodplain forest for monoculture ball fields, so I hope we all take her concerns seriously.

Barbara

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **laurel stavis** <lstavis100@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 12:07 PM
Subject: Rec Department proposal
To: SUSAN ALMY <susan.almy@comcast.net>, Barbara Hirai <bphirai@gmail.com>
Cc: Abel, Richard <richard.abel@leg.state.nh.us>

Dear Sue, Barbara:

I would write to all the members of the Conservation Commission but I don't have their emails. This is in response to this morning's Valley News coverage of the Rec Department's proposal to turn conservation

land along the Connecticut and Mascoma rivers into playing fields and a parking lot. I strongly oppose this proposal. For the last several years, that area has been home to nesting pairs of Bald Eagles. Indeed, the stretch of the Connecticut through West Lebanon from the Wilder Dam is one of the most active Bald Eagle nest sites in the area. It would be unconscionable to disturb that habitat in the manner proposed by the Rec Department.

Birders, walkers and photographers have come to treasure the open land behind the box stores on 12A. They visit from miles around to spend time there, quietly observing eagles and other magnificent birds. We do not need new playing fields and more cars in that area. Those of us who live in West Lebanon are making strides toward improving our side of the City but it seems at every turn there are efforts to locate things here that would not be countenanced elsewhere.

Thanks for considering these views. I will be in touch with the Upper Valley Birders Listserv to alert them to this proposal.

Regards,

Laurel.

Laurel Stavis

NH House of Representatives

Grafton 13 (Lebanon)

Member, Lebanon Planning Board.

=====

I agree with Laurel. I had wanted to attend the last meeting to voice my strong opposition to the proposal, but had a work emergency to deal with, so was very late. Along with the birds, there is a deer bed in there, I've seen fox and I hear there are beavers, too. This was conserved for a reason. It should remain a habitat for wildlife.

Darla

===== 2021-03-21 Don Lacey & Blake === ** Might be a private conversation..

=====

Blake, actually Audrey construction, the I-89 bridge contractor, asked the cons com if they could use part of the Two Rivers parcel as a staging ground for the project. They offered to "restore" the leveled area by way of picnic tables, gravel paths, etc. not exactly the habitat restoration we would have in

mind. Paul's fields/restoration offer seems to present much more potential benefit environmentally. —
—Don

=====

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 3:09 PM Mascoma Chapter NH Audubon <mascomabirds@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Don,

Thank you for your thoughtful response. It does show a positive way forward that could make the various stakeholders happy. Between yours, Larry's and Jeff's notes, many good points are made regarding the needs for the property's restoration and the pros and cons of a nature preserve and active playing fields in such close proximity. Presently, I'm inclined to wait to hear additional, informed discussion from both sides.

I've been back in there on one occasion and have not been inclined to go back given the conditions. Also, I wonder what impact replacing the I-89 Connecticut River bridges will have on the area's usage. That project is slated to continue into 2025. What kind of work zone buffer will it require?

Thanks again for your input,

Blake

=====

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 2:07 PM 1942dlacey <dlacey1942@gmail.com> wrote:

Blake, thanks for asking for my input. As a member of the Lebanon Cons Comm, I'm not sure how much I should say. So all this is my personal feeling and not necessarily shared by other commissioners, several of whom seem to have feelings like Laurel's.

I'm more of an environmentalist than a community minded recreation person. So I view this as a rare opportunity for a significant habitat restoration project in a highly degraded high floodplain natural community. In addition to the birding issue, this area has native plants and a number of rare plants as well. The whole area is gradually losing its diversity to invasives, as Jeff points out, as well as the piles of old building debris, junk, etc. The Nature Conservancy and the Cons Comm have planted some disease resistant elms but overall it is a tangle to walk through.

