

**Somersworth Conservation Commission  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
September 14 2022**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Doug Bryar  
Sarah Childs  
Jeremy Degler  
Kevin Dodds  
Angela Ficco  
Scott Orzechowski  
Jeremy Rhodes  
Dale Smith-Kenyon

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dana Crossley, Planning Secretary

The meeting was called to order by S. Orzechowski at 6:02 pm.

**1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

Corrections:

- Pg 2, paragraph D – Strafford County Forester's name is Rebecca DiGirolomo, NH Division of Forests and Land Urban Forester is AJ Dupere.
- Pg 3, Paragraph D – correction to Dodds
- Member Items II – refers to 3C

A. Ficco moves to accept as amended, S. Childs seconds, Vote 8-0-0

**2) PUBLIC COMMENT (five minutes per person and subject to closure in interest of time)**

None.

**3) NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Peter Harry on behalf of the Oaks regarding a proposed timber cut on a property located at 100 Hideaway Place, in the Commercial Industrial (CI) and Residential Single Family (R1) Districts, Assessor's Map 50 Lot 11**

Bob Belmore (City Manager) speaks first; the applicant has met with the Public Works and Environments Committee of the City Council, which intends to approve the plan. The intent is to include all necessary permits and easements. The site is irrigated with a combination of surface water, private well water, and city non-potable well water. This land is on lease from the City and they are currently about halfway through a 38-year lease.

Peter Harry next presents on behalf of the management group for the Oaks course; vertical tree growth has caused difficulty in maintaining the golf course. This is primarily due to increases in shading and decreases in air circulation due to thickening woods; it has been about 25 years since the initial cut that created the course. To date, course groundskeepers have attempted to manage the effects through increased use of fungicides, pesticides, and other control measures, but this is no longer viable. No cuts are planned inside wetland buffers or boundaries.

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Total area to be cut is approximately 50 acres; work is planned to occur after winter freeze. The cut areas will be seeded with Fescue grass, a native grass that is drought tolerant and doesn't need irrigation. Total cut will be approximately 1000 trees.

The Commission notes that cuts marked at holes 4, 6, and 7 appears to run close to wetland. Course management does not anticipate that any additional irrigation load will occur as a result of this work. It's noted that, in the past, Oaks management has not been as attentive to environmental concerns as many would have hoped; a past offsite wetland impact mitigation is noted. There's also the concern around the course using City-owned timber to offset their operating expenses, and the course has no environmental stewardship plan in place. Given these concerns, the commission believes that a site walk would be in order. This will be coordinated by Oaks management.

Ficco moves to table this request; S. Childs seconds. Vote 8-0-0

**B. John & Debra Birmbas are seeking a conditional use permit to construct an 8'x10' shed on a lot within the Riparian and Wetland Buffer located at 31 Coles Pond Road, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 49 Lot 16, CUP#10-2022**

John Birmbas presents. Chosen site is next to the house, with the wall closest to the water running even with back wall of the house. The shed does not have a poured foundation; it's placed on cinder blocks. A second site had been considered (closer to the water) but has not been chosen.

J. Degler moves that the request be forwarded to the planning board with a recommendation to approve with the following conditions:

1. Applicant shall locate the shed in location A;
2. That a crushed stone drip edge be installed at the full base of the shed at the time of construction; and
3. That the shed not extend beyond the wall of the house.

Vote 8-0-0

**C. Michael Halsey & Alden Folsom are seeking a conditional use permit to construct a single-family house with garage, driveway and onsite septic system within the Riparian and Wetland Buffer on a property located at Oakridge Drive, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 31 Lot 27A, CUP#11-2022**

Joe Berry of Berry Survey and Engineering presented the application to the Commission. The proposed structure is a 3-bedroom home, garage, and septic system. The home will be connected to City water supply, but sewer systems do not extend to this site. The construction occurs in the 50' setback, but not in the 100' buffer. Silt socks will be used for erosion control, and any disturbed vegetation/fill will be reseeded with conservation mix.

Concern is raised around the slope of fill near the septic system. This is kept as minimal as possible to avoid erosion and will use a retaining wall to hold fill at areas of drop-off. This wall has a maximum height of 4 feet. Only lawn on site would be in front of the house, at the furthest point from the wetland. A small landing is indicated on the back of the house; this is a 6x12 foot back porch. No additional deck is planned and would require reapplication to be added.

