

Town of Newport, NH
Newport Conservation Commission
Minutes of November 17, 2021
6:30 PM
Board of Selectmen's Room/Municipal Building
15 Sunapee Street/Newport, NH

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ken Dennis, Acting Chairman; Linda Dennis, Vice Chairman; Donald Schagen and Herbert Tellor, BOS Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT: Clifford Richer,

STAFF PRESENT: Christina Donovan, Planning and Zoning Administrator

GUEST PRESENT: *via zoom:* Gwyn Gallagher, arborist; Gallagher Tree Service

VIDEOGRAPHER: John Lunn, Executive Director NCTV

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dennis called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call of those in attendance.

MINUTES: October 20, 2021

On a motion by Mr. Tellor, seconded by Mr. Schagen; *the Commission voted to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

NEW BUSINESS:

Gwyn Gallagher Arborist: Discussion on Town Common – Tree Selection

Chairman Dennis stated the Commission would be discussing the trees on the Common that will be replaced. Mr. Gallagher was in attendance to give suggestions of the trees for the Commission members to select.

Chairman Dennis addressed Mr. Gallagher and asked for his opinion on which species should be chosen to replace the trees that will be taken down on the Common. Mr. Gallagher addressed the Commissioners and recommended that they work with the Quercus species (Oak trees). His suggestions were:

Red Oak

Scarlet Oak

Bur Oak

For confirmation, Chairman Dennis asked if there would be three trees replaced on the Common spring 2022. Mr. Gallagher stated he was correct.

Chairman Dennis asked when Mr. Gallagher proposed to take it down the tree that fell at the end of the Common (Park Street). Mr. Gallagher explained the negotiations to take down the hazardous trees when there were replacement trees for them. Initially they proposed working on the Rte. 10 side of the Common; they should modify their scope of work and de-stump and replace a tree on Park Street first. Chairman Dennis asked if one of the three trees in 2022 will be the end tree on Park Street. He was told yes. Chairman Dennis asked, for clarification for the Commissioners, that the other two will be on the Rte. 10 side. He was told yes, the two red maples would be taken down (Mr. Gallagher explained the poor condition they were in).

Returning to the recommendations of replacement trees, Mr. Schagen asked why Mr. Gallagher recommended the Quercus species (the three Oaks). Mr. Gallagher explained his reasoning; due to the salt from the roads Sugar Maples were not a good choice. Consideration was given to the trees that are

- Deeply fissured bark
- Interesting branch structure
- Grows in a variety of soils

- ### 3) Scarlet Oak

He doesn't recommend Pin Oak. There are several on Common. Mr. Gallagher's favorite is the native Red Oak.

- ❖ He would have to check on the Bur Oak. He wants to buy a locally grown tree.
- ❖ The Red Oak definitely is available.
- ❖ Swamp White Oak will be available.
- ❖ Scarlet Oak he thinks will be available. The 5" diameter is unknown.

Mr. Tellor said that Mr. Gallagher had stated there were some very old Bur Oaks in Cornish, NH and that not many people plant Bur Oaks. He asked if it was a native species to this area. Mr. Gallagher stated it was native to the area and repeated that it was hardy. If the Commission acquired one it would outlast any other tree on the Common.

Mrs. Dennis asked when Mr. Gallagher will begin fertilizing and caring for the present trees on the Common. She also asked for the cost for the work so she could make a proposal for the price to go into the Town budget. Mr. Gallagher stated that Town Manager Rieseberg has the proposal and amount. Mr. Gallagher did not have the numbers immediately for the Commission. He believed it was approximately \$2500-\$3000 (He could send the quote or she could get it from Town Manager Rieseberg). Root zone injections will begin the fall of 2022.

Mrs. Dennis asked if a motion was needed to cite the types of the three or four trees. She was told the amount was in the contract. Mr. Tellor affirmed it was in the contract. He suggested the Commission wait until they know what species are available before stating what would be put there. Ms. Donovan asked if the proposed trees will grow to approximately the same size. She was told yes. Mr. Gallagher explained the maintenance required starting in the trees youth. It will determine how healthy and well formed the mature trees will be.

Chairman Dennis asked if there was a timeframe for when the planting will be done in spring 2022. Mr. Gallagher stated he would like to get them planted the latter part of April 2022. The sooner it is done, the better. The Newport Town Common is down for Gallagher's first cutting/planting. Chairman Dennis asked if the trees would travel from the nursery to the Common, or to Gallagher first. Mr. Gallagher said the trees would be shipped right to the Common. The day the trees arrive Gallagher Tree Service will be there to take out stumps and plant the trees.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Gallagher for attending and participating in the meeting.

Town Common MAP

Ms. Donovan informed the Commissioners that Mr. Jesse Johnson had resigned from the Commission that afternoon, November 17, 2021. She has been trying to update the map of the Common; Mrs. Dennis has her notes from their walkabout which she will share with Ms. Donovan to make the map more complete. She will put the Map on January 2022 agenda.

