

**Peterborough Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2017, Peterborough Town House, 7 p.m.**

Present: Jo Anne Carr, Swift Corwin, Matt Lundsted, John Patterson, Robert Wood, Francie Von Mertens;

Guests: Dick Estes, Jocelyn Duffy, Craig Munger

January's minutes were approved.

Climate change in context of town and region

Dick Estes presented compelling need for the town to take steps to lessen greenhouse gas emissions and climate warming features (pavement, absence of trees shading the Contoocook and Nubanusit Rivers; etc.). He advocated a town policy throughout departments and committees that keep mitigation as a goal: Planning Board considering shade trees in landscape plans; requiring new roads with minimum widths that meet fire and safety needs with the goal of minimizing new pavement; shade trees along roads and in downtown to shade pavement; consideration of light roof color on municipal buildings; solar panels on those buildings.

He advocated that the town work with neighboring towns, especially towns that share the Contoocook River to address rising water temperatures that are inhospitable to aquatic species.

Discussion: Members suggested that the Master Plan have an overlay filter that addresses climate change as it relates to the various chapters, or have its own chapter. **Jo Anne Carr will check steps instituted by Keene**, one of the towns in NH that has taken clear steps relating to climate change—mitigating impacts and minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.

Regarding the town's proposed parking lot, and its addition of unshaded pavement, a policy of no net loss of tree canopy was recommended. In answer to what stage the landscaping plan for the shoreland buffer is, no one knows despite efforts to determine.

Carr will communicate the no net loss of tree canopy concept to Rodney Bartlett and ask for an update on the parking lot + landscaping project.

Minimizing waste stream relating to the town recycling center was discussed as another logical step. Town-distributed reusable shopping bags and water bottles was mentioned, accompanied by a pile on Town House steps of a week's worth of both that townspeople drop off at Recycling Center. Brainstorming will continue. . .

Regarding a shade tree pilot project along the river, Francie VM will check the town property north of AW Peters to see if it's a logical location.

Members thanked Dick Estes for his vision and work to achieve it, with encouragement he bring his proposal before the Master Plan Steering Committee and Select Board.

Cunningham Pond subdivision

The Planning Board invited the ConCom to a joint site visit Monday, April 3 at 5:30 p.m. Of interest is a ROW or easement held by the town along the shore and a 100-foot building setback, both dating back to when the pond was a town water supply. Heather

Peterson, representing her family that owns the two parcel being subdivided, mentioned both.

Francie VM will determine from Rodney Bartlett if the 100' setback still holds given that the pond no longer is town water supply; and if it is a formal ROW or easement and whether town is considering giving that up

Carr, Robert Wood, Matt Lundsted, Von Mertens will attend the site visit. Von Mertens will post.

Conservation Easements – solving the monitoring challenge

Given the ConCom's inability to monitor the 20 easements it holds for the town, and the potential costs that presents to the town if there are infractions, hiring the job out was discussed. Options discussed: 100% -- all 20 easement; a hybrid where those easements not monitored by ConCom volunteers by October 1 be hired out.

Carr and Lundsted will meet with Nicole MacStay to see what town protocol is for hiring (RFPs from multiple parties, etc.). It is assumed that the person hired has to be insured. **They will confirm that assumption.**

Von Mertens will seek a local qualified, insured person to bid on the job to keep it community based.

Swift Corwin will research the "going rate" for easement monitoring and how that's determined. Per acre? Cycle that varies each year following Forest Society model where every 4-5 years there is a 100% boots-on-ground monitoring v. less thorough other years with fee reflecting that cycle; etc. Goal is to ascertain likely budget item. To be determined: whether ConCom seeks this amount from town annually.

Traditional Neighborhood Overlay Zone

The Planning Board voted to send the new code to town vote in May. ConCom questions remain whether it will accomplish what motivated the ordinance in the first place: housing that meets the needs of the "missing middle"; walkable communities given its reach far beyond existing village "nodes;" lack of clear criteria that must be met in order for a developer to be granted the greatly increased density offered by ordinance; lack of map with color-coded parcels to give voters sense of ordinance's reac. Lack of open space set asides in large-parcel developments also is a concern.;

Von Mertens will request that a map be drawn up indicating which parcels are "in play." The ConCom requested this map early in the public hearing process for the ordinance.

Other

The ConCom's Trail Guide has about run out. Members authorized a reprint run. Noted was that the Cranberry Meadow Pond Trail no longer connects all the way through to the Raymond Trail.