

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Boscawen Municipal Complex

July 21 2020 @ 7:00 pm

Present: Thomas Gilmore, Chair, Norman LaPierre, Jeffrey Abbe, Lyman Cousens, Mark Kaplan and Henry Carrier.

Absent: Ed Cherian Jr., Brendon Jackson

Staff Present: Kellee Jo Easler, Planning & Community Development Director, Rose Fife, Recording Secretary

Guest: none

Due to the Covid-19/Corona Virus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board was authorized to meet electronically. The Town of Boscawen utilized the GoToMeeting platform.

Regular Business:

- Open by Chair at 7:03 pm

- Roll call taken by Chair.

- Review and Acceptance of the minutes of prior meeting minutes. A motion to approve the Minutes with amendments was made by Gilmore, seconded by Cousens. Roll call vote: AYE: Gilmore, Cousens, LaPierre, Carrier and Abbe. NAY: none.

- Accountant's Report Old Business: Forest Fund. Funds have been utilized to pay for the mowing. The Forest Fund has \$28,525.87. The Capital budget has \$217,485.73. Of that amount \$130,000 is committed to the Morrill Easement. They have \$2,200 in the regular budget funds that the town provides.

Old Business:

- Natural Resource Update: Mark Kaplan reported. He believes there are three areas that need attention. The recommendations on page 31 of the report need to be taken up with the relevant Boards. They need to communicate with AGCom, Planning Board and the Historic Commission to be sure they all have a say. Gilmore reports they will have a joint meeting with the Planning Board on 8.4.20. Any comments need to be emailed to Easler to distribute to the Board. Objectives that are laid out on Page 3 need to be discussed. They may want to review those objectives against the recommendations. There are examples around education and increasing public awareness. They have visual resources as they have the mapping. Gilmore recommends Kaplan get together with Abbe and come up with suggestions to forward to Easler for the Commission to agree or disagree with. Abbe asked if each Commissioner had a marked up set of the NRI. Gilmore reviewed it and didn't find any changes he'd like to make. Abbe noted that when presented, it would be done as Chapter 8, the Natural Resources portion of the plan. Kaplan wanted to contact the different Boards. Easler suggested they meet with the other Boards and ask those Boards to come to the Planning Board meeting on 8.4.20. Planning would be the last ones to have input. Easler noted that there will not be any person to person meetings anytime soon, they will be done virtually due to the pandemic. Gilmore thought it wouldn't happen until next year for a real meeting. Kaplan asked if they should postpone the Planning Board meeting until they have met with the other Boards. Gilmore wanted to keep the presentation to the Planning Board on the 4th.

FM CC 7.21.20

After that meeting, they can go speak with the other Boards. The Planning Board would take on those issues at that point, not the Conservation Commission. The NRI document belongs to the Master Plan so it belongs to the Planning Board. Abbe agrees. He feels they can present it as it is as they are close to a final draft. All other commissions have been notified and are familiar with the NRI. It's a living document that they can amend as needed. Gilmore wants it presented on the 4th and they can amend it thereafter. Kaplan is good with that. He'd like Gilmore and Easler's input on how to present it to the Planning Board. Gilmore asked him to send it to Kellee who will send it out to all of them and they will feed back their comments to her. Abbe feels that he and Kaplan should meet and govern over the marked up changes he has on his copy of the NRI.

- Discussion Items Town Forest – Mowing was done in the Town Forest and the bill has been paid. Abbe said a great job was done. Abbe gave an update on the New Town Forest. Gilmore reported Forester Niebling and Abbe handled the driveway permit and there is a commitment from the gravel company to delivery gravel. The two arches need to be moved apart. Abbe, Niebling and Hollins met with Warren, the owner of GMI, and he has verbally said he would bring a crew in with an excavator, strip out a foot and half of top soil and they will bring in enough material so that when it is done they will get a foot and a half of base material for a 60x40 parking area. There will be 10 truckloads of material brought in and 2 truckloads of material taken out. They started cutting the trees July 4th. They sent a letter to the abutters July 7th. Their concerns had to do with the sighting of a great horn owl in the area. The owls are not nesting at this time. They nest from October to December and hatch in February or March. The Fletcher's to the north are aware of what is going on and were helpful in locating the owl nests. They took 3 or 4 trees down. They have fire wood from there now. He reports Dean Hollins' crew pulled the 2 granite stones and set them inside the stone wall. They will reset them when they reopen the entrance. Warren Colby from GMI was gracious enough to say he will take on the whole project other than moving the granite piers. Gilmore asked if all materials were donated. Abbe understood that to be correct. Gilmore suggested they send him a thank you letter at the end of the project. Niebling has agreed to build the kiosk. They will be getting some material from a contractor in Andover to make a bar way and a chain to prevent motorized vehicles going up through there. Gilmore suggested they provide a key to the snowmobile club so they can open up the bar way during snowmobile season.

