

Stratham Conservation Commission Public Meeting

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

I. Call to order

Mr. Bill Kenny (Chair) called to order the regular meeting of the Town of Stratham Conservation Commission at 7:02pm on the 28th of September, 2022 at Stratham Town Hall.

II. Roll call

The following members were present: Bill Kenny (Chair), Kyle Saltonstall (vice-Chair), Allison Knab (Member, Select Board Representative), Robert Keating (Member), Brad Jones (Member), and Bill McCarthy (Member). Also present were Mark Connors (Town Planner), Seth Hickey (Town Parks and Rec), and Jeremy Lougee (SELT Rep).

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Mr. Saltonstall submitted minutes from the August meeting for approval. Ms. Knab noted that the minutes had been incorrectly labeled as the "September" minutes. Mr. Kenny motioned to approve the minutes from August with the correction for the date, Ms. Knab seconded, and all were in favor.

IV. Mail

State of NH DOT sent us a letter to inform us that they will be replacing and upsizing columns/culverts on the Merrill Property.

The NH Department of Environmental Services let us know that will be replacing a utility pole.

V. Open Issues

A barn on Portsmouth Ave. is falling down. Site walk coming up tomorrow at 5:30pm. Owners of the property might not have the resources to rehab this facility.

DOT is open to putting a marked crossing at Stratham Hill Park on Route 33. Stratham staff is looking into what would be needed for that. Select Board wrote a letter to the DOT asking for an appropriate traffic light at that intersection.

VI. New Business

- a) Mr. Hickey informed us of a significant trail reroute in Stratham Town Forest as portions of the Soggy Dollar trail are seasonally wet. This causes degradation to the

trail which negatively impacts a vernal pool at this location, a valuable wildlife habitat. Work to be completed by Seacoast NEMBA, funded through Recreation Revolving Fund (Race Series). Already approved by TMAC. Wants to get it done by the fall. Seth is asking for the Conservation Commission's approval. Bill McCarthy made a motion to approve a reroute of the trail and close the portion as discussed. Brad seconded. All in favor.

- b) Mr. Hickey, informed us that a new eco counter has been half funded by Rec Commission and Park Association for \$5,400. More to follow as data becomes available.
- c) Mr. Hickey, Pursuing Jack Rabbit parking as resident only, in conversation with Police Chief and Select Board to make an ordinance and make this enforceable.
- d) Mr. Hickey, new "Trail Closed" signs will be installed in the park on spontaneous "cut-through" trails in an attempt to stop rogue trails. The hope is that if this is done before the fall, the leaves will cover the trails and begin repair to the soil.
- e) Mr. Hickey, TMAC is building a new trail map. More to follow.
- f) Mr. Hickey, Seacoast NEMBA is working to remove old signs in the effort to establish a cohesive sign strategy across the entire trail system.
- g) Mr. Connors informed the Commission that the Goodrich Farm has issued a Proposal to Cut on their property (under a Conservation Easement) on Stratham Heights Road. Ms. Knab asked why a Forestry Management Plan (FMP) hadn't been submitted. Mr. Jones emphasized that this is a beautiful wooded lot and is worth being preserved in its current condition. Mr. Kenny and Mr. Connors weren't certain if the Town could force the Goodrich family to submit a FMP before a cut happens, but Mr. Connors did hear from the Forester (Charlie Moreno) that they would be willing to submit an FMP before cutting. The Conservation Easement on the property does require that public views as well as populations of native wildlife should not be impacted by forestry or agricultural activities. Mr. McCarthy motioned to request a Forestry Management Plan prior to the initiation of cutting and to request that all Forestry Management Activities will be supervised by a professional forester. Mr. Kenny seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

VII. Non-Public Meeting

- a) Ms. Knab motioned for non-public at 7:45. Bill McCarthy seconded and all voted in favor.

b) Mr. Keating made a motion to exit and seal 8:10, Mr. McCarthy seconded, all in favor.

VIII. Adjournment.

Mr. Bill Kenny (Chair) adjourn the meeting at 8:28 pm. Mr. Keating seconded the motion and all other members voted in favor.

Minutes submitted by: K Kyle Saltonstall

Minutes approved by: