

**ALTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
ALTON TOWN HALL
July 8, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.**

Approved
Aug 17, 2021
Gene Young

Members and others Present:

Gene Young, Chairman	Russ Wilder	Earl Bagley
Quinn Golden, Vice Chairman	Dana Rhodes	Tom Diveny, Alternate
Virgil Macdonald, Selectmen's Rep	Bob Doyle	
Jamie Balint		
Brad Bissell		

Members Absent:

Melinda Ferreira, Secretary

Call Meeting to Order: Gene Young, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

Public Announcements: G.Young announced that restrictions on public gatherings from "in-person" meetings to "remote audio participation meetings", in regards to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, and the Governor's Orders on restrictions at public gatherings, have been rescinded per vote of the Commission at its' meeting on June 10, 2021, and will no longer hold Zoom meetings. Meetings will be open to the public with social distancing rules per the Emergency Management Committee.

Approval of Agenda: G.Young stated Jamey Balint was present to discuss his Mountain Bike Trail Proposal off Rte 28, (M15 L49) under New Business, Item #2 and suggested moving it up to Presentations/Consultations; in addition to moving up Mr. Bissell when he arrives.

Presentations/Consultations:

- 1) **Jamey Balint- Mountain Bike Trail Proposal off Rte 28, M15 L49-** J.Balint introduced himself as part time Alton Student Resource Officer, and stated one of the programs he'd been working on at the high school was Mountain Biking in conjunction with the Outdoor Club. Students were interested in the outdoors and development of mountain biking trails and can get community service credit which is a requirement for graduation, and he thought this piece of property would be a great location. Mr. Balint gave an over overview of his proposal for Map 15, Lot 49. The 57 acres, in which Hurd Brook runs through, abuts Lakes Region Conservation Trust property as well as Camp Brookwoods property, which also has a Mountain Biking program. In the future there's a possibility the trail systems could be merged. R.Wilder commented LRCT's Management Plan for the 135 acre Cotton-Hurd Conservation Area does not include mountain biking as an allowed activity and LRCT has not been approached about this idea. J.Balint stated there are former logging and access trails already in place for monitoring the ground contamination that could be utilized for walking/cross country/cross country skiing as well as biking trails and can be used for access to medical emergencies which may arise. He explained single track trails which are just a few feet

wide is what they envision. Photographs were presented of work currently being done on trails in Wolfboro to show examples of things being constructed. Mr. Balint stated they have a lot of volunteers who work to put in these trails. He stated that since COVID, there has been an increased interest in biking and feels this would be a great opportunity for the Town. It was confirmed none of the land is conserved and technically none of it is public, so its not under the purview of the Conservation Commission. Mr. Balint stated the Town, Camp Brookwoods and Lakes Region Conservation Trust have agreed to work to enhance along Hurd Brook. R. Wilder commented LRCT is working with the Belknap County Conservation District on an Eastern Brook Trout habitat enhancement project. LRCT has not agreed to work with Mr. Balint on establishing bike trails which are not allowed on the Cotton-Hurd property.

G. Young noted copies of emails between him and Liz Dion are included in the packets distributed. Ms. Dion contacted the manager of the dump for comment; there is quite a bit of concern about putting something like this up there and liability issues.

R. Wilder explained the Hurd Brook Trout Project; he suggested Mr. Balint look at the Alton Bay State Forest, which is 210 acres off of Alton Mountain Road. He gave him contact information for the State Division of Forest and Lands, as the State has bicycle trails on other State lands and has procedures in place to develop recreational facilities such as mountain bike trails. R. Wilder also mentioned that the Alton Bay State Forest is in a better location in that it is closer to the schools and downtown businesses that might benefit from a mountain bike recreational facility. The forest also has good access from Jones Field and Alton Mountain Road.

2. **Canoe & Kayak Access to Merrymeeting River-** Q. Golden stated he wrote a letter in early June to Mr. Bissell, explaining the Conservation Commission's objective to acquire land for a public canoe or kayak access into the Merrymeeting Lake Wildlife frontage; there is currently one in New Durham but no Alton side access. Mr. Bissell owns a property which is flat and potentially suitable to accessing the water; he was invited to come meet with the Conservation Commission to discuss this further. Mr. Bissell stated he is willing to sell the property. He stated he would rather see the property used for this purpose than to be developed. G. Young stated the Commission can purchase a property at appraised valued but can't go beyond that; he asked Mr. Bissell if he'd entertain proposals along those lines. Mr. Bissell replied he would consider that. It was noted the proposed lot is 0.46 acres, which the Commission agreed would be adequate for a small parking area for a few cars.

