

Somersworth Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting
November 14, 2018

Attendees: Scott Orzechowski, Chair, Dale Smith-Kenyon, Vice Chair, Sarah McGraw, Treasurer, Angela Ficco, Larry Hamilton and Shanna Saunders, City Planner.
Absent: Jeremy Rhodes, Secretary.

Meeting called to order at 7:10.

1) Approval of meeting minutes for October:
This item was tabled as minutes not available.

2) Old Business:
Per discussion and general consensus of Commission, moved to after New Business in interest of time for applicant.

3) New Business:
a) Michael Turgeon is seeking conditional use permits to build within the wetland buffer on properties located on Cemetery Road, in the Residential Duplex (R2) District, Assessor's Map 23, Lot 01 and 01A, CUP #03-2018 and #04-2018.

Turgeon reviewed proposed project and work already completed. As 2 lots are involved, separate votes required for each. Posterior decks also added to plans since initially designed by applicant. Turgeon provided history of site which was used by prior owner to store construction debris, as well as work completed by applicant. Applicant acknowledges work was done in error due to unclear understanding of where wetland buffers were located. He has moved piles of debris and regraded 20 feet inside the buffer already.

There are no plans to cut any trees in existing tree line. Much of prior work was related to attempts to control Japanese Knotweed. Applicant cut down the Knotweed, much of which was in the front of the property, away from wetlands. However, there was some in Buffer. The applicant also moved soil, erected a silt fence to control erosion, gravel, asphalt, construction waste left by previous owner. Much of this was used for fill. Work was completed in Lot 01, not Lot 01A. The Knotweed was buried 15 feet deep and he offered continued attempts to control including the use of Round-Up. Orzechowski reviewed proper application of Round-Up to minimize impact in Buffer. Turgeon reports since 50 feet silt fence erected, there has been no erosion or sediment noted.

Most of the pending work is related to the second structure. No vegetation was moved from Buffer but some covered by soil toward back of lots by loam removed for pits in which to bury the Knotweed.

Restoration Plan required and discussed to include: 1) Lawn maintained no further into Boundary than 10 feet past current 12' x 12' back decks. Turgeon reports was not planning for lawn to edge of wet. 2) Use of Native Wetland Buffer plants including those that can tolerate "wet feet" and grow well to counteract Knotweed growth. 3) Conservation Mix Seed to stabilize soil. 4) In the 0-60' Buffer recommendation is to plant Native shrubs to aid in control of siltation as well.

McGraw makes motion to recommend acceptance by Planning Board with above noted Restoration Plan and recommendations; to have Applicant minimize/employ more direct application of Round-up (Chemical controls) in Buffer rather than broad spectrum use. Discussion ensued. (See Ordinance 19.13.6.C.2a) Hamilton clarified Applicant to use Perennial Conservation Mix for seeding areas in Buffer. Saunders reviewed if snow holds off, Applicant can seed now to aid in Spring growth.

Recommendations: Lawn into Buffer no further than 10' from current 12' x 12' back deck; seeding recommendations as noted above; plant Native shrubs in Buffer; Submit planting plan to Conservation Commission.

Hamilton made motion to recommend approval of plan by Planning Board including consideration of above recommendations.

Seconded by Ficco. Motion passed with recommendations as noted.

Lot 01A:

Place silt fence prior to regrading and follow the same recommendations as noted above for Lot 01.

Hamilton motioned to recommend Planning Board accept plan with recommendations for consideration as noted above.

Seconded by Ficco. Motion passed unanimously.

Brief discussion off-topic: Ficco suggested that Commission add agenda item to meetings to allow up to 5 minutes per person for public to speak/voice concerns. Suggested should occur after approval of minutes. Commission.

1) Approval of Minutes

Typos in September minutes corrected.