Paul Coates (who has a proven track record in such things) would apply for grants for the fields and the habitat restoration project. I feel that if the fields project was strictly confined to the 1/3 or 1/4 of the parcel closest to Kmart then the habitat restoration activities would take place on the rest of the parcel. I would be counting on the funding that Paul obtains to fully pay for a real habitat restoration project, perhaps fully planned by someone like Jim Kennedy, thorough invasives removal, careful protection of rare and more common native plants, a carefully planned minimally intrusive trail system, etc.

ideally, a habitat restoration project would be done without having playing fields, but I know that will never happen given our past history on such things. . So I view Paul's proposal as a way to actually achieve restoration of this potentially very nice habitat rather than just let the invasives continue to dominate and decrease the biodiversity.

As to whether the chapter should take a position, I'll leave that up to the group. Personally, I would like to see planning for the project go forward with the view that the habitat restoration part of the project is equally as important as the playing field portion.

---Don

=====

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 10:48 AM L Morin <lmorin@gmail.com> wrote:

Jeff expressed my thinking very well, and with more immediate knowledge. I'm glad Jeff chimed in because, after my previous message I thought, Of course, Jeff McQueen certainly would have birded there. Actually, depending on how the field layout is managed, a border of trees and shrubs along the river might be a better outcome.

I also have a question that is not directly related to wildlife. What size(s) and shapes are the proposed fields? The map in the Valley News showed rectangles, but I saw no exact size information. The diagram scale bar is 500 ft, meaning the length of a field will be close to 750 ft, much more than any sports field. Full size soccer fields are at least 100 x 60 yds (most are bigger). That would mean 22 players on the field per game plus an additional 3-5 subs per team (assume 26 players per game) times 3 fields equals a theoretical 78 players present simultaneously plus roughly 1 parent per player with 1 car per parent equals about 80 cars (assuming a bit of car pooling and late arrival of another parent or grandparent in another car). The only available parking lot, not including the lot for the new Target store, is stated to hold only 40 cars. Not nearly enough, probably.

If the fields will be 80 yds long for standard 8 per side games (or even smaller for the little kids), the number of people and vehicles present will probably be reduced, but the turnover will be higher as the games are shorter.

With Jeff's knowledge and input here, I would agree with his conclusion that this is a good spot for more athletic fields.

Larry

=====

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 8:36 AM Jeff MacQueen <jmacqueen65@gmail.com> wrote:

I will add my two cents here, and preface them with this, I believe strongly in protecting valuable habitat for wildlife. Having said that, this area in my opinion is not a special place that needs to be fought for. I have tried to bird there before in the past and was not impressed. It is FAR from my favorite places in West Leb to bird. It is good for waterfowl along the river and at the Mascoma River mouth, but the "floodplain forest" is overgrown, full of invasives and not desirable habitat for a lot of species. The other thing (and maybe, selfishly) it is not accessible to birders. A lot of work would need to be done to make it attractive to visitors. The trails are overgrown and full of poison ivy. At times I have encountered homeless people camped in there. I didn't want to make my feelings known to the whole listserve, but I think this is a good spot for more playing fields. Jeff

=====

On Tuesday, March 16, 2021, L Morin <lmorin@gmail.com> wrote:

Blake--I suggest no position pending more info. I read today's Valley News article about the situation and have some misgivings about the negativity. I can be persuaded otherwise.

I have personal experience with community sports fields being placed in "good" or "bad" locations, the word choice being largely dependent on personal preference and not necessarily related to reality or practicality. This may be a similar situation.

I'd be more than happy to make an excursion through the area with a few birders and those who know regional botany better than I.

Regards,

Larry

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **laurel stavis** <lstavis100@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 12:12 PM

Subject: [UVB] Please read

To: <UV-BIRDERS@listserv.dartmouth.edu>

Fellow birders:

The Lebanon Recreation Department is proposing playing fields and a large parking lot along the Connecticut and Mascoma rivers in West Lebanon. Is anyone else concerned that this would disturb eagle nesting sites and other bird habitats? If so, please make your views known to the City. See below:

<https://www.vnews.com/Lebanon-Pitches-New-Playing-Fields-39428979>

[53 Acorn Hill Road](#)

[Lyme, NH 03768-3400](#)

Phone: 603-795-4167

Cell: 603-359-2100

Mascoma Chapter of NH Audubon

Crystal Taplin

From: Paul Coats
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 8:57 AM
To: Dan Billin; Mark Goodwin
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]Two Rivers Conservation Area

Hello
Thank you for your note Dan, and interest in the proposal. Did you discover the Hackberry on the property? Given your interest in identifying trees, you might be interested in knowing that we are in the process of establishing a Tree Board for Lebanon. Initial efforts are underway now, and we hope to have something to announce to the public by the end of April.

