

CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 8, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

City Hall, 2nd Fl Conference Rm, 41 Green St

Attendees: Mark Coen, Katherine Healy, Emily Landry, Vice-Chair Jeff Lewis, Alternate Allison McGregor, and Chair Kristine Tardiff

Absent: Rick Chormann, Councilor Michele Horne, Tracey Lesser, Alternate Jim Owers

Staff: AnneMarie Skinner, Assistant City Planner/Acting City Planner
Krista Tremblay, Administrative Specialist II

Public: Ron Klemarczyk (Forest Resource Consultant)
Rene Marro

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tardiff at 7:01 p.m.

2. Minutes – Approve June 12, 2024 meeting minutes

Vice-Chair Lewis moved, Ms. McGregor seconded, to adopt the minutes with a change to paragraph 4(a) removing Chair Tardiff and to correct Swope. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

a. Proper Disposal of Invasive Plant Species – Allison McGregor

Ms. McGregor explained last month there was discussion on invasive species and how to properly dispose them once removed. Ms. McGregor stated the new contract for trash removal is with a facility that is burning the waste. At this time the recommendation is to place the invasive species in the purple bags. Ms. McGregor suggested looking at a scheduled collection day for the collection of removed invasive species, similar to the Christmas tree collection after Christmas.

Chair Tardiff suggested checking with staff on how the disposal of removed invasive species is addressed and if it's an issue.

Ms. Skinner stated no one has brought the matter to her attention and suggested she would contact General Services and Parks and Recreation to see how they dispose of removed invasive species.

Ms. Landry asked about the process for leaf collection.

Chair Tardiff stated the City of Concord picks up collected leaves.

Ms. McGregor will investigate how other cities address this issue and report back.

b. Country Hills management plan review and timber harvest

Ms. Skinner stated that it was brought to her attention that the forest management plan for Country Hills has not been revised since 2020 and that the plan needs to be reviewed in 2025 as per a requirement of the stewardship plan. Ms. Skinner noted that, in conjunction with the proposed timber harvest, it would be a good idea to review the management plan. Ms. Skinner reported that the trails

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and open space ranger performed the annual monitoring of the site last week and reported back that everything looks fine with no encroachments.

Mr. Klemarczyk reported that in 2020 when he came before the Conservation Commission with the map and findings that comprise the management plan. Mr. Klemarczyk stated several things have come up since development of the plan, including beech leaf disease at Marjory Swope Park and very little regeneration of the hemlock stands. The plan does discuss the hemlock and woody adelgid on District 5 Rd and the piece of land from the Leadbeater Family. Mr. Klemarczyk noted that beech leaf disease is being found in numerous places, that it was found two years ago at Bear Brook State Park, and has since spread everywhere south of the White Mountains. Mr. Klemarczyk stated there are concerns about the forest they are losing from the oak gypsy moth, the hemlock adelgid, and the beech leaf disease. Mr. Klemarczyk noted regeneration is important to consider.

Chair Tardiff asked about the beech impact on wildlife.

Mr. Klemarczyk stated it will have a major impact for bear, that bears will eat more acorns instead of beech nuts.

Ms. Landry asked if this is a new thing?

Mr. Klemarczyk stated it is a very new thing. Mr. Klemarczyk stated nothing will be dying off this winter, and it could be better to hold off on the harvest until next year.

Ms. Skinner asked if the management plan needs to be revised?

Mr. Klemarczyk indicated that was unnecessary at this time because nothing has been done to the site.

Chair Tardiff noted they will perform an official review in 2025.

Mr. Klemarczyk stated the management plan does not discuss the beech leaf disease which will impact the Country Hills forest. Mr. Klemarczyk noted the quicker you get in there will start the regeneration of new growth.

Mr. Lewis stated he would be interested in moving forward with the timber cut and asked about any benefit to holding on the cut until there is final direction on the location of the northerly bypass.

Mr. Klemarczyk stated he has an idea of where the northerly bypass trail will go and if he were to do a timber cut he would leave a buffer zone for the trail. Mr. Klemarczyk stated the timber cut will not affect the trail.

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Mr. Lewis asked if the timber cut was to move forward when would it begin?

Mr. Klemarczyk stated it would have to happen this fall.

Chair Tardiff reiterated again the need to review the management plan in 2025, after the timber harvest, and in relation to the beech leaf disease and hemlock issue.