2) Old Business:

a) Saunders reports handbook update not yet completed.

b) Landowner letter- Orzechowski and McGraw met with Scott Smith, Finance Director and Bob Belmore, City Manager to discuss plan. Memo was drafted to City Council, read to Commission this meeting by Orzechowski. He reports that there was no input from Council when it was read at Council meeting. The next step is to send letter to the landowner with invitation to meet with members of Commission to be followed up by telephone call. Reminder that property is currently listed for sale. It does include a camp structure on the property. Landowner would have multiple options. Inquiry made by McGraw regarding possibly allowing ongoing use by current landowner should the Commission be successful in obtaining property. Saunders advises that City is not interested in obtaining more properties to manage as landlord. Letter to be finalized on City letterhead, signed by Orzechowski, and mailed.

c) Story Walk: Ficco advised name and format is copyrighted; updated Commission on meeting with Sarah McNamara about trail at Malley Farm mapped out, benefits and concerns reviewed/discussed. Due to lease situation and other issues at Malley Farm, Saunders suggested consideration of different park such as Mast Point Dam Park, as Malley Farm parking is included in lease to Softball association that leases ball fields. Saunders cautions past attempts by City to change verbiage of lease were not well received due to ongoing problems with parking, especially during tournaments. Ficco stated Mast Point Dam is too open with the fast flowing water for the young kids she is trying to attract. Millennium Park is good option due to updated facilities and proximity to Idlehurst School.

d) Interpretive Trail at Malley Farm: trail needs to be re considered due to issues noted above and following recommendations of Fish and Game, educational information obtained at NHACC conference.

e) Malley Farm Trails: Ficco and Orzechowski out recently. Report evidence of ATVs causing erosion, tree cutting, stream crossing. Saw 2 ATVs coming and going on Indigo Hill (Old Indigo Hill Rd), across stream. When Ficco and Orzechowski returned to the parking area, noted a bow hunter exiting his vehicle. They notified police once home as neither activity allowed in City. Police recommended follow up with DES, Fish and Game. Ficco reports her research shows NH State law overrides City Ordinance which requires signs specifically posted. She obtained "No Motorized Vehicles Allowed" signs from Fish and Game but they don't provide "No Hunting" signs. Signs need to be posted every 300 yards from ALL potential entry points. Saunders can obtain "No Hunting" signs as well. Cost of signs are minimal.

Fish and Game inquired if any City lands are available to open for hunting. Saunders advises City not able to do so as there are no tracts of land large enough and away from homes to safely allow hunting. Discussion about who manages adjacent land in Rollinsford, town or SELT? Noted by Orzechowski that there are not any "No Hunting" or "No Motorized Vehicles"

signs on their trails either. Co-ordination between the two municipalities recommended.

Discussion as to how to mount signs-staple on trees but with staples loose enough to allow tree growth. In areas without trees, such as grassy areas, posts may be needed. Saunders recommends that once signs are posted in accordance with above, that any illegal activity be reported immediately to police. Will also need to follow up with ATV website that advertises trails and cites they are "working with the city" to cease and desist. Signs at Mast Point Dam loosening up.

McGraw questions about trails by General Linen-notes there are some indications of use but a lack of signs. Saunders reports property line close by with signs being okay on City side, but the other side is private property (General Linen).

3) New Business:

b) Signage for Frank Richardson Trail-sign to include brief bio on Frank. Smith-Kenyon to follow up with City Clerk to obtain more specifics about Richardson's time on Commission and service to the City.

Ficco made motion that subcommittee and further discussions be tabled until next meeting. McGraw seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Discussion on dispersing funds for Commission's membership to NHACC. Dues are \$500 per year.

Ficco motioned to pay membership dues, citing benefits to Commissions. Hamilton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Saunders advises she has resigned her membership on NHACC Board and position is now open for anyone interested. Smith-Kenyon asked what the obligations are. Saunders reports that time involved varies. Meetings are held monthly to quarterly in Concord but that meetings can be attended remotely by phone. Board Members can become active on subcommittees, in political realm, or assisting in functions such as annual conference.

d) Somersworth Sustainability Committee reports tabled to next meeting

e) Member items and reports: Commissioners will review/discuss NHACC conference at meeting in December.

Saunders stated she will try to have information for next Conservation Commission Meeting regarding current trail systems within the City. Discussions regarding trail updates, who can make, and technology required. New protocols might be required. Purpose of maps and aside, illegal to hunt NE

Cottontails. Orzechowski suggested regular meetings with Parks and Recreation Department. Saunders suggested any regular meetings with Davenport should occur during business hours as much as possible due to the Recreation Supervisor's current evening commitments.

McGraw proposed a site walk on Saturday 11/24/18 to complete monitoring of Conservation Easement Parcel 2 at The Oaks. To meet at 09:00 at Dunkin Donuts on Route 108.

Ficco motioned to adjourn. Hamilton seconded. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 20:51.

Submitted by Dale Smith-Kenyon, Vice Chair

