

Conservation Commission
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
January 13, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeremy Degler
Sarah Eckstein
Larry Hamilton
Mercedes O'Donohue
Scott Orzechowski
Jeremy Rhodes
Dale Smith-Kenyon
Angela Ficco

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Michelle Mears

The meeting was called to order by S Orzechowski at 6:02 pm. Please note that this meeting was held remotely due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency; all votes will be recorded by roll call as a consequence.

1) Approval of meeting minutes.

Regular Meeting of 12/9

Clarifications/Corrections: Section 4, add spaces for Storm Water Treatment

Motion to approve A. Ficco, seconded by D. Smith-Kenyon.

Vote:

A. Ficco: Aye

J. Degler: Aye

L. Hamilton: Aye

M. O'Donohue: Aye

S. Orzechowski: Aye

J. Rhodes: Aye

D. Smith-Kenyon: Aye

Motion Carries 7-0-0

Special Meeting of 12/10

Clarifications/Corrections: Page 2, Line 10 – Tree Removal – note that there's also predator concerns for this action.

Page 4, Lines 12-13: Capitalize place names.

Copperhead Road Wellhead Parcel incursion notes included inadvertently.

Motion to approve A. Ficco, seconded by J. Degler.

Vote:

A. Ficco: Aye

J. Degler: Aye

L. Hamilton: Abstain

M. O'Donohue: Abstain
S. Orzechowski: Aye
J. Rhodes: Aye
D. Smith-Kenyon: Aye

Motion Carries 5-0-2

2) **Public Comment**

None received.

3) **CONTINUED APPLICATIONS**

A. Wentworth Douglass Hospital, is seeking conditional use permit for a 1-mile long nature trail in the wetland buffer on a property located at 23 Works Way, in the Commercial Industrial (CI) District, Assessor's Map 61 Lot 14B, CUP#08-2019

D. Crossley contacted applicant regarding tabling until DES is able to advance; no response has been received. S. Orzechowski suggests removing the application; J. Rhodes concurs. Staff will follow up with the state for status.

Motion to remove the application from the agenda, with an old business item to track progress of state action by J. Rhodes, seconded by L. Hamilton.

Vote:

A. Ficco: Aye
J. Degler: Aye
L. Hamilton: Aye
M. O'Donohue: Aye
S. Orzechowski: Aye
J. Rhodes: Aye
D. Smith-Kenyon: Aye

Motion Carries 7-0-0

4) **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Section 13 – Riparian and Wetland Buffer District Ordinance Review & Comment
Ordinance cleanup focused on removing RSA language that was inapplicable, clarification of ambiguous sections, particularly around impervious impact percentages.
Specific notes/comments:

- 19.13.3.A – end – modify to 'including but not limited to:'
- 19.13.3.A – add 'active' to farm and fire pond exclusion
- 19.13.4.B.a – change 'perennial stream' to 'perennial streams'
- 19.13.5.PL– Correct to 19.13.5.L, additional line returns – typo
- 19.13.5.QM – correct to 19.13.5.M, additional line return – typo
- 19.13.5.O – extra space before 'or wetland'
- 19.13.6.D.5 – Change to: The total area of a lot's original woodland buffer shall not be covered by more than 25% impervious surface. The area defined as the

original woodland buffer shall remain set when the lot is established, and shall not be recalculated, for the lifetime of the lot.”

- 19.13.6.I – correct to 19.13.6.H – this will impact subsequent lettering and numbering in this section.
- 19.13.7.C.2.b – add line return
- Add to site plan requirements;
 - Requirement for buffer lines to be noted in support of 19.13.6.D.5 on all applicable plans

Motion to recommend the revisions as noted in preparation for City Council by D. Smith-Kenyon, seconded by A. Ficco.

Vote:

A. Ficco: Aye

J. Degler: Aye

L. Hamilton: Aye

M. O’Donohue: Aye

S. Orzechowski: Aye

J. Rhodes: Aye

D. Smith-Kenyon: Aye

Motion Carries 7-0-0

B. Other New Business:

Note that the dog park is closed but not listed as such.

Regarding Malley Farm: most No Hunting signs at Malley Farm have been removed; more durable signs would be helpful here. Signs were likely removed by vandalism. The possibility of trail cams was also raised. Removed signs will need to be reposted. We’ve noted that Malley Farm is technically not conserved land; there is interest in placing this under conservation, but there are multiple barriers to doing so. City staff, assisted by A. Ficco and D. Smith-Kenyon, will look into city master plan and any existing activity on the site; last known plan, in 2010, flags the site as having conservation and recreation value.

5) **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Wetland encroachment at former well parcel

City Staff need to meet with DES to advance.

B. MEMBER ITEMS, SUB-COMMITTEE ITEMS, AND REPORTS

a. Low-Flow Showerheads

Previously voted for \$100 pilot distribution; M. Mears will submit to finance for purchase based on items listed in previous minutes.