Mark, can you provide comment to Dan's question about the planting project that he found at Two Rivers?

Thank you
Paul

From: Dan Billin <danbillin@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 8:48 AM
To: Paul Coats <paul.coats@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Two Rivers Conservation Area

Hi Paul,

I was very interested to see the story on the Two Rivers Conservation Area in Tuesday's Valley News. I'm into identifying tree species, so when I read there was hackberry there, I went out to take a look. While I was there, I saw that someone has put in considerable work to establish a protected plantation of some kind in the central open area. There are a dozen or so staked wire cages encircling very small saplings. The stems are wrapped to protect against mice, and each sapling bears a numbered metal tag. Do you know what this project is?

Regards,

Dan Billin

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Crystal Taplin

From: Paul Coats
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:13 AM
To: Mark Goodwin; Rick Desharnais
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]riverside forest

Hi Mark

Keep the forwards coming as you get them. It's better to not be surprised by them. Here are a couple that have come directly or indirectly to me so far.

Via Instagram:

jared.rhoads Visited the site of the proposed recreational fields today. It has potential, and I think it would be a major improvement over its current state. @lebrecreation

via email:

From: Kristin O'Rourke <orourkekm@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 3:11 PM

Hi Paul- I read the story in the VN- I think it's a great idea to have some fields down there at the river- it's a good location and will make it nicer there. I didn't know that there was so much land behind those ugly stores for people to walk around. I hope some good plan can happen.

Best
Kristin

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Goodwin <Mark.Goodwin@lebanonnh.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 7:58 AM
To: Paul Coats <paul.coats@lebanonnh.gov>; Rick Desharnais <Rick.Desharnais@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]riverside forest

Valley News article generated some feedback....

I'll forward the ones I receive with the assumption you want to see what folks are saying, whether it is supportive or not. But if you don't want them, just let me know. These are being submitted via the City Web form and so all over the place as to whom they are being directed to, i.e. ConCom, City Council, etc.

-Mark

===== From R Watkins

From: Robin <robbobwk@vermontel.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:54 PM
To: City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]riverside forest

Please don't put athletic fields on the riverside forest conservation area. It would be such a mistake. Lebanon has developed so much of that area and now its an eyesore, plaza's everywhere. there is not much left next to the river that plants and animals can call home. Three fields or one will ruin all. look at that ugly hotel next to the ugly bus station across from the old Landers restaurant. there must be somewhere else. r watkins

===== From Andrew Kebalka
Dear Lebanon Conservation Commission,

I write to you as I am concerned with the proposal to develop upon the two rivers property. The basis of my concern is that first, conservation land should continue to be conserved for natural preservation. Much of the city has been built up by private land development and invalidates the need to also do so as well upon our public lands.

I am extremely familiar with this land. It serves as a nesting refuge for both our delicate population waterfowl and other wildlife and in my opinion serves as a buffer between industrialized Lebanon and a valuable waterfront that much of the upper valley has failed to maintain. We have the opportunity to maintain it by not moving forward with any proposal other than to keep it as is.

One thing I will guarantee will happen if this land is built into any number of recreation fields is an onslaught of goose droppings. Not something that makes for a healthy environment for our youngest residents.

I have voiced myself enough here. Please do your job in conserving our public lands and suggest alternatives (Seminary Hill, etc.). I have an enormous amount of respect for Paul Coates and understand his need. However, this property is not the answer.

Thank you!

=====From Kit Hood

Two Rivers Conservation area must NOT be used for fields and parking. It is needed as a riparian area. It is often flooded in times of spring runoff or heavy rains from hurricanes. It is important to wildlife and recreation.