Q. Golden made a motion to form a steering committee to pursue the Bissell project, contact New Hampshire Fish and Game for input, appraisal and possibly help in getting the purchase started. D. Rhodes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

It was agreed Quinn, Earl, Tom and Dana would form the committee.

Approval of Minutes:

June 10, 2021 – D. Rhodes made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. V. MacDonald seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-2. R. Wilder and B. Doyle abstained.

PERMITS AND APPLICATIONS

G. Young stated he put the following items on the agenda for informational purposes, unless anyone has a question, along with the dates which the items were signed off on.

Planning Board/ZBA Agenda Items:

- 1) **Z21-17- Rosenthal Family Trust- 76 Shore Rd, M18 L36-3-** A Variance is requested from the Zoning Ordinance to permit the creation of a new lot of record, through a boundary line adjustment that doesn't meet the current frontage requirements in the Lakeshore Residential Zone. *(G.Young signed off on 6/22/21)*
- 2) **Z21-18- Jake & Jenna O'Brien- 514 Rattlesnake Island, M79 L34-** A Variance is requested from the Zoning Ordinance to permit the voluntary rebuild of current structure within 30' of the shoreline setback. *(G.Young signed off on 6/22/21)*
- 3) **Z21-19- Bill & Barbara Toothaker- 27 Torelli Terrace, M33 L29-1-** A Variance is requested from the Zoning Ordinance to permit the expansion of a non-conforming structure for a nonconforming use beyond existing elevations. *(G.Young signed off on 6/22/21)*

Standard Wetlands Dredge and Fill Applications:

- 1) **Raymond & Darlene Breton- Rattlesnake Island, M79 L39-** Applicant proposes to construct a 10x10 water access platform, which is removable and rests on the surface of the land, and to construct a perched beach with associated walkways connecting to the existing house.

The Commission reviewed the documents, drawings and pictures presented. It was noted there is no indication trees will be taken out. There will be excavation in order to build the beach area; there are concerns about erosion control until it's stabilized as there are fairly steep slopes. It was suggested some kind of vegetation be placed.

Wetland Permit by Notification (PBN):

- 1) **Leah Debra Read- 9 Lamprey Ledge Rd, M61 L13-** Applicant proposes to repair existing damaged crib supported dockage and walkway along shore (supported by rocks/boulders). Replace damaged/deteriorated pilings supporting a boat lift. No change in size, location or configuration is proposed. *(G.Young signed off 6/23/21)*
- 2) **Thomas Economou- 5 George's Rd, M37 L47-** Applicant proposes to repair an existing 198+-sqft piling supported dockage "in-kind" and two accessory pilings. No change in size, location or configuration is proposed. Install two seasonal watercraft lifts adjacent to dockage. No temporary impacts are anticipated. Prior approval 2007-218. *(G.Young signed off 7/1/21)*

Minimum Impact Expedited Applications:

- 1) **Stephen & Deborah Awalt- 18 Melody Ln, M59 L13-** Applicant proposes to repair dock and breakwater in-kind. Dock repairs include replacing existing support piling. Breakwater repairs include resetting fallen and disturbed rocks. *(G.Young signed off 6/28/21)*

Shoreland Permit Applications:

- 1) **Jason Muise & Christina Marie- 144 Hopewell Rd, M21 L5-5-** Applicant proposes to construct a new pervious path with steps from the driveway to the boathouse, and to replace a section of existing pervious path with pervious pavers. *The Commission reviewed the plans presented. It was noted the gravel driveway will be replaced with pervious pavers; the amount of pervious surface will not change. The Commission has no concerns.*

- 2) **Pamela Puleo Rev Trust- 14 Litch Ln, M38 L42-** Applicant proposes to renovate & expand existing 2-bedroom to become 4-bedroom; adding porches, new septic & well, and relocation of existing driveway. *The Commission reviewed the plans presented. It was questioned how much of a wooded, natural buffer there is. The natural woodlands on the property between 50' and 150' from the lake should not be disturbed in any manner. The Commission notes this because disturbances happen in "undisturbed" areas during construction and are not repaired.*

- 3) **David Lawrence- 72 Shore Rd, M18 L36-5-** Applicant proposes rebuilding & relocation of existing 4' stone wall and removal for existing accessory structures including 3 stone patios, a wooden bridge & staircase, a man-made pond, and replacement of existing slate stone walkways with natural stone pathways. Conversion of these areas to lawn and areas of plant beds, with natural boulders to hold grade; addition of a rain garden; regrading and planting by design & where necessary. Central lawn area to tie all existing & proposed elements on property. Total impact of 5,737sf. *The Commission reviewed the plans presented. No concerns.*

Shoreland Permit by Notification (PBN): None

Notification of Routine Roadway Maintenance Activities: None

Reoccurring/Unfinished Business & Projects:

- 1) **Green Oak Realty-** It was noted a cease-and-desist order was supposed to have been issued. G. Young stated it's been imminent for 90+ days but doesn't know what the holdup is. He stated the Building Inspector and Attorney Sessler have been going back and forth on things; he will follow-up with Mr. Dever.

