

**AGENDA
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 12, 2019**

**AGENDA ITEM #2
APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

JULY 11, 2019

DRAFT

**LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Council Chambers, City Hall
Thursday, July 11, 2019
7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ernst Oidtmann (Acting Chair), Erling Heistad, Sarah Riley,
Susan Almy

MEMBERS ABSENT: Donald Lacey, Suellen Balestra (Alt.)

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator), Christina Hall (City Engineer)

- 1 **1. CALL TO ORDER** – Acting Chair Ernst Oidtmann called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.
2
- 3 **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 9, 2019**
4 Amendments: Page 3, line 31: add “on” before what; Page 3, line 34: change “lays” to “lies”
5
6 *Susan Almy MOVED to approve the May 9, 2019 Minutes as amended and presented in the July*
7 *11, 2019 agenda packet.*
8 *Seconded by Sarah Riley.*
9 ** The Vote on the MOTION passed (3-0-1). Ernst Oidtmann abstained because he was no*
10 *present at this meeting.*
11
- 12 **3. PERMIT REVIEW:**
13 **A. CITY OF LEBANON-**
14 Review and comment on NHDES wetland expedited review (minimum impact only) application
15 to add a 400’ sidewalk along Labombard Road from Heater Road. This will provide a connection
16 between an existing sidewalk on Heater Road and a proposed sidewalk being constructed
17 now. The minor impact project in review includes 2,790 sq. ft of impact. **CC#2019-04** (Note:
18 detailed information on this project was included in the Conservation Commission agenda packet
19 for this meeting.)
20
- 21 Christina Hall came forth representing the City of Lebanon in the above review and comment request.
22
- 23 Ms. Hall informed the Commission that this is a 400 ft. missing segment of a sidewalk that would add
24 connectivity to the Heater Road Project. The Planning Board placed a condition on Dartmouth Coach’s
25 permit to have them pay for the construction/plan design for the sidewalk and have the City do the
26 wetland application and a crosswalk. The reason for this expedited review is the hope that this sidewalk
27 can take place at the same time Dartmouth Coach is doing their parking lot. The sidewalk includes 2,790
28 sq. ft. of impact to the wetland noting that Dartmouth Coach would be letting this land (behind the
29 sidewalk area) grow naturally and will not be maintaining it. She also informed the Commission that the
30 US Army Corps of Engineers is looking for the wetland permit # from NH DES. This has not been
31 submitted yet because the City was waiting for the Conservation Commission’s review first.
32
- 33 Ms. Hall said it would be an impervious asphalt sidewalk with the typical gravel base, noting it was
34 almost an extended shoulder of the road but include a curb and catch basins and outfalls along the way
35 because there is no drainage. At present it is sheet flowing.
36
- 37 The Commission asked questions about, and discussed, the following:

- 1 • Pedestrian traffic along Labombard Road.
- 2 • The longevity of the sidewalk: Ms. Hall said it should last approximately 10+-years; would not
- 3 be an elevated sidewalk; would have a gravel base; would remain sheet flowing; and the surface
- 4 would impermeable.
- 5 • If the Pedestrian/Bicyclist Committee has reviewed this plan: Mr. Heistad said they have not
- 6 reviewed it.
- 7 • Maintenance of the sidewalk: The impact the future replacement of sidewalk would have on the
- 8 wetland; Snowplowing and its impact on the wetland and if salt going into the wetlands would be
- 9 impacted from the salting of the sidewalk during the winter months.
- 10 • Best management practices of the Corps and the NH DES. Ms. Riley asked if there were better
- 11 management practices (i.e., a permeable surface as opposed to asphalt) that could be used in order
- 12 to make this sidewalk more sustainable and reduce the paved surface area.
- 13 Ms. Hall said the City is coming forth to speed up the process for the review time to allow the
- 14 contractor to get this sidewalk constructed at the same time as the other work is being done. She
- 15 did not feel it was a good idea to put pervious pavement in because water would be collecting
- 16 under the sidewalk and explained her reasons.
- 17 • Walkability and safety of pedestrians vs. conservation of the wetland: This discussion included
- 18 the Planning Board's condition to Dartmouth Coach to pay for a sidewalk and its design to get
- 19 pedestrians off of Labombard Rd. due to increased traffic from developments in the area.
- 20

21 Ms. Almy said that we have essentially been putting a lot of urban infrastructure on marshes for

22 40 years now, and we are going to be completely cutting off one side (of the marsh) from the

23 other, with something that is going to be disintegrating within 10 years. Her concern was about

24 the longevity of sidewalk and suggested a boardwalk be installed.

25

26 Ms. Riley questioned if the Planning Board considered any alternative configuration to

27 Labombard Road instead of adding this additional paved surface area in the wetland and

28 explained her reasonings. Her goal is to minimize paved areas, to slow down traffic, and get

29 pedestrian and cyclists to wherever they want to be safely. Ms. Hall said this did not come up at

30 the Planning Board meeting. Mr. Goodwin said this would be probably be the preferred

31 alternative on a slower, rural residential neighborhood street, but here there is bus traffic.