Playing fields should be nearer the middle school to save gas and the environment. They would be less likely to be damaged by flooding.

Please know that this area should remain for recreation and wildlife only! Better Signage could make its use wider know.

Kit Hood
Landowner In Lebanon

Crystal Taplin

From: City of Lebanon-Planning
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 7:47 AM
To: Mark Goodwin; Beth Beraldi
Cc: David Brooks
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]riverside forest

-----Original Message-----

From: Robin <robbobwk@vermontel.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:54 PM
To: City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]riverside forest

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Three fields or one will ruin all. look at that ugly hotel next to the ugly bus station across from the old Landers restaurant. there must be somewhere else. r watkins

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Crystal Taplin

From: City of Lebanon-Planning
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 7:46 AM
To: Mark Goodwin
Cc: David Brooks; Beth Beraldi
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]Online Form Submission #4731 for Boards and Committees Contact Form

Another letter for Two Rivers. I believe the conversation is continuing at the Con Com level, but I am not sure (Mark?). Also, Mark did say he thought it would be going to Council next too. I will continue to forward letters to Mark and Beth. David, I will include you, but if you do not need to be included, let me know. I have one more coming your way...

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 7:55 PM
To: webmaster <webmaster@lebcity.com>; Beth Beraldi <beth.beraldi@lebanonnh.gov>; City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Online Form Submission #4731 for Boards and Committees Contact Form

Boards and Committees Contact Form

Please complete this form to contact a City of Lebanon board or committee. Your submission will be received by a city staff member who will forward your communication to members of the board or committee you choose below. Please be aware that your submission will become part of the public record.

Visit our [Boards and Committees page](#) to find rosters, agendas, meeting details, and more. Please [contact the City Manager's office](#) if you have questions about this form.

(Section Break)

Your First Name	Andrew
Your Last Name	Kebalka
Contact Email Address	andrew.kebalka@gmail.com
Contact Phone Number	Field not completed.

(Section Break)

Which board or committee do you wish to contact?	Conservation Commission
--	-------------------------

Which topic would you like addressed by the Conservation Commission?

Other topic not listed above.

Please enter your comments:

Dear Lebanon Conservation Commission,

I write to you as I am concerned with the proposal to develop upon the two rivers property. The basis of my concern is that first, conservation land should continue to be conserved for natural preservation. Much of the city has been built up by private land development and invalidates the need to also do so as well upon our public lands.

I am extremely familiar with this land. It serves as a nesting refuge for both our delicate population waterfowl and other wildlife and in my opinion serves as a buffer between industrialized Lebanon and a valuable waterfront that much of the upper valley has failed to maintain. We have the opportunity to maintain it by not moving forward with any proposal other than to keep it as is.

One thing I will guarantee will happen if this land is built into any number of recreation fields is an onslaught of goose droppings. Not something that makes for a healthy environment for our youngest residents.

I have voiced myself enough here. Please do your job in conserving our public lands and suggest alternatives (Seminary Hill, etc.). I have an enormous amount of respect for Paul Coates and understand his need. However, this property is not the answer.

Thank you!

Do you need to attach a file?

No

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Crystal Taplin

From: City of Lebanon-Planning
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 2:16 PM
To: kithood3@gmail.com
Cc: Mark Goodwin; David Brooks
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]Online Form Submission #4728 for Boards and Committees Contact Form

Importance: High

Good Afternoon,

I have included Mark Goodwin and David Brooks from the Planning and Development Department on this email. They will be sure to share your request with the appropriate committee and/or staff. Please note, there was a discussion with at the last Conservation Commission meeting re Two Rivers. I am not sure if you were able to attend that meeting, but if you would like to watch a recording of the meeting, you can use this link <https://lebanonnh.civicclerk.com/Web/Player.aspx?id=374&key=-1&mod=-1&mk=-1&nov=0>.

Please let us know if you have any questions, or need further assistance.

