

Town of Plaistow

Town Hall
145 Main Street
Plaistow, NH 03865



Conservation Commission

Chair B. Jill Senter

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Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2021

7:00 PM

Second Floor, Town Hall

Note: These minutes are in draft form and may be subject to change upon review and approval by the Conservation Commission.

1. Meeting opening: At 7:05 PM by Jill Senter
2. Roll call: Present: Jill Senter, Tim Moore, Charles Blinn, Olaf Westphalen
Excused: David Averill, John Blinn (Selectmen's Representative)
3. Review/approval of minutes:
 - 5/06/21 – Motion to approve – Olaf Westphalen, second by Charles Blinn. No discussion followed. Vote: 4-0-0
 - 5/20/21 – Motion to approve – Olaf Westphalen, second by Charles Blinn. No discussion followed. Vote: 4-0-0
 - 8/05/21 – Olaf Westphalen noticed in the minutes that the building size for 27 Plaistow Road was listed as 40,000 square feet. It will be corrected to 4,000 square feet. Motion to approve with the correction – Olaf Westphalen. second by Charles Blinn. No discussion followed. Vote: 3-0-1 with Jill Senter abstaining.
4. Workshops/discussion topics
 - A. Eagle Scout Project – Owen Ouellette, Troop 18. Owen made a presentation to the Conservation Commission about his proposed Eagle Scout project in the Town Forest. Owen will lead a group of scouts and scout leaders that clean and clear all walking trails in the Town Forest including those that have been impacted by the logging currently in progress. Additionally, Owen will replace all trail signs and markers using a composite material and stainless-steel screws. The new signs will be placed at a height of 8 feet that should help reduce any sign vandalism.

Brent Ebner has been working with the Conservation Commissions from Atkinson, Plaistow, and Hampstead to generate a three-town trail map and a standard trail marking system that will also be GPS compatible making it easier for lost or injured hikers/bikers to report their location within the three-town area. All of Owen's work will be compatible with what Brent will be doing in the near future.

The last work that Owen will perform is the closure of the Orange Trail. This trail very closely parallels the White Trail and was recommended to be removed by the Southeast Land Trust (SELT), owner of the Town Forest conservation easement, review of the trail network.

Olaf Westphalen made a motion to approve the plan presented by Owen Ouellette to install trial blazes and the clearing/cleaning of all the Town Forest trails. Charles Blinn made the second. No discussion followed. Vote: 4-0-0.

- B. Mark West from West Environmental gave an update on his progress in preparing for a March 2022 warrant article that will seek town approval of the implementation of prime wetlands ordinance in Plaistow. Note that in 2020 an update to the prior Wetlands Ordinance was approved. The update included renaming the ordinance to the Natural Resource Ordinance and has several tables providing provisions for prime wetlands should the 2022 warrant article pass.

Mark West identified four major steps in the preparation for the March 2022 warrant articles as follows:

1. Wetlands Inventory – Complete.
 - a. Define local criteria for Wetlands Inventory – Minimum on all wetlands over 2 acres in size that can identified on National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps.
 - b. Cannot consist of water body only.
 - c. Aerial photo interpretation of targeted wetlands from NWI maps.
 - d. Field verification from public access point.
 - e. Wetland Inventory Report.
2. Wetlands Evaluation – Complete
 - a. Define evaluation priorities and develop data form.
 - b. Research existing Natural Resources studies.
 - c. Perform wetland evaluation and field data collection with photo documentation.
 - d. Identify Prime Wetland candidates.
 - e. Prepare Wetland Evaluation Report.
3. Get Conservation Commission's input on which wetlands to consider for prime wetlands. Prepare text of prime wetlands warrant article – work with Planning Board for warrant article public hearings and schedules.

4. If warrant article passes, then prepare public hearings on details of prime wetlands recommendations and then submit the whole package of wetlands inventory, evaluation, warrant article results and public hearing results to NH DES for approval. Prime wetlands become official as soon as NH DES approves the submission.

The rest of Mark West's presentation included location of wetlands and an inventory of all wetlands over 2 acres. There are over 50 such wetlands and it would not be practical, nor desirable, to designate all of them as prime. Mark will come back in October with the wetlands grouped for size, function and value to make it easier for the Conservation Commission to select which wetlands they will recommend as prime.

5. Old Business

- None

6. New Business

- Next meeting date – October 7, 2021.

7. Communications

- Review information in the Conservation Commission mail folder
- NH DES approved the Dredge and Fill Permit for the work being done on East Road for the potable water system pump house.
- NH DES approved the permit to do the logging in the Town Forest.
- A copy of contract between Charles Marino, the forester hired to prepare and execute an update to our Forest Management Plan, and the Town was also in the mail folder.

8. Meeting adjournment: At 9:06 PM by Jill Senter

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy E. Moore
Secretary, Plaistow Conservation Commission