

Brentwood Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes - January 8, 2025

Members Present: Chair Becky Dunham, Secretary Michelle Siudut, Bob Stephens, Rob Wofchuck, Lise McNaughton, Matt Lipinski (remote), BOS representative Paul Kleinman; alternates Patrick Marcoux, Andy Laroche, Heather Dudley-Tatman, Emma Laham
Guests: Bruce Stevens, Naoto Inouye, Dr Andrew Fisk

Dunham called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm. Motion by McNaughton, seconded by Wofchuck to allow Lipinski to attend remotely; Siudut-aye, Wofchuck-aye, Stephens-aye, Kleinman-aye, McNaughton-aye, Dunham-aye; 6-0

Minutes Review. Minutes from the December meeting were discussed. Motion by Kleinman, seconded by Stephens to approve; Siudut-aye, Wofchuck-abstain, Stephens-aye, Kleinman-aye, McNaughton-abstain, Lapinski-aye, Dunham-aye; 5-0-2.

Bills & Reimbursements. Brian White from Dover was chosen to appraise a parcel being considered for conservation; the property was visited on Jan 2. Dunham paid, and was reimbursed, the deposit of \$1500. An invoice for the balance of \$1500 will be submitted tonight. Our consultant has submitted her first invoice; 7 hours at \$566.40 plus \$49.71 travel for a total of \$616.11. Invoice will be submitted for payment.

Presentation by American Rivers Northeast Regional Director Andrew Fisk

Stephens said the Exeter dam and Phillips dam projects prompted him to invite Dr Fisk to give a presentation. An American Rivers video featuring Jimmy Carter was played. Dr Fisk's territory covers New England and New York. He presented a slideshow about River Restoration. The group partners with residents and municipalities to protect rivers. Their mission is to safely remove dams to 1) improve river flow to restore access for migratory fish 2) ensure safety. There are federal incentives for state dam safety programs, for repair and removal. NH currently has 4700 dams; 70 have been removed since 1999.

American Rivers is part owner of the Brentwood hydro/Phillips dam. They are working to acquire federal dollars to help with removal; with completion expected by 2026. They are also involved with the Pickpocket Dam removal. Question was asked, what can Brentwood residents do for the best outcome for our side of the dam; as residents will lose water access and have concerns about decreased property values with the loss of waterfront/river access. Dr Fisk said to stay informed about the process, design, infrastructure of dry hydrants, plans to build banks, plans to create access, etc; he assured us that the property value won't change even though the waterfront look will change. Through the process, Brentwood should have ample time/opportunity to be involved. Resident Naoto Inouye spoke about his experience with hydro dams; though he initially was supportive, they are just not viable for ample production. Question as to what happens after the dam is removed: monitoring is required (usually for 5 years) after a dam removal, to control plant growth, invasive growth, etc. Dunham requested Dr Fisk to provide the PowerPoint, which he agreed to do.

Brentwood Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes - January 8, 2025

Old Business

- The Martin subdivision driveway has been approved by the planning board.
- Dunham thanked Kleinman for his help finalizing the Fuller Easement transaction, which required \$9,000 less than expected from the town. Discussion as to what will happen to those funds. Kleinman said they currently sit in the general fund; it was the consensus of this committee that since those funds came from bond money, they can only be used for conservation efforts.
- Prescott Project (old Castles). GOVE said all DES questions have been answered, and their application was submitted prior to the rules change; they should know by the end of month if their plan will be approved.
- Easement Monitoring - Lise said there are just a few reports left to complete.
- Conservation Stewardship Fund. Wofchuck put the idea on ListServe and had 3 responses. Barbara Richter from NHACC thought it was a good idea as it is a requirement for landtrust accreditation. Town of Durham does have stewardship funds; though they prefer to be executory interest holder. Milton will not take primary easement; they have a capital reserve fund for legal defense; they monitor town-owned properties with volunteers but town-held easements are monitored by a company. If Brentwood obtains property in the future, we should consider taking money from each easement for the purpose of monitoring.
- Speaker for February: possibly Anna (our consultant) to discuss how easements work. Dunham requested other ideas if Anna doesn't work out. Wofchuck suggested someone from UNH Cooperative Extension.
- At last month's meeting, Andy Gray presented an outline of plans of the Rec Department to change fields and drainage. Heather Dudley-Tatman wrote an overview of this Committee' concerns about the impact of that plan on wildlife/vernal pools. A letter with our concerns will be sent to the Rec Director and is included in tonight's minutes.
- Open Space Committee: Next meeting is January 15 at 4:30 pm. Jeff Dvorak is working on updating documentation.

New Business

- Dunham included in tonight's packet, upcoming webinars offered by NHACC.
- UNH State Wildlife Habitat Specialist Matt Tarr informed us we are eligible for a Fish & Game small grant which may help with the cost of the Stevens field upkeep. Matt offered to assist us with the application in March.
- Marcoux is researching the Wildlife Stewards Program for community engagement, in partnership with NHF&G. The Committee would like to have a public program, possibly held at the library, in April. There are five programs to choose from.
- PREPA Grant program - Dunham and Wofchuck are signed up for a webinar on Jan 15. If others are interested, please contact Dunham to enroll.

Other Business

- NH Coverts Project, a multi-day workshop offered by Cooperative Extension, trains volunteers in promoting wildlife conservation and forest stewardship. Wofchuck attended

Brentwood Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes - January 8, 2025

in the past and recommends going. There is a nominal fee to enroll, but the workshop and housing costs are covered in exchange for attendees' commitment to volunteer 40 hours during the year to share what is learned.

- Resident Bruce Stevens presented a handout on GreenSno program, which is environmentally friendly ice/snow handling procedures aimed at reducing salt/sand usage. Stevens and resident Doug Finan attended a workshop, took the test and are now certified. Stevens said we have the majority of equipment, there would be very little to invest, it could be a great cost savings with a decreased use of salt/sand, and would be better for our environment. Stevens would like this Committee to consider asking our Public Works department to become certified and use this program.

Rob Wofchuck left the meeting.

Dunham distributed draft minutes from the non-public session of December 11, 2024. Motion by Stephens, seconded by Siudut, to go into non-public to discuss the minutes at 8:18 pm; voting in favor were McNaughton, Kleinman, Stephens, Siudut, Lipinski, Dunham; passed 6-0. Motion by Siudut, seconded by Kleinman to come out of non-public at 8:26 pm; voting in favor were McNaughton, Kleinman, Stephens, Siudut, Lipinski, Dunham; passed 6-0.

Motion by Lipinski, seconded by Kleinman to approve the non-public minutes as amended; Siudut-aye, Stephens-nay, Kleinman-aye, McNaughton-abstain, Lipinski-aye, Dunham-aye; motion passed 4-1-1

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Motion by Kleinman, seconded Stephens to adjourn 8:28 pm; voting in favor were McNaughton, Kleinman, Stephens, Siudut, Lipinski, Dunham; 6-0

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Siudut