

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of February 1, 2021

Chair Dawn Genes opened the meeting by reading the following statement:

"As Chair of the Conservation Commission, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is meeting electronically utilizing the Zoom platform. We previously gave notice to the public of how to access this meeting using Zoom and instructions are provided on the Town of Lee's website at: www.leenh.org. If anybody has a problem with access, please call 603-234-8194. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote. Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law."

Present and with no one else present in their respective rooms:

Members: Catherine Fisher (Secretary), Dawn Genes (Chair), Amanda Gourgue (Treasurer), Bill Humm, Dave Shay, Deb Sugerman, Anne Tappan

Alternate Member: Mimi Winder

Select Board Representative: Scott Bugbee

Technical Assistance: Caren Rossi, Planning, Zoning, and Health Administrator

Guests: Sherrie Trefry and Nicole Martin, VHB; Jeni Menendez, Eversource

Approval of Minutes of January 4, 2021: D. Sugerman moved to accept the minutes as written, D. Shay, seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: A. Gourgue reported that, as there were no transactions in January, the Commission's account balance remains at \$9,068.68 and is comprised of:

LCC Balance: \$6,381.00

David Allen Balance: \$2,686.69

Education/Outreach: A. Gourgue reported that the Commission's Facebook page had reached 3745 individuals, with 725 engagements, and 20 page likes. D. Sugerman asked if there were ways Commission members could help in making the page more widely known; A. Gourgue suggested that members follow the page, and share posted items.

C. Fisher reported that she had finished making the thank you/save-the-date notes which she and A. Gourgue will write and mail to residents with conservation easements. D. Genes suggested that approving the 2021 monitoring schedule be put on the March agenda.

Board Reports:

Planning:

Clay Lane: A. Tappan reported that approximately twenty people attended the site walk held on January 23, including Planning Board members, C. Rossi, Steve Bullek, A. Tappan and Clay Lane and Daniels Drive neighbors. The bulk of the questions were environmental, particularly the effect on drinking water of stockpiled materials. After the site walk an hour-long Q&A session took place, with C. Rossi making notes of the questions. The meeting was continued to February 10, to answer questions and address concerns.

Demeritt Ave: A. Tappan reported that the proposed parking area project has been rescheduled and will come before the Planning Board on March 10. Once C. Rossi receives a new site plan for the project, A. Tappan will update, and then circulate, the letter outlining the Commission's recommendations.

Select Board: S. Bugbee reported that 42 people took part in the remotely-held Deliberative Session and that there were few questions and no questions regarding the operating budget.

OLD BUSINESS:

FY22 Conservation Commission Budget: Following the Deliberative Session, the Commission's \$7000.00 budget request remained unchanged.

Trails Subcommittee: D. Sugerman reported that twelve people have signed up, and there may ultimately be 15 members. Several people are interested in limited participation, i.e., during trail-work sessions. Three groups of four people will monitor the trails of the Town Forest, Maud Jones Memorial Forest, and Little River Park. Each group of four will focus on one area, and each group has accompanied D. Sugerman on a walk of the trails they will be focusing on. The group focusing on Maud Jones Memorial Forest will meet with Don Quigley. The groups monitoring the trail in the Town Forest and Little River Park expressed an interest in meeting with the folks who maintain the snowmobile trail in the latter location. Reports on trail conditions, an inventory of work that needs to be done, and a timeline of projects will be outlined at the March meeting. Work will begin in March and April.

Several questions arose, including prohibited activities, and funding for trail projects. Reading through the easements for these properties to determine what activities are prohibited, was discussed. Funding projects through grants and/or fund-raising was discussed. The possibility of consolidating the survey plans for different parts of the Town Forest was also discussed.

Little River Park Trails Project: D. Sugerman reported that the draft showing the kiosk panel content and layout had been sent to all Commission members. C. Fisher will contact the graphic designer to set up a meeting. Additions to the QR codes on the four posts marking the habitats along the trail, such as pictures and drawings, were discussed. C. Fisher reported that, a self-guided audio tour might be a future option.

A site visit with DES east region supervisor, David Price; DES wetland permitting specialist, Stefanie Gialongo; and wetland scientist Marc Jacobs, is scheduled for February 8.

D. Sugerman reported that she had contacted the person who has constructed bridges and boardwalks for SELT, and he is happy to meet with Commission members.

Conservation Commission Project Calendar Draft: Adding monthly Trail Subcommittee meetings and project work dates to the calendar was discussed.

Conservation Lands Management - Lee 5 Corners: A. Tappan reported that she had contacted Ted Kendziora and will meet with him this spring to review the contract and get his recommendations.

NEW BUSINESS:

Eversource Pole Replacement Project: S. Trefry outlined the continued work on pole replacement along Snell Road. Eversource seeks a Special Exception for the work of replacing, with steel poles, 14 wood poles located in wet soils areas. S. Trefry described the erosion and sediment controls that will be used, following best management practices outlined by DES. Following the presentation, C. Fisher stated that this ongoing pole replacement project had been done with minimal impact to wet soil areas, and that she did not oppose the special exception request. A. Tappan concurred, stating that Eversource had followed best management practices previously in this project. A. Tappan moved that the Commission approve the project with the condition that all best management practices are followed. B. Humm seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Library Expansion and Conservation Considerations: A. Tappan reported on the proposed expansion design, a 24 sq. ft. bump-out addition, noting that the library, as it currently stands, is in the wet soils conservation setback. Sometime this summer, after a professional has been hired to evaluate the plan, this proposed project will come before the ZBA and the Commission.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) at Public Safety Complex (PSC): A. Tappan reported she had notified S. Bullek of an EAB-infested ash near the PSC; it will be taken down. S. Bullek is aware of EAB sites throughout the town and he and A. Tappan plan to walk the area near the PSC. A. Tappan suggested that an inventory be taken to evaluate EAB in town-owned conserved lands (Town Forest, Maud Jones Memorial Forest, Little River Park), and suggested the Commission discuss how to deal with this issue on a town-wide basis. Options such as insecticidal treatment, releasing non-native parasites, and harvesting

infected trees were discussed. A. Tappan recommended Commission members visit nhbugs.org to learn about EAB and options for dealing with it.

M. Winder stated that A. J. Dupere at the Urban Forestry Center may have some grant money that could be put towards removal, education, etc.

A. Tappan suggested holding a late February follow-up to the EAB workshop held at the PSC in March 2020. The workshop, led by UNH Cooperative Extension/Strafford County Forester, Rebecca DiGirolomo, would, following COVID19 protocols, include up to 25 participants. UNH and the Commission would both advertise the event, and UNH would oversee sign-ups. The Commission agreed to co-sponsor this workshop. A. Tappan suggested that D. Sugerman encourage Trail Subcommittee members to attend so that they can learn to recognize EAB signs and notify the Commission about affected trees.

Administrative Document - Overview of Town-owned Conserved Lands: A. Tappan suggested the creation of a document outlining basic information about lands with which the Commission is involved. She suggested the Commission think about what categories to include in such a document (non-native invasive species present; prohibited activities; etc.), and what format would be most useful. Such a document would be provided to all Commission members and would be periodically updated.

Elongate Hemlock Scale in Lee: C. Fisher reported that, in addition to the wooly adelgid that has been found in hemlocks in Lee, the elongate hemlock scale (like the wooly adelgid, a non-native invasive species) has recently been found in hemlocks in town.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 1, 2021

Submitted by: _____
Catherine Fisher