

Conservation Commission Meeting

January 26, 2022

Members present: Brad Jones, Bob Keating, Bill Kenny, Allison Knab, Bill McCarthy

Non-members present: Mark Connors, Town Planner; Donna Jensen, resident

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

Minutes: The December 2021 minutes had to be resent so not everyone had read them; they will need to be reviewed in February.

Mailbox

- SELT sent an anniversary card for the Zarnowski property
- A copy of the permit for 8 Oxbow Road was sent by DES (dock project)
- DOT sent a letter regarding proposed work on Route 33 from the community college to Winnicut Road in Greenland to create a turn lane. The town has expressed concern about this project happening ahead of the Bunker Hill light, which has been in the 10-year transportation plan for many years. Mr. Connors noted the town will be going to Concord to comment on the proposal. As there are not official plans yet the Commission will hold off on any comments.
- The Commission received correspondence via our webpage about putting a gas station in at 19 Portsmouth Avenue, which is surrounded by conservation land. Mr. Connors stated that the property is being otherwise developed; the Commission asked him to respond to the email.

Salting of Stratham Roads

- Ms. Jensen had previously communicated with Commission members and DPW Director Nate Mears about perceived oversalting of town roads during weather events.
- Ms. Jensen reminded members of the Commission's research in 2008 into salt and sand usage in town. She noted that excess salt is bad for soils, depletes trace minerals, corrodes bridges and cars, and negatively impacts concrete. The Commission had previously found that Exeter used computerized salt distribution. The findings were discussed with the Select Board at the time and changes implemented by previous DPW Director Colin Laverty. She was concerned that some of the Commission's recommendations had been forgotten over time.
- Other points raised by Ms. Jensen were: ensuring proper calibrations of equipment and training of staff, spreaders working properly, classification of roads and how much salt they receive (e.g. is River Road receiving the same amount as a road like Winnicunnet?)
- Commission members noted that there is also the public safety aspect to consider, as well as the public's perception as to when, how quickly, and how much the roads are treated. It was also noted that the salt budget for 2022 had dropped significantly, indicating reduced use.
- Mr. Kenny said he would ask Mr. Mears about any new technology available, and if there had ever been consideration of defining low salt areas around bodies of water.

Other

- Pat Elwell, who continues to maintain the Commission's Facebook page, had shared a communication she had received about Roundup being used to eradicate Japanese knotweed. This was done as part

of a RCCD grant to remove invasives around the transfer station. The Commission discussed concerns about the chemical but also the difficulty in eradicating Japanese knotweed. Ms. Elwell had already responded to the resident and it was decided no further action was needed.

- Mr. Kenny noted that attendance is being recorded for town committees. Members Kenny, Saltonstall, and Copeland (alternate) will be up for renewal this spring.
- Mr. Connors reported that the town has approved a medical office building for a property between Market Basket and Shaws. The Planning Board also conducted a site walk of the large parcel south of 101. Due to the wetlands in the area the Commission will likely be involved as the project moves forward.
- Ms. Knab noted that the Commission should think about the clean-up day at the February meeting.

At 7:58 p.m., Mr. Kenny motioned, Mr. Keating seconded a motion to enter nonpublic session to discuss possible land acquisition. All voted in favor.

At 8:15p.m. Ms. Knab motioned, Mr. Keating seconded a motion to exit nonpublic session and seal the minutes. All voted in favor.

At 8:17 Mr. Kenny motioned, Mr. Keating seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Allison Knab