- b. Hats
S. Orzechowski will deliver the hats to M. Mears
- c. Update regarding the property at 53 Coles Pond Road

City staff has reached out to DES for grant items needed; baseline documentation is required. Bids have been requested; this will be at least partially grant funded. This needs to be resolved prior to sale closure. Consultants are being informed of need for quick turnaround and are moving forward. We'll also need a stewardship plan, which is being worked on by city staff.

- d. Habitat restoration at Sunningdale easement

Public comment meeting held; correspondence from Tracy on 1/12/2021. This will be attached as an addendum. City staff will request clarification of what will and won't be cut.

- e. Any other old business that may come before the Commission

D. Smith-Kenyon requested an update on SRTC membership. This will require amendment of existing rules to allow membership. S. Orzechowski will investigate what this amendment would require.

A. Ficco notes that the dog park placement was within 25 ft of the brook; City Staff will raise in the department head meeting.

6) **Treasurer's Report**

City of Somersworth, NH		
Conservation Commission, Fund Balance		
December 31, 2020		
November 30, 2020	Balance Forward	\$ 140,444.24
	Receipts:	
	Interest Received	2.56
	Disbursements:	
December 18, 2020	Exeter Environmental Associates, Llc	(1,500.00)
December 21, 2020	Strafford County Register Of Deeds	(54.92)
December 31, 2020	Ending Balance	\$ 138,891.88

L. Hamilton moves to adjourn, A. Ficco seconds

Vote:

A. Ficco: Aye

J. Degler: Aye

L. Hamilton: Aye

M. O'Donohue: Aye

S. Orzechowski: Aye

J. Rhodes: Aye

D. Smith-Kenyon: Abstained (technical difficulties)

Motion Carries 6-0-1

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Jeremy Rhodes
Conservation Commission Secretary

Addendum to 5.b.d:

From: Michelle Mears <mmears@somersworth.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 2:41 PM
To: tracy@rockinghamccd.org; Scott Orzechowski
<scott.orzechowski@comcast.net>
Subject: RE: RCCD with Sunningdale updates for January 2021

Tracey-

What is the correct term for the cutting that could potentially be happening in February. Is it the underbrush. Can you explain it so I can rely it. I just want to make sure to convey the correct information at the Con Comm meeting and to the CM.

Thank you.

Michelle

-----Original Message-----

From: tracy@rockinghamccd.org <tracy@rockinghamccd.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 1:04 PM
To: Scott Orzechowski <scott.orzechowski@comcast.net>; Michelle Mears

<mmears@somersworth.com>

Subject: RCCD with Sunningdale updates for January 2021

Hello Scott & Michelle

I hope the New Year finds you both well. I've been asked by NRCS to provide a monthly update to the Somersworth Conservation Commission regarding restoration projects at the Sunningdale WRE site for your upcoming meeting.

To date these are the management tasks that are unfolding regarding the NRCS restoration project at the Sunningdale WRE easement site.

- a. Flags (orange/yellow) have been placed around the general perimeter of the Existing NEC habitat - selective maintenance area (12+/- acres). Please see attached NRCS map and updated RCCD map (January 2021).
- b. Additional flags -(blue) have been placed in one fairway area with large existing trees to remain - that area (Mature Tree Removal) is now pending further consideration and future discussion with other contractors.
- c. Contractor bids have been submitted, and we are waiting on NRCS to comment and/or approve.
- d. If approved, RCCD will prepare an agreement with the selected contractor and will manage the project for NRCS.
- e. If approved, likely timeframe is February 2021 - under frozen conditions. NRCS, Fish and Game, and the City of Somersworth will be notified when the project is initiated.
- f. RCCD is currently flagging the centerline for the legal access for the selected contractor to access the WRE easement.
- g. RCCD is currently evaluating best sign placement for signage that indicates active mechanical restoration is taking place, and will be installed prior to restoration being initiated.
- h. RCCD is currently creating a map highlighting temporary trail closures due to large mechanized equipment, and woody debris movement. Adjacent/nearby trails will likely be closed for 2 +/- weeks, but will also be dependent on weather/site conditions. It is anticipated that the City of Somersworth can provide that map to the homeowners association, and also have it posted on mailbox locations, or other appropriate areas within the development. This is expected to assist the homeowners/abutters so that they know of the estimated timeframe and area of impact.
- i. RCCD will be in contact with the selected contractor, and on site at times during this restoration phase, to appropriately manage this NEC restoration project.

j. RCCD will report back to the Somersworth Conservation Commission of any potential changes, and before the next scheduled (Feb 10) Conservation Commission meeting.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions, and I look forward to seeing this important NEC restoration project take place.
Thank you -

Tracy Degnan