

Lancaster Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes Town Hall Second Floor – July 11, 2022

Members present: Nancy Southworth, Racheal Stuart, Kathy-Jean Lavoie, Vickie Gibbs, Kim Votta, Troy Merner, Sam Mayne

Members Absent:

Others present: Joel White, Rebecca More, members of the public

Initial Business: Stuart called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of minutes:

Lavoie made a motion to approve the June 13, 2022 minutes as written. Gibbs seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

LCC Workplan Topics:

Easement Monitoring Update

Votta reported on plans for the July 20 visit from the State Conservation Land Stewardship Program to monitor LCIP easements held by the LCC. Jocelyn Duffy is the representative who will be conducting the visit. She will walk easements alongside LCC members Votta, Southworth and Mayne representing LCC, and any landowners who want to participate. The LCC monitoring team is in communication with Barb Smith about pedestrian access across the Smith Easement to Tekwood Road. Smith has historically allowed this and it is a condition of the easement so LCC wants to be sure the access is visible to the public and respectful of the cows pasturing there.

ARM Fund Application Update

Stuart reported that the LCC has been invited to submit a full proposal to the ARM fund. After consultation with key landowners, the 2022 proposal will focus on putting a conservation easement on the Town Forest and a few associated activities related to findings from the Wetlands and Ecological studies. Neighboring landowner interest will determine whether the LCC pursues additional ARM funds for conservation in 2022 and 2023.

A motion was made to request NH Fish and Game to serve as the easement holder on the Lancaster Town Forest by Gibbs. Votta seconded. Stuart, Southworth, Merner, Votta, Gibbs and Mayne voted in favor, Lavoie opposed; The motion carried. If Fish and Game agrees, there will be negotiations between Fish and Game, NH DES and LCC to ensure that all parties' conditions will be met and that the easement language reflects this.

Report on CISMA/Knotweed Project

Lavoie reported that materials for the demonstration projects have been ordered. If all goes well, the site at the transfer station will be in place with signage by the fall. The CISMA group is also providing one day of professional knotweed mitigation on select public right of way locations. Lavoie is working with the Lancaster Highway Department to identify priority locations. Volunteers are currently mapping the location of Knotweed on both public and private lands. An educational display at the Lancaster Farmers Market is planned for late July or early August.

Joel White, member of the public noted that some communities create an "Invasives Management Plan" and suggested this might be considered as part of the Lancaster Master Plan. LCC representatives to the Master Plan Committee Southworth and Votta noted the natural resources chapter is under development and this idea has been discussed with the Town Manager. Votta also noted that a

decision by the Master Plan committee to include and Invasives Management Plan would need to be assigned to an appropriate Town department or committee. White provided a sample table of contents for such a plan. Lavoie acknowledged White's participation in the knotweed mapping efforts. Maynes asked to be added to the online platform.

Update on Town Forest Wetlands Assessment

Votta reported that Elise Lawson had completed her field work. Southworth participated in two of the three days in the field and shared her impressions. Stuart noted that Lawson will have data available at the end of July for inclusion in the ARM Fund proposal.

Update on Town Forest Ecological Assessment

Stuart reported that Consulting Ecologist Matt Peters has been contracted with to perform the Rapid Ecological Assessment at the Town Forest. Northern Forest Center is providing grant funds for this. He will begin his work in mid-July. Stuart will connect him with several people who know the property well, including forester Greg Ainsworth and neighboring landowner Lucy Wyman.

LCC Workplan Review

Stuart suggested the commission defer this to the August meeting given time at this meeting. The group agreed. Votta noted that the LCC has a lot of activity right now and suggested we consider planning for longer meetings in the near future. The group concurred.

D142 Line Three Week Look Ahead

Stuart reported that Eversource is in the process of removing construction matting and noted they have been very cooperative with various LCC contractors in and around the ROW near the Town Forest. Southworth noted that an Eversource ecologist accompanied her and Elise during part of the wetlands assessment field work.

Treasurers report-2022 budget update

Lavoie presented the budget and noted the LCC has 91% of funds remaining. Stuart suggested that we discuss at the August meeting how funds could be allocated to education activities related to current activities.

Master Plan Committee report

The next Master Plan Committee meeting is July 14 Votta will inquire about LCC input options at the upcoming meeting. Rebecca More noted that the previous Master Plan emphasized conservation easements as a means toward land conservation, and suggested this should be included in the Master Plan update as well.

Planning board report

Gibbs noted the Planning Board is scheduled for July 14 and no additional information has been submitted pertaining to the Main Street site plan near the traffic circle.

Selectboard report No report

Noting that there was no further business to discuss, Mayne made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm. Gibbs seconded. *The motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted, Racheal Stuart

Approved July 11, 2022

Racheal Stuart, Chair

Kim Votta, Vice Chair