Mrs. Dennis asked that the following be discussed in New Business:

Conservation Commission Line Item in Budget

Mrs. Dennis asked what the cost of the root injection fertilizing will cost. She asked if the Commission could put in a request for a line item in the budget to cover the cost. Mr. Tellor would discuss the line item addition with Town Manager Rieseberg. All costs were in the contract in Town Manager Rieseberg's possession and it was broken up into yearly contractual work to be done. The Commission might want to start an annual line item in the budget to cover the maintenance plan done by the Gallagher Tree Service in year four and future years. Chairman Dennis asked Mr. Tellor to ask Town Manager Rieseberg what dollar amount the Commission should ask for in a budget line item and what the appropriated money would be for specific use or TBD Commission projects).

Other members felt that because of the short amount of time before the Town Budget Season and the fact that the Commission would not be meeting in December 2021, after a lengthy discussion between the Commissioners and public, Mr. Schagen made a motion ***to request \$2,500 in a Conservation line item for fiscal year 2022-2023***. It was seconded by Mrs. Dennis. ***The motion passed 3-1-0***. Mr. Tellor voted no. He stated he did not believe it was the right way to request the money.

Update on Gilman Pond

The commissioners discussed inviting Mr. Todd Cartier, Director of Public Works to the January meeting (or as soon as his work schedule allows) for an update on Gilman Pond and to discuss:

- Invasive species currently at Gilman Pond and mitigating them
- Logging: The 3 phases of cuts at Gilman Pond. Where are they at?
- Proceeds from the logging: to be used for the purchase of gates, maintaining trails, signs, fencing and parking area.

There was discussion on having recreation at Gilman Pond. It is Newport's sole source of (drinking) water. Chairman Dennis stated it was Mr. Cartier's idea, not the Conservation Commissions'. Mr. Cartier has working in a community where it (recreation trails) were done. Mr. Tellor expressed his concern on having people out at the Pond area. The Commission members agreed with Mr. Tellor. They will talk to Mr. Cartier about what should be allowed at Gilman Pond.

ADMINISTRATION:

Hazard Mitigation Meeting

Ms. Donovan and Mr. Tellor were on a committee for Hazard Mitigation in Newport. The leader of the last meeting was Ms. Vicki Davis from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC). The group discussed invasive species and Ordinances written to save natural resources in communities. In Newport that would be for the Sugar River; she suggested that the Conservation Commission write articles on it for the Town magazine.

The Commission had a lengthy discussion on invasive species located at Gilman Pond and on Conservation lands in Newport. Possible projects for Conservation Commission:

- 1 Create a Newport map of locations of invasive plant species (knot weed, burning bush, Japanese bar berry, others).
- 2 Write some articles for the bimonthly Town magazine Newport News to educate townspeople on what the species are and the importance of mitigating (eliminating) them.

Chairman Dennis stated that Mr. Cartier is knowledgeable about the invasive species at Gilman Pond as are the Meadowsend Timberlands foresters (Jeremy Turner and Sue French).

- 3 State wetlands expert was doing a wetland inventory in New London. Newport might ask to be a part of the program and have all the wetlands in Town documented. Ms. Donovan would look into it.

Ayers Road Violation- Sugar River- DES- Could not see any disturbance

There was general discussion on the Ayers Road property. Ms. Donovan will follow-up on it.

Chandler Mills Road- Sugar River- FEMA-Large Retaining Wall

There was general discussion on the Chandler Mills Road property and retaining walls. Ms. Donovan will follow-up on it.

Invasive Species

After a general discussion on the invasive species found in Newport, Mr. Tellor asked if the easement monitoring reports were templates. When told yes, he asked if the Commissioners could add an additional line item to include invasive species. The Commissioners agreed; stating it would be a great addition to the annual monitoring done on the conservation easements.

Commission member number

The Commissioners and Ms. Donovan discussed the number of members currently on the Conservation Commission (four), the number of members needed for a quorum (four), and the number of BOS representatives assigned to the Conservation (one). Ms. Donovan will inquire about the possibility and procedure of decreasing the official number on the Commission from seven to five. She will also question about there not being a BOS representative alternate appointed to the Conservation Commission.

In further discussion, Mr. Schagen offered to write some articles for the Newport News as well as a draft for the Commissions' space in the annual report. He will send the annual report write up to Chairman Dennis for submittal. (From the October 20, 2021 Conservation Commission minutes: *The Commissioners also discussed the bimonthly Newport magazine (first edition will be November 2021). The Conservation Commission will write some informative articles to be submitted for the magazine. The Commissioners will share all articles written before submitting them. There would be no editorializing by any member of the Commission.*).

On a motion by Mrs. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Schagen; ***the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Maura Stetson
Scribe

Approved: January XX, 2022