

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

August 4, 2021

APPROVED: 10/6/21

AGENDA: BRIDGEWATER MOUNTAIN SNOWMOBILE CLUB, DON LECLAIR
WINDRIDGE DEVELOPMENT SLOPE REPAIRS
SEWER LINE PROPOSAL CHANGES
CATTERALL CONSERVATION EASEMENT
NHDES NOTICE – BRISTOL SHORES ASSOCIATION
BRECK-PLANKEY SPRING - LAB RESULTS
REVIEW DRAFT BROCHURE
NHDES- RESEARCH ON BUFFER ZONES

ATTENDING: Carroll Brown (Chair), Janet Cote (Vice Chair), Richard Batchelder, Jason Moore

ABSENT: Karen Bemis, Bonnie MacGillivray-Blout

OTHER: Christina Goodwin (Land Use Manager), Lindsay Thompson (Land Use Administrative Assistant), Don LeClair

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. Ms. Goodwin explained that, as of June 12, 2021, meetings must return to the former rules and that a quorum of members must be in-person in the meeting room. A quorum for the Commission is four (4) members. The meeting continued with a quorum.

Ms. Thompson was introduced as the new Land Use staff member.

MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2021: J. Cote made a motion, second by J. Moore, to approve the minutes as read. The motion carried 4-0-0.

BRIDGEWATER MOUNTAIN SNOWMOBILE CLUB – DON LECLAIR

Mr. LeClair explained that they have a trail that goes through Ashland, Plymouth, Bridgewater, and Bristol. Each year the snowmobile club tries to clean up a portion of the trail. They remove stumps, downed trees, etc. and this year there are some problems caused by beavers. For the muddy sections, they wish to do a method called cogging in which they lay logs in the wet areas. They will need to cog a 10-foot area. Mr. LeClair added that there is a huge amount of new growth due to all the rain we have had, and it has been 10 years since anything has been done to this section of the trail. The trail goes through the Bennett woodland and comes out by Swiss View. The only drainage work that is planned is to be done in Bridgewater.

Ms. Cote stated that this is an established trail, and she has no problem with doing maintenance on it. The map of this section was looked at and it was noted that none of the work to be done on the trail is in the designated wetland. Mr. Brown offered to meet Mr. LeClair to walk this portion of the trail.

J. Cote made a motion, second by R. Batchelder, to allow Mr. Brown to walk the trail to assess the work necessary, including the beaver damage, and the work that is to be performed by the Bridgewater Mountain Snowmobile Club when the trail is not as wet. The motion carried 4-0.

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Ms. Goodwin will do research on the deeded access and the parking area for the Commission, as it was mentioned that it would be nice to have a sign. Ms. Goodwin will also verify if the Select Board has any concerns with the work being done by the club.

WINDRIDGE DEVELOPMENT SLOPE REPAIRS:

The Department of Environmental (NHDES) application was reviewed by the Commission, as an FYI. The Town is working on drainage in the area that is causing issues for structures within the Windridge Condominiums. The State originally installed the drainage and has transferred the responsibility for maintenance and repairs to the Town.

SEWER LINE PROPOSAL CHANGES:

Ms. Goodwin stated that the Water/Sewer Department is backing away from the Bennett wetland area, which was originally proposed to have lines installed with the Sewer to the Lake Project. There was a lot of concern over the project cutting through this area. They are pursuing other avenues.

CATTERALL CONSERVATION EASEMENT:

Ms. Goodwin requested the Commission to issue guidelines regarding uses allowed on the Catterall Easement property. It has been for sale, with many different proposals. Most recent has been a woman who wants a Floral Arrangement Home Occupation business with two (2) employees. She may grow her own flowers in the future. Her mother would be in the in-law apartment and her daughter would be in the caretaker apartment in the barn.

Mr. Brown suggested that more research be done on the history to determine what is allowed. Ms. Thompson will scan the history in chronological order and check the deed. The Commission will review the documents provided and provide feedback for Ms. Goodwin to inquire with legal.

The MLS listing will be checked for what is being advertised. The findings will be sent to the Board and a meeting may be called if we feel it is necessary.

Regarding the matter at hand, the Commission agreed that the floral business would not be allowed under the easement. The proposed new owner will be contacted to inform.

NHDES NOTICE – BRISTOL SHORES ASSOCIATION:

Wetlands permit application has been submitted to DES from the Bristol Shores Association but is missing a lot of necessary information. The application is for adding beach sand to the Association property and the applicant will be updating the missing information.

BRECK-PLANKEY SPRING – LAB RESULTS:

The test results, from the State lab, have been received. Mr. Brown reviewed the results with the Commission. No bacteria were found.

REVIEW OF DRAFT BROCHURE:

The Commission discussed the second draft of the Conservation Commission brochure. The Commission would like to include a drone photo of the Catterall property that Mr. Batchelder will take with his own drone and then a photo of Profile Falls provided by Mr. Moore. Ms. Goodwin will try for a better photo of the Plankey Spring and Mason's plaque. The contents will be reviewed by the members. Ms. Thompson will make sure the font is corrected and prepare a third draft for the September meeting.

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NHDES RESEARCH ON BUFFER ZONES:

Mrs. Cote provided handouts with regards to buffer zones for wetlands. Ms. Thompson presented further review of the change in the Zoning Ordinance. She updated the Commission that, in 1998, the wetlands setback for septic installations was 75 feet and it was changed in 2001 to 125 feet with notation to follow the guidelines of RSA 483B. This RSA has three (3) tiers for permitting based on hydrology soils. The Board discussed if this should be brought to the Planning Board.

Ms. Thompson will do more research on the RSA, wetlands vs shoreland and further discussions will be held in the September meeting.

MEMBER ITEMS:

Mr. Brown asked the members if they would like to consider recommending to the Planning Board height restrictions on fences along West Shore Road. The current Ordinance doesn't restrict the height of fences, other than the requirement for a permit if the fence is over six (6) feet. It was thought that, especially near the Lake, the Ordinance should be amended to not allow fences to block the view. Mr. Brown would like to recommend the Ordinance be changed to limit fences to four (4) feet. The Board will further discuss this at their next meeting and Ms. Goodwin will mention it to the Planning Board.

The Board was given the new Conservation Commission handbooks, issued in 2021 by the NH Association of Conservation Commissions. The Board agreed that this would be good for all members. Ms. Thompson will order four (4) more.

Ms. Goodwin stated that a Special Use permit will be coming in for a property on West Shore Road that has a failed septic once they have a plan. To keep the septic from leaking, the owners are currently pumping every two (2) weeks.

Ms. Goodwin stated that a Special Use permit will be coming in for work to be done across from Swiss view on the Lake. The project is proposed to correct erosion and runoff issues and add a retaining wall.

With no other business before the Commission, R. Batchelder made a motion, second by J. Cote, to adjourn at 9:05 pm. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Laferriere,
Land Use Associate