Mr. Lewis made motion to move forward with the timber sale on Country Hill Estates in accordance with the current forest management plan. Mr. Coen seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Reports

a. Trails Subcommittee

Ms. Skinner reviewed with the group the trail ranger's report of the previous month's activities published in the agenda packet.

Mr. Lewis asked about the Carter Hill trail with the crushed rock.

Ms. Skinner reviewed the email received from the trail ranger reporting that the crushed rock was placed for erosion control.

Chair Tardiff asked if it was one short stretch?

Ms. Skinner stated yes.

Mr. Klemarczyk stated that stretch was eroding and added that driving on the crushed rock will pack it down.

Ms. Skinner stated the person wants another trail on the side of the trail.

Chair Tardiff stated they will not put a trail on the other side of a trail and asked Ms. Skinner to send a response that the stone was placed for erosion control.

Mr. Lewis wanted to discuss the benches that were discussed at last month's meeting.

Ms. McGregor stated the bench was for Don and that it was to replace the existing one with a small plaque. The type of the bench for the replacement was not discussed, only the wording on the plaque. Ms. McGregor stated there was more of a discussion on the type of bench for Beth's Bench at Marjory Swope Park.

Chair Tardiff stated they should have a checklist for future bench requests.

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Ms. Skinner will add Beth's Bench as an August agenda item for the Trails Subcommittee.

b. Forestry

Ms. Skinner provided an update on the Jason Cross mowing situation, noting that the City Attorney has drafted an official notice of violation letter, but asked if the Conservation Commission was interested in pursuing some form of agreement to allow Mr. Cross to mow a portion of the area.

The Conservation Commission determined that the mowing needed to cease, as per the easement, and asked Ms. Skinner to proceed with sending the official notice of violation letter.

c. Tree Subcommittee

Ms. Skinner explained it is unclear right now if the Tree Subcommittee will remain as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission, be moved as its own committee, or be a subcommittee as of the reorganization under the Energy and Sustainability Committee.

d. Local River Advisory Committees

There is nothing new to report.

e. New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

Ms. Skinner stated there was a permit received and that information was emailed to the Conservation Commission to review.

f. City Open Space and Easements

There is nothing new to report.

g. City Council/Planning Board

Ms. Skinner stated for Planning Board item a previous applicant, AAMCO, is no longer happening. Ms. Skinner noted at this time there is nothing new from Onyx about a possible trail on the City-owned property around the pond.

5. Other Business

Mr. Lewis asked to leave conservation land preservation matrix on the agenda.

Ms. Skinner stated the Conservation Commission needs another special meeting to discuss that agenda item.

Mr. Lewis asked to keep things on the agenda as a reminder even if there is no update.

Chair Tardiff asked to add funds review as an agenda item for August, as well as adding current land use tax.

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Ms. McGregor requested that the standard easement template and invasive plant species disposal also be added to the agenda.

Rene Marro (Currier Rd) spoke to the Conservation Commission about ongoing parking lot issues at the Currier Rd parking lot. Mr. Marro asked the Conservation Commission to limit the hours the public can use the parking lot. Mr. Marro stated he has called the police several times when incidents occur and has not gotten anywhere with getting results.

Chair Tardiff reiterated that illegal activity needs to be reported to the police, adding that the Conservation Commission does not have the authority to limit the hours of parking lot use.

Mr. Marro asked again for hours to be posted at the parking lot.

Ms. Skinner stated there are no hours to post. There is no overnight camping, but parking is allowed at all hours.

Mr. Lewis asked how long Mr. Marro has owned his house in relation to the existence of the trail.

Mr. Marro stated he has owned his house for 21 years and the trail was established a few years ago, noting though that a snow mobile trail has always been there.

Chair Tardiff stated the parking lot was put in due to complaints about people parking in the road.

Mr. Lewis asked if the parking lot has created a new problem.

Mr. Marro stated the parking lot is a huge problem and not the trail.

Mr. Coen explained to Mr. Marro that the Conservation Commission cannot regulate the parking lot or the police. Mr. Coen advised Mr. Marro to contact his City Councilor and the Councilors at Large to make aware of the situation as this is issue that Conservation Commission cannot address.

Ms. Skinner stated people make requests to City Councilors and those requests will be referred to applicable city staff.

Ms. McGregor wondered if the Conservation Commission has a role in trail security.

Ms. Skinner stated the Conservation Commission does not have any role in trail security.

6. Staff updates

There is nothing new to report.

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Adjournment

Ms. McGregor moved, seconded by Ms. Landry, to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 p.m. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Tremblay

Krista Tremblay

Administrative Specialist II