Thank you,
Crystal Taplin

From: noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 12:33 PM
To: webmaster <webmaster@lebcity.com>; Beth Beraldi <beth.beraldi@lebanonnh.gov>; City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>; Manager <Manager@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Online Form Submission #4728 for Boards and Committees Contact Form

Boards and Committees Contact Form

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(Section Break)

Your First Name	Katherine
Your Last Name	Hood
Contact Email Address	Kithood3@gmail.com
Contact Phone Number	6034436339

(Section Break)

Which board or committee do you wish to contact?	City Council
--	--------------

Please enter your comments:	Two Rivers Conservation area must NOT be used for fields and parking. It is needed as a riparian area. It is often flooded in times of spring runoff or heavy rains from hurricanes. It is important to wildlife and recreation. Playing fields should be nearer the middle school to save gas and the environment. They would be less likely to be damaged by flooding. Please know that this area should remain for recreation and wildlife only! Better Signage could make its use wider know. Kit Hood Landowner In Lebanon
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Do you need to attach a file?	No
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Crystal Taplin

From: City of Lebanon-Planning
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 8:41 AM
To: Mark Goodwin
Cc: David Brooks
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]hi

I am assuming this is re Twin Rivers too.

-----Original Message-----

From: Robin <robbobwk@vermontel.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:08 PM
To: City of Lebanon-Planning <Planning@lebanonnh.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]hi

locally it would be nice if surrounding towns let lebanon use there athletic fields as they use Lebanon to do most of their shopping.
Saving the environment is very important

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https://us3.proofpointessentials.com/index01.php?mod_id=11&mod_option=logitem&mail_id=1616011670-WkdRHRg0t6BV&r_address=planning%40lebanonnh.gov&report=1

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Crystal Taplin

From: 1942dlacey <dlacey1942@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 3:50 PM
To: Mark Goodwin
Cc: Paul Coats
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Two Rivers project

Mark, the VN article has certainly generated a lot of discussion. I'm not very good at speaking off the cuff as I tried to do at the last meeting. Not quite sure how Gmail works, but I hope you can see all the posts in this thread that I've been a part of, as a sort of steering committee member of the Mascoma Chapter of NH Audubon. As you can see there's a variety of opinions, some of which seem knee jerk to me. Anyway, I had a chance to sort of compose my thoughts in this thread. I'd like to share them with other Cons Comm members but I'm sure that wouldn't be appropriate outside of a meeting. I run into people all over town with thoughts both pro and con, almost all based on gut reaction to the article. I think the issue needs ongoing planning, as Blake suggests in his comment, and a fuller presentation, not just focused on playing fields, to let everyone see the fuller picture. Any suggestions?

—+Don

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 1942dlacey <dlacey1942@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 3:29 PM
Subject: Re: [UVB] Please read
To: Mascoma Chapter NH Audubon <mascomabirds@gmail.com>
CC: Gail 'Pip' Richens <lynx.rufus@comcast.net>, George Clark <george.clark@myfairpoint.net>, Jeff MacQueen <jmacqueen65@gmail.com>, Katharine Thompson <kthom22@gmail.com>, L Morin <lmorin@gmail.com>, Susan Tiholiz <stiholiz@gmail.com>

Blake, actually Audrey construction, the I-89 bridge contractor, asked the cons com if they could use part of the Two Rivers parcel as a staging ground for the project. They offered to "restore" the leveled area by way of picnic tables, gravel paths, etc. not exactly the habitat restoration we would have in mind. Paul's fields/restoration offer seems to present much more potential benefit environmentally. —Don

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 3:09 PM Mascoma Chapter NH Audubon <mascomabirds@gmail.com> wrote:
Dear Don,

Thank you for your thoughtful response. It does show a positive way forward that could make the various stakeholders happy. Between yours, Larry's and Jeff's notes, many good points are made regarding the needs for the property's restoration and the pros and cons of a nature preserve and active playing fields in such close proximity. Presently, I'm inclined to wait to hear additional, informed discussion from both sides.

I've been back in there on one occasion and have not been inclined to go back given the conditions. Also, I wonder what impact replacing the I-89 Connecticut River bridges will have on the area's usage. That project is slated to continue into 2025. What kind of work zone buffer will it require?

