

**Conservation Commission Meeting**  
**Public Minutes**  
**November 8, 2023**

**Members Present:** Becky Dunham (Chair), Bob Stephens (Vice Chair), Andy Laroche, Andy Artimovich, Lise McNaughton, Brian Silva, Matt Lipinski (Secretary), Doug Cowie (Alternate).

Chairman Dunham called the meeting to order at 6:31pm. Following opening remarks, the Chair turned to the agenda items.

**Agenda Items**

1. **Pickpocket Dam:** Dunham introduced Robert Span, a Brentwood resident on Peabody Drive, who presented on this topic at last night's Selectboard meeting. He reported that the Town of Exeter, as owner of the Pickpocket Dam, received a notice from state authorities that the dam is either in need of repair or removal, as it could potentially endanger one house at some point in the future if it wholly or partially failed. After researching the issue, Exeter learned of a federal grant that is available for dam removal. Exeter applied for this grant, expressing its intent to remove the dam, without first consulting or notifying neighboring towns or residents. Span advised that studies reflect dam removal could have an adverse impact on Brentwood, as the river level above the current dam location would significantly drop following dam removal.

After discussion, including a summary review by town resident Bruce Stevens of actions taken to date by state and local agencies on this matter, a consensus was formed that Brentwood should notify Exeter of its concerns regarding potential dam removal. Lipinski introduced a motion to recommend the Selectboard do the following: 1) obtain a legal opinion detailing Brentwood's rights and options regarding the matter; 2) contact the NHDES Wetlands Bureau to see whether it participated in the dam evaluation process; 3) obtain all information and data available regarding the process and steps which must be followed for removal of an existing dam; and 4) send a letter to Exeter by 11/16/2023 expressing Brentwood's concerns and reservations about proceeding with dam removal. Laroche seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

2. **Minutes Review:** Review of the draft Minutes from the September 13, 2023 Commission meeting. Upon motion by McNaughton and second by Lipinski, the September 13, 2023 minutes were approved by a 6-0 vote, with Artimovich abstaining.

Review of the draft Minutes from the October 11, 2023 Commission meeting. Upon motion by Laroche and second by McNaughton, the October 11, 2023 minutes were approved by a 6-0 vote, with Silva abstaining.

3. **Bills & Reimbursements:** The following bills and reimbursements were approved:

- a. NHACC dues, \$300 – Motion by Lipinski, second by Laroche, unanimously approved.
- b. NHACC Handbook, \$20 – Motion by Stephens, second by McNaughton, unanimously approved.
- c. NHACC Annual Meeting admission fee reimbursement to Dunham, \$60 – Motion by Lipinski, second by Stephens, motion approved 6-0 with Dunham abstaining.

## **Old Business**

4. **Property Development Reviews:** McNaughton reported that the proposal made by Gove Environmental Services to adjust a small portion of a boundary line on map of one wetland area on the Magnusson Farms property has been withdrawn. No further action needed.
5. **Town Boundaries:** Stephens is coordinating with Exeter to schedule a review meeting. Lipinski is meeting with Phil Coombs, Kingston Director of Public Works, on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, to walk that boundary. Artimovich is to meet with Fremont when it can be scheduled. McNaughton volunteered to contact Epping.
6. **Alternates:** Posting is up on the Town website for adding up to two Alternate members to the Conservation Commission. Application process to take its course.
7. **Budget:** Dunham will submit the Commission’s proposed 2024 budget to the Selectboard on November 14, 2023.
8. **Advisory Roles:** Alternate Commission member Jessica Balukas is our representative to the SRLAC; Dunham will contact Jillian Benedix regarding a Planning Board rep.
9. **Easement Monitoring:** McNaughton is compiling a master list of conservation easement properties in Brentwood and also comparing it with other lists. She noted the SELT and RPC lists do not match, either with each other or the Brentwood master list. She will dig deeper to identify conservation easement holders, and will also initiate easement monitoring with letters to easement holders going out next week.
10. **Consultant:** Dunham is seeking a boilerplate job description for the Consultant role as it relates to Conservation Commission work. She will also follow up with the Consultant candidate previously identified by former Commission Chairman, Mark Young.
11. **Prospective Conservation status/updates (non-public as needed under the law)**
  - a. Spead Property: The owner of a ¼-acre property has offered it for conservation and wishes to gift it to the Town on the condition that it remains open, undeveloped space in perpetuity. Numerous avenues for conveyance were discussed, from amending an adjacent easement to obtaining a quitclaim deed. McNaughton will contact Glen Greenwood for guidance on the best option to pursue.

- b. Fuller Property Discussion: As reported last month, Jeremy Lougee of SELT had presented the revised conservation proposal and accompanying budget package to the Selectboard, which voted to approve moving forward with conservation of the tract, as well as the proposed timeline. It is expected the SELT will proceed with next steps in January.
- c. Webb Property: Dunham will arrange a meeting with Mrs. Webb to discuss potential easement terms, interests, etc. on the property she wishes to have conserved. Other Commission members identified by Dunham may be invited.
- d. Tremallo Property: A small, potentially conservable 2.4-acre tract has been offered for conservation by its owner. McNaughton met with the owner who wants no compensation for conveyance of the easement, but asked to have all conveyance expenses covered by the Town. Will review options.
- e. Swasey Property: The Swaseys have scheduled a meeting with SELT next week to discuss easement terms. Dunham to attend.

## **12. Other Business**

Dunham reported that the Trustees of the Trust Fund had inquired whether the Commission wished to dissolve the Forestry Management Fund, which exists to cover costs of forestry management. There is a current balance of \$5,000 in the Fund account. Dunham tabled the matter until the December meeting in order to have time to obtain additional information.

Upon motion by Lipinski, second by Laroche, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm.