

# APPROVED

## Town of Grantham Grantham Conservation Commission

### MEETING MINUTES MARCH 16, 2015

In Chairman Sheridan Brown's absence, Commissioner David Wood called the Grantham Conservation Commission to order on Monday, March 16, 2015 at 7:04 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, NH.

**Present:** David Wood; Susan Buchanan; Dick Hocker; Laura Nagy; and Caroline Hoen, Clerk. (Laura Nagy, normally an alternate member of the Commission, served as a voting member for this meeting.)

**Members of the Public:** Mark Brunelle, Doug Gamsby, Richard Kaszeta, Robert Meyer and Susan Meyer.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE

##### Approval of Minutes for the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2015 Meeting

Commissioner Wood asked if there were any additions, corrections, or modifications to the draft minutes for the January 26, 2015 meeting.

*There being none, a motion was made by Hocker to approve and accept the January 26, 2015 minutes as written; second by Buchanan. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.*

*Unanimously Approved & Accepted*

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Expedited Wetlands Dredge and Fill Permits

Wood opened a review of the expedited wetlands Dredge and Fill Permit application submitted by Robert and Susan Meyer to allow for work needed to construct a new driveway on their Turnbuckle Road property in Eastman. Doug Gamsby, the engineer on the project, explained how the work would be conducted and Hocker noted that it would be the responsibility of the owners to ensure that the wetland area involved be assiduously maintained and protected. Buchanan asked whether wetland mitigation rules might apply in this case but it was decided that the area involved was too small to merit any such consideration.

*After due consideration of the project plan, a motion was made by Buchanan to approve the expedited wetlands Dredge and Fill Permit application submitted by Robert and Susan Meyer for the construction of a new driveway at their 11 Turnbuckle Road property in Eastman; second by Hocker. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.*

## **APPROVED**

### ***Unanimously Approved & Accepted***

Wood introduced a second wetlands Dredge and Fill Permit application submitted by developer Mark Brunelle for driveway construction at a property owned by him on Howe Hill Road. The project was discussed in detail with certain changes to the plan agreed to and assurances made by Mr. Brunelle that all wetland restrictions would be observed.

*A motion was made by Hocker to approve the expedited wetlands Dredge and Fill Permit application for work to be done on the Howe Hill Road property belonging to Mark Brunelle with the proviso that culvert specifications be made consistent; second by Buchanan. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.*

### ***Unanimously Approved & Accepted***

#### ***Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Prevention Program***

Wood reported that he, Hocker and Nagy had met with the Sullivan County forester at the UNH Cooperative Extension in Concord to discuss the threat of the Emerald Ash Borer insect to Grantham's ash trees. They also observed there the symptoms of the disease in trees already infected. Since symptoms take four years to manifest after the tree has been attacked, EAB may already be present in the Town. To combat a major infestation, advance planning and significant Town resources would be required. One of the major problems of an infestation is the danger to roads and public areas, as well as private property, of limbs falling from dying trees. Wood posed the question as to whether the Commission should sponsor the creation of a Town-wide inventory of ash trees, perhaps marking trees to be protected or cut down. A public education program was also brought up, perhaps consisting of a presentation on the subject and the creation of a brochure to be distributed Town-wide. Nagy wondered if the Town should consider a proactive logging program to harvest still healthy ash trees on Town property. Further, the opportunity to serve as the UNH Cooperative Extension's Sullivan County prototype for EAB preparedness planning was positively received.

*A motion was made by Wood to inform the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension that Grantham is willing to act as a candidate town for Emerald Ash Borer preparedness activities; second by Buchanan. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.*

### ***Unanimously Approved & Accepted***

It was agreed that the question of the creation of a Town ash tree inventory should be delayed until such time as the expertise of the county forester and the UNH Cooperative Extension could be deployed.

#### ***Commission Membership and Vacancies***

*A motion was made by Buchanan that a request be submitted to the Select Board to approve the appointment of Laura Nagy, currently an Alternate member of the Conservation Commission, as a full voting member; second by Hocker. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.*

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It was noted that with this action, two (2) Alternate member vacancies remained to be filled.

Richard Kaszeta, a mechanical engineer and sixteen-year resident of Grantham, introduced himself to the Commissioners, saying that he had been in touch with Chair Sheridan Brown and was interested in filling one of these vacancies.

## **Brookside Park Trail Improvements**

Construction options for a new footbridge to be built across Skinner Brook in Brookside Park were discussed, including ADA accessibility, and it was agreed that further research was needed.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Open Space Committee Update**

Buchanan reported that the inventory of Grantham's undeveloped lands of ten (10) acres or more had been completed. No attempt was made to rank the properties in terms of desirability for purchase by the Town. An overlay showing the relationship of the various properties to the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan is included in the inventory. It will be ready to be used in the formulation of the Town Master Plan revision. Hocker recommended that the report first be delivered to the Selectmen and Wood suggested that an informal presentation of the information to the Conservation Commission would be useful. Buchanan and the Committee were congratulated on a job well done.

### **Town Meeting Update**

It was noted that at the March 10, 2015 Town Meeting the voters had fulfilled the Commission's budget request for the coming fiscal year and that funds had been appropriated to rebuild the Miller Pond Road bridge to allow for the passage of heavy construction and logging vehicles.

## **HANDOUTS**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Wood asked if there was any further business. There being none, Hocker moved to adjourn the meeting and Buchanan seconded the motion.

***The Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:11 p.m.***

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Grantham Conservation Commission will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room on Monday, April 19, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

*Caroline Hoen*

Caroline Hoen, Clerk