Thanks again for your input,

Blake

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 2:07 PM 1942dlacey <dlacey1942@gmail.com> wrote:

Blake, thanks for asking for my input. As a member of the Lebanon Cons Comm, I'm not sure how much I should say. So all this is my personal feeling and not necessarily shared by other commissioners, several of whom seem to have feelings like Laurel's.

I'm more of an environmentalist than a community minded recreation person. So I view this as a rare opportunity for a significant habitat restoration project in a highly degraded high floodplain natural community. In addition to the birding issue, this area has native plants and a number of rare plants as well. The whole area is gradually losing its diversity to invasives, as Jeff points out, as well as the piles of old building debris, junk, etc. The Nature Conservancy and the Cons Comm have planted some disease resistant elms but overall it is a tangle to walk through.

Paul Coates (who has a proven track record in such things) would apply for grants for the fields and the habitat restoration project. I feel that if the fields project was strictly confined to the 1/3 or 1/4 of the parcel closest to Kmart then the habitat restoration activities would take place on the rest of the parcel. I would be counting on the funding that Paul obtains to fully pay for a real habitat restoration project, perhaps fully planned by someone like Jim Kennedy, thorough invasives removal, careful protection of rare and more common native plants, a carefully planned minimally intrusive trail system, etc.

ideally, a habitat restoration project would be done without having playing fields, but I know that will never happen given our past history on such things. . So I view Paul's proposal as a way to actually achieve restoration of this potentially very nice habitat rather than just let the invasives continue to dominate and decrease the biodiversity. As to whether the chapter should take a position, I'll leave that up to the group. Personally, I would like to see planning for the project go forward with the view that the habitat restoration part of the project is equally as important as the playing field portion.

——Don

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 10:48 AM L Morin <lmorin@gmail.com> wrote:

Jeff expressed my thinking very well, and with more immediate knowledge. I'm glad Jeff chimed in because, after my previous message I thought, Of course, Jeff McQueen certainly would have birded there. Actually, depending on how the field layout is managed, a border of trees and shrubs along the river might be a better outcome.

I also have a question that is not directly related to wildlife. What size(s) and shapes are the proposed fields? The map in the Valley News showed rectangles, but I saw no exact size information. The diagram scale bar is 500 ft, meaning the length of a field will be close to 750 ft, much more than any sports field. Full size soccer fields are at least 100 x 60 yds (most are bigger). That would mean 22 players on the field per game plus an additional 3-5 subs per team (assume 26 players per game) times 3 fields equals a theoretical 78 players present simultaneously plus roughly 1 parent per player with 1 car per parent equals about 80 cars (assuming a bit of car pooling and late arrival of another parent or grandparent in another car). The only available parking lot, not including the lot for the new Target store, is stated to hold only 40 cars. Not nearly enough, probably.

If the fields will be 80 yds long for standard 8 per side games (or even smaller for the little kids), the number of people and vehicles present will probably be reduced, but the turnover will be higher as the games are shorter.

With Jeff's knowledge and input here, I would agree with his conclusion that this is a good spot for more athletic fields.

Larry

On Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 8:36 AM Jeff MacQueen <jmacqueen65@gmail.com> wrote:

I will add my two cents here, and preface them with this, I believe strongly in protecting valuable habitat for wildlife. Having said that, this area in my opinion is not a special place that needs to be fought for. I have tried to bird there before in the past and was not impressed. It is FAR from my favorite places in West Leb to bird. It is good for waterfowl along the river and at the Mascoma River mouth, but the "floodplain forest" is overgrown, full of invasives and not desirable habitat for a lot of species. The other thing (and maybe, selfishly) it is not accessible to birders. A lot of work would need to be done to make it attractive to visitors. The trails are overgrown and full of poison ivy. At times I have encountered homeless people camped in there. I didn't want to make my feelings known

to the whole listserve, but I think this is a good spot for more playing fields. Jeff

On Tuesday, March 16, 2021, L Morin <lmorin@gmail.com> wrote:

Blake--I suggest no position pending more info. I read today's Valley News article about the situation and have some misgivings about the negativity. I can be persuaded otherwise.