- 2) **Monitoring-**

- 3) **Canoe & Kayak Access to MerryMeeting River-**

- 4) **Gaia GPS Professional Account-**

- 5) **Gilman Pond Field Mowing-** G. Young stated he met with Michael Nemser who owns the easement in the area; he wants to take a look at an area behind Mr. Nemser's house which he also wants mowed. G. Young stated he suggested conservation of the

land across the road, which would connect various pieces of currently conserved land into one mass. He stated the property owner didn't seem receptive at this time.

Rodney Sanborn (2016), Benjamin Thompson 534-4494 (2018), Andrew Morse 817-8191, Burt Morse 455-2605, Dave Avery 569-9162

6) Shape Files for Timbers, PMHS & Hussy Properties-

7) Natural Resource Inventory Update- G.Young stated the project is now being handled by Stoney Ridge and work has begun.

8) 2022 Budget- The Commission reviewed the proposed 2022 budget developed by G. Young, along with a summary of expenditures for last year's budget line items.

R. Wilder made a motion to approve the 2022 Budget as presented by G. Young. E. Bagley seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 yea. V. MacDonald abstained.

9) NH Lakes- Michelle David, Program Manager, will be doing a presentation on water monitoring at the Commission's August 12, 2021 meeting. The CD3 unit will be demonstrated at the Alton Town Docks from September 16 through the 30, 2021 as that was the soonest it was available this year. G. Young stated this unit is self-service so people can come up and clean their boats.

New Business:

T. Hoopes Easement Property- 550 Drew Hill Rd- Drainage/Runoff Issue-

G. Young stated this issue has come up before, as development happened uphill from this house, more runoff comes down and onto the property with a lot of mud erosion, filling a catch basin. He stated the property owner is willing to buy a new culvert but wants the Town to install it. DPW Director Scott Kinmond took a look and is willing to do the work, but it can only be done with the approval of the Board of Selectmen. The Town holds the easement and it specifically states the property owner has a 50' right-of-way through the easement to his house. The Town's permission is not needed to replace the culvert. It will help protect Gilman Pond. Terms of the easement to require the property owner to purchase the culvert. It was confirmed that he offered.

Q. Wilder made a motion to allow the Town to work with Hoopes to install larger culvert and catch basin to stop sediment from reaching Gilman Pond. V. MacDonald seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Q. Golden gave an update on the MOTUS project; he stated Alton is not a piece of the lakes region that is a focus piece but if the Commission wanted to participate and fund the participation, they would be welcome. He stated the Squam Lakes is the choice area for this project.

Q. Golden reminded Commission members about the spreadsheet for tracking volunteer hours; it is available to the Commission members via Dropbox.

Q. Golden stated he spoke to the Rotary on June 10 about what the Commission does; he stated he was well received and an article was printed in *The Baysider*.

Q. Golden stated he is worried about half-severed trees near Frohock Brook; he asked to have land owners contacted and offer to cut them down.

The Commission discussed the potential for a CSA to be located on Coffin Brook Road. There are concerns about adding agriculture in this watershed area.

D. Rhodes stated the Frohock rock paint has been removed; the cleaning project should be finished next week.

Notice of Intent to Cut Timber: None.

Commissioner Reports:

Chair-
Vice Chair-
Members-

Correspondence:

- 1) Budgeted Expense Sheet for Con/Com
- 2) Bank Statements for Con/Com
- 3) DES Violation Letter- Brad & Deb Bissell- 70 East Side Dr- M33 L16
- 4) DES Shoreland Permit- Steven Perkins- 26 Cragin Rd- M49 L25
- 5) DES Wetlands Permit Amendment- Couture- 78 Shore Rd- M18 L36-2
- 6) DES Shoreland Permit- Michael Audesse- 16 Acorn Dr- M65 L40
- 7) DES Shoreland Permit- Wolfe Property Holdings- 40 Tranquility Ln, M18 L39-7

Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Thursday, July 22, 2021, 6:00PM.

Adjournment:

Finding no further business, G. Young adjourned the meeting at 7:46PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer L. Riel

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary