

**Lancaster Conservation Commission (LCC) Meeting Minutes
Town Hall Second Floor – January 9, 2023**

LCC Members present: Racheal Stuart, Kathy-Jean Lavoie, Sam Mayne, Nancy Southworth

LCC Members Absent: Vickie Gibbs, Kim Votta, Troy Merner

Others present: Robin Irving, Margy Hobbs, Dale Covey, Heidi Chester

Initial Business: Stuart called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm, followed by introductions. She announced a slight modification of the meeting agenda, changing the sequence of workplan topics so Smith Forestry Management Plan will be first discussed.

Approval of minutes:

Lavoie made a motion to approve the December 12, 2022 minutes as written. Southworth seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business: Stuart reported the LCC has been approached by Weeks Memorial Library's librarian Barbara Robarts to participate in a NH Humanities Council program centered around a reading of The Bear. This event is in early-stage development so LCC's specific role is not yet determined.

Ongoing Business: Stuart reviewed the current draft of the 2023 LCC Annual Calendar.

LCC Workplan Topics:

Smith Forestry Management/Agricultural Reclamation Plan Update (Mayne)

Mayne reported he has consulted LCIP & UNH Cooperative Extension (who deferred to LCIP) for guidance in making a determination of "best management practices" (BMPs) for waterway protection. He referred LCC members to the NH state source information he received, while summarizing his findings. Mayne identified two main concerns for the landowner: fencing the cows out of major & minor waterways, and defining a maximum number of cows (50) in writing. He interpreted BMP to be a 35 ft. minimum fenced-out buffer for perennial streams & wetlands; a 50 ft. buffer for Garland Brook, with a 25 ft. no-cut zone followed by 50% basal area cut (50BA) for the additional 25 ft. Mayne provided maps showing pertinent boundaries.

Stuart emphasized that the LCC's role is to look to state agency documentation for clarification of terms like "best practice" or "minimum allowable". She also stressed the importance of directing these references to Smith so she understands the origin of these determinations.

Covey (Smith's forester) emphasized he cannot speak for Smith, but voiced his own concern that fir be an allowable exception within no-cut buffers (propensity for blowdown). He requested a clear definition of "riparian zone" so starting points for buffers are indisputable; also requested clarity on what constitutes a perennial vs. intermittent stream. Covey stated cutting was unlikely to be feasible this winter due to weather delays, but marking with paint or flagging was feasible.

Mayne will put together a written interpretation of findings with potential exception for firs, for emailed communication with Smith. Mayne stated he believes Smith's plan will be good for wildlife diversity, but agreed (with Southworth) that the fencing would be particularly extensive due to number of waterways. Covey said he was told by NCRS there's no funding for fencing projects. Irving wondered if a DES grant would cover fencing for the sake of town water source protection. She will explore this & team with Mayne to pursue, if applicable.

Town Forest Stewardship Roles & Responsibilities

Stuart referred LLC members to a summary of five Town Forest resource-based assessments conducted in 2022, 2020 & 2006. Using recommendations from these assessments, she drafted a proposed Stewardship Plan as a starting point for initial discussion. Members offered feedback which Stuart noted. She plans to make suggested revisions & will post the document to the group for continued development.

Treasurer's Update on 2023 LCC Budget (Lavoie)

Lavoie reported that LCC's 2022 account closed with a balance of \$ 255.29. She noted the 2023 LCC Budget (level funding) will be subject to public hearing on February 9, with public vote to follow in March.

Other business: Irving stated that she's in process of obtaining highly accurate surveyor/mapping equipment & that it may be of use to the LCC for ongoing projects.

Mayne moved to adjourn; Lavoie seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Heidi Chester

Approved February 13, 2023

Racheal Stuart, Chair

Kim Votta, Vice Chair