I have personal experience with community sports fields being placed in "good" or "bad" locations, the word choice being largely dependent on personal preference and not necessarily related to reality or practicality. This may be a similar situation.

I'd be more than happy to make an excursion through the area with a few birders and those who know regional botany better than I.

Regards,
Larry

On Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 7:23 PM Mascoma Chapter NH Audubon <mascomabirds@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi, Don. What do you think? Should the Mascoma Chapter publish a comment?

Blake

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Blake Allison** <vblake.allison@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 2:06 PM
Subject: Fwd: [UVB] Please read
To: Mascoma Chapter NH Audubon <mascomabirds@gmail.com>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **laurel stavis** <lstavis100@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 12:12 PM
Subject: [UVB] Please read
To: <UV-BIRDERS@listserv.dartmouth.edu>

Fellow birders:

The Lebanon Recreation Department is proposing playing fields and a large parking lot along the Connecticut and Mascoma rivers in West Lebanon. Is anyone else concerned that this would disturb eagle nesting sites and other bird habitats? If so, please make your views known to the City. See below:

<https://www.vnews.com/Lebanon-Pitches-New-Playing-Fields-39428979>

To post messages, send e-mail to: UV-birders@listserv.dartmouth.edu Set your e-mail application to PLAIN TEXT ONLY to post messages. To contact the list owner: UV-birders-request@listserv.dartmouth.edu To unsubscribe: E-mail this command to listserv@listserv.dartmouth.edu UNSUBSCRIBE UV-Birders To change your e-mail address: E-mail this command from your old address to: listserv@listserv.dartmouth.edu CHANGE UV-Birders [new e-mail address]

Web based archives and subscription management are available at: <http://listserv.dartmouth.edu/Archives/uv-birders.html>

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[53 Acorn Hill Road](#)
[Lyme, NH 03768-3400](#)
Phone: 603-795-4167
Cell: 603-359-2100

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Mascoma Chapter of NH Audubon

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Mascoma Chapter of NH Audubon

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Crystal Taplin

From: barbara hirai <bphirai@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 3:46 PM
To: ernst oidtmann; Erling Heistad; sarah riley; Bruce R. James; darlarbruno@gmail.com; don lacey; Chris Johnson; Mark Goodwin; suellen balestra; Susan Almy
Cc: laurel stavis
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Fwd: Rec Department proposal

Dear fellow Con Com members,

I just received this email from Laurel Stavis and wanted everyone to be aware of her concerns. As you know I am reluctant to destroy a portion of the unique floodplain forest for monoculture ball fields, so I hope we all take her concerns seriously.

Barbara

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **laurel stavis** <lstavis100@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 16, 2021 at 12:07 PM
Subject: Rec Department proposal
To: SUSAN ALMY <susan.almy@comcast.net>, Barbara Hirai <bphirai@gmail.com>
Cc: Abel, Richard <richard.abel@leg.state.nh.us>

Dear Sue, Barbara:

I would write to all the members of the Conservation Commission but I don't have their emails. This is in response to this morning's Valley News coverage of the Rec Department's proposal to turn conservation land along the Connecticut and Mascoma rivers into playing fields and a parking lot. I strongly oppose this proposal. For the last several years, that area has been home to nesting pairs of Bald Eagles. Indeed, the stretch of the Connecticut through West Lebanon from the Wilder Dam is one of the most active Bald Eagle nest sites in the area. It would be unconscionable to disturb that habitat in the manner proposed by the Rec Department.

Birders, walkers and photographers have come to treasure the open land behind the box stores on 12A. They visit from miles around to spend time there, quietly observing eagles and other magnificent birds. We do not need new playing fields and more cars in that area. Those of us who live in West Lebanon are making strides toward improving our side of the City but it seems at every turn there are efforts to locate things here that would not be countenanced elsewhere.

Thanks for considering these views. I will be in touch with the Upper Valley Birders Listserv to alert them to this proposal.

Regards,
Laurel.

Laurel Stavis
NH House of Representatives
Grafton 13 (Lebanon)

Member, Lebanon Planning Board.

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