D. Smith-Kenyon moves to forward to planning board with a recommendation for approval, with the condition that the plans be stamped by the consulting wetland scientist. J Degler seconds. Vote 8-0-0

**D. PSNH/Eversource Energy is seeking a conditional use permit for replacement of utility poles within the Riparian and Wetland Buffer located within the PSNH Utility Right of Way located at 355 MAIN ST (07-27), 216A GREEN ST (08-81A), Map 8 Lot 82 on Green St., 226 GREEN ST (16-01), 225 GREEN ST (16-08), 39 INDIGO HILL RD (16-18), 32 MAIZE DR (16-54), 242 GREEN ST (17-03), 21 GUILMETTE LN (20-3D), 18 BAKER WAY (32-12B), 19 VINCENT WAY (34-3A), 60 STACKPOLE RD (36-45), 59 WALTONS WAY (37-10), 19 STACKPOLE RD (37-10A), 17 STACKPOLE RD (37-10B), 45 CINNAMON RIDGE RD (37-17), 21 CINNAMON RIDGE RD (37-29), 19 CINNAMON RIDGE RD (37-30), Map 38 Lot 29 on Ruel St, 34 RUEL ST (38-29E), 39 RUEL ST (38-29F), 1 TRI CITY RD (39-02), 12 COMMERCIAL DR (43-1B), Map 43 Lot 1F on Commercial Dr., Map 43 Lot 1G on Commercial Dr., Map 43 Lot 1I on Willand Dr., 100 BLACKWATER RD (44-01), 241 RT 108 (45-01), Map 46 Lot 04 on Pinewood Dr, 200 W HIGH ST (48-14), 371 Rt 108 (48-20), Map 48 Lot 24 on Enterprise Dr, 213 W HIGH ST (49-SOMERSWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03) & 100 HIDEAWAY PL (50-11) in the Residential Single Family (R1), Agriculture (A), Residential Commercial (R/C), Business (B), Commercial/Industrial (CI), Manufactured Housing (MH) Districts, CUP#12-2022**

Kris Wilkes of VHB was in attendance to represent the application. The request is submitted to replace worn, failing wooden poles with new elevated steel ones in a corridor stretching through the tri-city area. These are all supporting distribution lines. 78 poles in Somersworth are stated for replacement, all owned by Eversource. Pole heights will increase 5-10 feet in most cases to meet current engineering standards. All wetlands were delineated this summer. Work is planned to start in the fall, running through early 2023. Winter work will reduce ground impact and wildlife disturbance. Erosion control will be handled with silt socks, and timber matting will be used to reduce machinery impacts on wetland areas. Restoration will be undertaken on any locations with degradation after timber mat removal.

A request is made by the commission to share any and all survey data possible.

Poles will be removed and disposed of off-site; stubs may be left in ground to reduce disturbance where appropriate. No underground placement or trenching is expected beyond guy wire placement. No habitat creation is planned; disturbance is to be minimized.

Work is expected to be complete before the thaw; sequencing is unknown at this time.

A. Ficco moves to recommend approval to Planning Board; J. Rhodes seconds.  
Vote 8-0-1 (J. Degler, abstained)

**E. Any correspondence**

Former members Larry and Mercedes requested an update on cutting behind White Mountain Pool and Spa; this land is actually owned by Key Buick; they're cutting to help manage unauthorized habitation on their land.

New England Cottontails – A. Ficco notes release is being looked at for fall; NH Chronicle is interested in filming the release and is being directed to the city for coordination.

**F. Any new business to come before the Commission**

NH Coastal Adaptation Working Group is holding a virtual working session 9/23 from 1-4 PM  
Also 9/23, Invasives education at Thompson Forest on Wednesday Hill Rd in Durham. Currently on a waiting list.

**4) OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Easement monitoring**

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Checks are scheduled for 9/17 and 24, sites TBD. Reports for prior checks will be submitted.

**B. Any Correspondence**

None

**C. MEMBER ITEMS, SUB-COMMITTEE ITEMS, AND REPORTS**

**i. Lily Pond wildlife management plan**

No Update.

**ii. Invasives plan sub-committee report**

Continuing to gather information. Looking to hold public information session. List of city properties needed for examination. Notes also a new biological control for Purple Loosestrife.

**iii. Exploration of potential trail project at Malley Farm**

Looking for report from Michelle.

**iv. Community Wildlife Habitat publicity**

Was published in most recent city newsletter.

**v. iNaturalist project publicity**

Looking to add to city publications.

**vi. Culvert Assessment**

No update.

**vii. Idlehurst Tree Inventory**

Tree inventory at Idlehurst school is planned for 9/20/2022 at 8 AM; open to the public with sign in at school office. Multiple representatives of both school district and forestry services are planned to be in attendance. This will also include examination of drainage and other similar items.

**D. Any other old business that may come before the Commission**

None

**5) TREASURER'S REPORT**

City of Somersworth, NH		
Conservation Commission, Fund Balance		
August 31, 2022		
June 30, 2022	Balance Forward	\$ 188,930.61
	Receipts:	
	Interest Received	615.31
August 31, 2022	Ending Balance	\$ 189,545.92

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D. Smith-Kenyon moves to adjourn, A. Ficco seconds.

Vote 8-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

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Jeremy Rhodes  
Conservation Commission Secretary