32

33 Ms. Almy said that she felt the Planning Board should go back and talk with the Ped/Bike

34 Committee.

35

36 Councilor Heistad said he had no major concerns from a Conservation Commission standpoint.

37

38 Ms. Riley questioned if Lebanon had limitations to salting sidewalks near wetlands. She also expressed

39 her concerns about how the City maintains sidewalks as a safe place for pedestrians to walk, noting that

40 urban sidewalks, in non-wetland environments, are difficult to walk on during certain times of the year

41 due to ice. She questioned how icy this sidewalk was going be and how much salt/gravel would be used.

42 Ms. Hall said it would not be much different than what is being experienced now. In a storm, this

43 sidewalk would probably be done once, noting the City's priority are school routes and the downtown

44 area. Councilor Heistad said that once the City accepts this sidewalk, it would be treated just like any

45 other sidewalk in terms of maintenance.

46

47 Mr. Brooks said that if you were wearing a Planning Board hat, it's a no brainer: you are trying to make a

48 safe passage for people. If you are wearing a Conservation Commission hat and saying I do not want any

49 more impervious material here, then people who walk in this area would be walking on the street.

50

1 Councilor Heistad said that conservation interests could create a dangerous section in this area for
 2 pedestrians and felt this application should move forward. There is already a road that crosses over the
 3 wetland area now and felt that, since people would be walking on the road, the Commission should figure
 4 out what they are comfortable doing to promote a safe way for the people to walk. He understood that the
 5 Ped/Bike Committee is more concerned about getting a crosswalk but walking in the roadway is not the
 6 safest way to go. Putting in a sidewalk beside the road is only going to increase the impervious surface
 7 area by 5 ft. (2,790 sq. ft. of impact) and he was uncertain what the Commission could promote that
 8 would have the same benefit of pedestrian safety and be any better for the wetland.

9
 10 More discussions took place regarding the sidewalk construction, its culverts, subsurface drainage, buffer
 11 area, longevity, and pedestrian safety vs. conservation of the wetlands.

12
 13 Ms. Riley said she is not opposed to a sidewalk if it is well done and again explained her problems with
 14 sidewalks. Councilor Heistad said that it all comes down to the maintenance budget. The City does not
 15 have enough funds to keep our sidewalks in what we consider are safe conditions. It would be a
 16 tremendous increase in City costs for manpower and materials to do this.

17
 18 Ms. Almy's concern was making the understructure of the sidewalk strong enough so it would not have to
 19 be replaced by something much bigger 10-years later. The Commission discussed Ms. Almy's concern
 20 about how the sidewalk would be constructed.

21
 22 **Councilor Heistad MOVED that the Conservation Commission recommends approval of the**
 23 **application by the City to expedite the NHDES wetland expedited review (minimum impact only)**
 24 **application (CC#2019-04) to add a 400' sidewalk along Labombard Road because, despite our**
 25 **reluctance to have additional pavement in the wetlands, pedestrian safety/connectivity outweighs**
 26 **wetland impact concerns.**

27 *Seconded by Mr. Oidtmann.*

28 **The Vote on the Motion was approved (4-0).*

29
 30 **4. STUDY ITEMS: NONE**

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 32 **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

33 A. Conservation Lands Monitors (Various Members): Mr. Brooks updated the Commission on field
 34 reports. Work/repairs being done in these areas were also discussed.

35
 36 B. Lebanon Biodiversity Group (D. Lacey): Ms. Riley said she is working with a group on creating a
 37 pollinator corridor along the Mascoma Greenway. She will also be meeting with a summer school
 38 group to educate them on invasive plants.

39
 40 C. Workshops & Educational Opportunities (Various Members): Mr. Brooks informed the
 41 Commission that there would be an event on Friday, August 9, 2019, 8:30AM – 1:30PM, 54
 42 Portsmouth St., Concord, NH. This is being sponsored by NH Association of Natural Resource
 43 Scientists.

44
 45 **6. OTHER BUSINESS:**

- 46 • Letter to landowners: Letter has been drafted and ready to go. 400-600 envelopes need to be
 47 stuffed.
- 48 • Master Plan: Ms. Riley had no updates on Chapter 5, Natural Resources.

- 1 • Mr. Goodwin reminded the Commission that the agenda is driven by members of the
- 2 Commission, so if they had topics they would like to discuss, to let him know.
- 3 • Commission membership was discussed. With the resignation of Harrison (Hal) Bourne, Al
- 4 Miltner and Shane Smith (Alt. Council Rep.) from the Commission, it is important to start
- 5 recruiting for new memberships.
- 6 • Elections: Since elections were held in April, Mr. Goodwin was uncertain whether the Vice
- 7 Chair could act as Chair for the next 6 months or if elections needed to take place at the next
- 8 meeting. Ms. Almy said that Suellen Balestra requested to be just an alternate member.
- 9

10 **7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** No future agenda items were proposed.-

11

12 **8. OPEN TO PUBLIC:** No one from the public was present at this meeting.

13

14 **9. ADJOURNMENT:**

15

16 *Councilor Heistad MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM.*

17 *Seconded by Sarah Riley.*

18 ** The Vote on the MOTION passed (4-0).*

19

20 Respectfully submitted,

21 Dona E. Gibson

22 Recording Secretary

23