

Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes of
6/21/23

PRESENT: Tim Lovell, Brent Ebner, Erin O'Neill, Neil Lynch, Karen Cozzens, Neil Reardon, David Treat and Jim Wilkinson.

Mr. Lovell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Minutes: Mr. Lovell made a motion to accept the minutes of 5/17/23. Mr. Treat seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-3 (Messrs. Lynch and Ebner and Ms. O'Neill abstained). Motion passes.

Bridge discussion

Mr. Ebner said that the bridge by Country Road is rotten and now needs to be dismantled. He suggests that the bridge be re-routed towards the left where the two streams join into one. There will be a 20 ft bridge. Mr. Ebner presented a proposal to the Commission, which included digging up the organics, and replacing it with crushed stone. He said that the water can get a couple of feet deep in this area. The crushed stone is for drainage, it will be placed under the footings. Steps will be installed instead of a ramp, which can get slippery. A handrail is not needed if the bridge is less than 30". The previous bridge didn't have handrails. The current bridge is one of the oldest on conservation land. It was built with trees that were already down and is probably 8 to 10 years old.

Mr. Treat made a motion to accept the plan as present by Mr. Ebner. Mr. Lovell seconded the motion, Vote: 8-0. (Please see the plans that are attached to these minutes).

Moving forward, Mr. Ebner will make a formal proposal for work to be done on the trails for the Commission to review and accept.

Invasives

Mr. Treat has lined up the company to help remove the burning bush. The dates are July 8th and July 15th. He would like three people scheduled at a time, two would work and one could take a break. Last year they worked from 8:00 until 2:00. Ms. O'Neill will check with the older boy scouts to see if they could help on the 15th. The branches do not have to be hauled away.

Trail Stories

Ms. O'Neill said that she would like to laminate 100 copies of the book pages and then Velcro the pages to a board. The story trail would be up from August to September and would form a loop like it did last year. The plan is to have five different books that are rotated out for a five year cycle. She will also try to do an exercise trail with leftover stakes. The goal is to get children outside.

Maps

Mr. Wilkinson is working on “you are here” maps for the West Road and Marshall properties. He would also like to replace the Mill Shore map. Atkinson Conservation Commission is working with Mr. Ebner to rebuild the mountain bike trails now that the logging campaign is complete. Atkinson would like to reduce the number of trails. Mr. Lovell doesn’t want the Hampstead trails chopped up into a lot of mountain bike trails. Mr. Lovell described where the mountain bike trails were created.

Real Estate Items

Mr. Lovell sent a letter to the owner of the Hampstead Heights property to see if he was interested in selling it to the Commission. The Commission doesn’t have the kind of money to reimburse the owner for his current expenses. Secondary access is needed for the development. It was mentioned that Hampstead Heights could be used for single family homes or apartments. It was noted that this would put a strain on the school system.

The Commission discussed ways to appropriate more funds into the land purchase fund. An article could be drafted to present to the voters. Mr. Lynch said that the town might support the article which would preserve the nature of the Town. Mr. Ebner said that when a town is over built it affects everyone.

Big Island Pond

Mr. Lovell received a letter from SPNHF that outlined what they are looking for and what must be done regarding a couple of parcels that border Big Island Pond. The area is to be cleaned up and the docks are to be removed. That area has been maintained by an abutter and it extends into conservation land. The dock needs to be removed and native plants or bushes should be put back into its natural state. Mr. Lovell got quotes to survey the parcel; it could cost as much as \$14K. Mr. Lovell asked the organization if they wanted to pay \$14K for the survey. Part of the area is a swamp. Mr. Treat doesn’t believe that anything is going to be gained by doing a survey. Waterfront to these homes could increase the value of the homes. There is an issue whereby the Collette’s Drive residents believe that they have water rights too, but this issue is being directed towards an abutter to conservation land, not the Town itself. The intent by the developer was to allow Collette Drive to have access. Mr. Treat said that there would be a prior report that would help to identify any prior issues. Mr. Lovell said that there is a new team at the SPNHF and they are looking at some things more closely.

There was a continued discussion about the fish kill at Big Island Pond and the reduced oxygen levels.

Mr. Treat announced that the Library will be having a mushroom presentation on September 13.

Mr. Lovell made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Reardon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting 7/19/23

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Theriault, Recording Secretary