Gilmore reported that the new town forest naming was put out in an email. They are collecting names for the forest and will then wait to publish the name when the school gets reorganized and let the school help select the name. Abbe wanted to add that it's very important they get a large list of names. He spoke with Kearsten O'Brien and she suggested they reduce it to 5 quality names and have the kids choose from those 5 names. Cousens spoke with Kim Kenney at the school about this. Abbe asked if should have a committee that would choose the 5 names from the larger list of names. Gilmore thought they could decide that at next month's meeting as school won't be back in session until September. Cousens reported that the naming of the new town forest was on the front page of the NewsVine. Abbe reported it was on Facebook as well.

New Business:

- Encroachment Town Forest 83/7. There are 2 encroachments. Easler has been addressing those. There is one on Queen Street and one across from Marshall's Fire Arms. The Select Board is sending out letters to the Fletchers and Marshall's and the recommendation is they cut the pavement at their property line but they need to have it marked. The surveyor is still forthcoming. Abbe noted that there was an issue on Web Stout's survey. The O'Day lot that was reserve - those corners have never been set and they are waiting for Web Stout, the Surveyor, to come and set those. Easler has been in touch with Web Stout and he will get an estimate to them. As soon as she receives the estimate she will pass it along to all. Web Stout will get ahold of Forester Niebling when he is ready to do the field work. They should be hearing from him by the end of summer.

Recommendations for the Select Board. Easler feels they need to do that. The town forest is managed by the Conservation Commission. Gilmore felt that the setting of the monuments and any encroachments is a building department issue. Abbe spoke of the locations of the encroachments. There is a driveway that has 2 entrances and the middle line of the 2nd entrance is the encroachment. Gilmore said it needs to be marked out. Easler said below 54 Queen Street there was some gravel put in for a turnaround for a driveway. It is a small encroachment on Queen Street. Abbe was hoping that would be their next trailhead.

Gilmore had information from Niebling that there is a piece of property behind the town pound that is on Water Street and the individual owner of that land would like to have the land in an easement. He has been in contact the Forester. He spoke with Hardy about that this morning and it is owned by a wealthy individual and they may be able to pick up the easement without cost. Kaplan asked how much land. Gilmore said there was 350 acres or so. Kaplan asked if there was any way for them to see what lot that was. Easler suggested he find the town pound on the Avitar software and the property is behind that.

Gilmore has no update on the Morrill Easement. Cousens asked how much it was costing the Commission. Gilmore reported \$130,000.

Kaplan asked about Walker Pond. Gilmore said a letter was sent to the CC from the Water Commission saying they have an offer on the property and they will be pursuing that offer. They notified the Commission and Five Rivers in case a counter offer was viable. Hardy and Gilmore have decided to leave it be at this time. Easler said it is 25 acres and includes the boat launch. The Commission has a standing offer with the Water Commission of \$40,000. Kaplan will follow up to see what information he can obtain. Gilmore is not sure it is a done deal with the other offer. Kaplan asked if it was buildable. Easler said no, that property is a Class VI road and the town doesn't allow building on a Class VI road.

Abbe wanted to discuss the Weir Town Forest and the balancing rock trail decommissioning. He thinks they should visit it. It was being used heavily during the Covid-19 early time. There is not much usage now. Gilmore suggested they take a motion to decommission that trail without reason. Abbe doesn't want to decommission that trail until they have a better look at it. The destruction of the lichen that grows on the rock is an issue. He believes they should have a site visit. They may not be able to decommission it until November when the leaves fall. With some minor educational type kiosk to let people know not to climb on this rock, but enjoy it as it is. Gilmore is inclined to follow his recommendation. Abbe will speak with Niebling regarding decommissioning it. Kaplan wanted to know if Abbe wanted to pick a date for that viewing. Abbe asked Carrier if he would be interested to do that and Carrier said he would be. Abbe suggested Niebling go with them.

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Cousens, seconded by Kaplan. Roll call vote: AYE: Abbe, Cousens, LaPierre, Kaplan, Gilmore, and Carrier. NAY: none.

Next Meeting:

- August 18, 2020

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*