



TOWN OF
NEWMARKET
NEW HAMPSHIRE

Conservation Commission

April 11, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ellen Snyder (Chair), Melissa Sharples (Vice-Chair), David Bell, Jeffrey Goldknopf (Planning Board Rep.), Tom Jones, Julianna Tyson, and Brian Ward (Town Council Rep. ex officio)

Members Absent: Cris Blackstone, Jessica Cann (Alternate), and Colin Lawson (Alternate)

Town Staff Present: Bart McDonough, Director, Planning and Community Development

Guests: Autumn Scott and Nadege Masumbuka from SRPC.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

[time on DCAT 3:42]

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

The Chair announced that **Tom Jones** is now a full member on the Commission and

Julianna Tyson has renewed her membership for another three years. Thank you!

The six voting members this evening include **Ellen Snyder, David Bell, Jeff Goldknopf, Tom Jones, Melissa Sharples, and Julianna Tyson.**

3. Public Comment

There was no one present for public comment.

4. Elect Officers & Committee Appointments

Chair and Vice-Chair 2024-2025:

Ellen Snyder is currently serving as Chair and **Melissa Sharples** is currently serving as Vice-Chair. They are both willing to continue in these roles.

Action

Motion: **Tom Jones** nominated **Ellen Snyder** as Chair and **Melissa Sharples** as Vice-Chair for 2024-2025.

Second: **David Bell**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

Energy & Environment Advisory Committee 2024-2025:

Action

Motion: **Melissa Sharples** nominated **Julianna Tyson** to continue as Conservation Commission Representative to the EEAC for 2024-2025.

Second: **Tom Jones**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

Riverfront Advisory Committee:

The Chair spoke with **Sam Kenney** and he wishes to continue to be the ConCom representative with the Riverfront Advisory Committee for 2024-2025.

Action

Motion: **Ellen Snyder** nominated **Sam Kenney** to continue as Conservation Commission Representative to the RFAC for 2024-2025.

Second: **Julianna Tyson**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

The Chair announced that **Brian Ward** will continue as the **Town Council Rep** and **Jeff Goldknopf** will continue as the **Planning Board Rep.**

5. Approve Meeting Minutes

There are no minutes to approve this evening.

6. Financial Summary

[time on DCAT 7:41]

The Chair reported that the Conservation Fund has a balance of \$134,811.31. The Richard Schanda Fund has \$4,621.11. Together the fund totals: \$139,432.42. There was some interest earned and several expenses previously approved. The General Fund has a balance of \$1,861.71.

7. Master Plan Update

[time on DCAT 9:37]

Land and Water Conservation Chapter

Present this evening to make a presentation are **Bart McDonough**, Town Planner, and **Autumn Scott**, Regional Planner with SRPC, and **Nadege Masumbuka** from SRPC. This week is part of the ongoing Visioning Week. Between the workshop on March 16, community survey responses, and feedback from meetings earlier this week, the outreach and community participation has been wonderful. A “word cloud”, asking the question ‘What is your one wish for Newmarket?’, has been created combining input from all these events and, tonight, **Bart** asked the members to select their top 5 words in the cloud.

The Master Plan Chapters will be: 1) Vision, 2) Housing, 3) Land and Water Conservation, 4) Energy, 5) Arts, Culture, and Historic Resources, 6) Community Facilities & Utilities, 7) Economic Development, 8) Transportation, 9) Existing and Future Land Use, 10) Downtown Riverfront Design, 11) Recreation, and 12) Implementation

Guide.

Bart discussed the expected growth in Town. There are approximately 100 units as yet unbuilt. He then read the 2015 Newmarket Vision Statement to the members. **Please see Addendum Page 1.** Members were asked for their suggestions for changes to be considered – or did they like what was written. The members continued to brainstorm with the themes from the workshop and five major themes rose to the fore as aspirational goals: 1) connectivity, 2) affordability, 3) resilience, 4) age/friendliness, and 5) health ecology - to be included in the Land and Water Conservation chapter. In terms of the future: **Tom** would like an open space plan be considered in every new development; **Julianna** would like to see biodiversity prioritized; **Ellen** would like to see aquatic passages be restored.

The Open Space draft should be completed in May and **Ellen** has offered to assist with the draft. The members all agreed that she should participate. Thank you Ellen! Please feel free to contact Autumn (ascott@strafford.org) or Kerrie Diers (kdiers@strafford.org) with any other comments or concerns. Kerrie Diers is replacing Angela Cleveland on the team from SRPC.

The Chair has updated the Land Acquisition Criteria Evaluation Form with Autumn. The form was included in the meeting packet. She asks that the members take the time to review the final form and send any changes/corrections/questions to her in email so that the form can be completed as quickly as possible. We may have a land conservation project coming forward to the ConCom in May and we could use the form to evaluate the project. We are expecting a funding request for this project. The Chair spoke about the old Open Space Bond for ~\$1 million. There is approximately \$89,000 remaining in the bond and the ConCom could apply for the funds from the Town Council to use toward a conservation project if we approve.

8. Committee/Board Reports

[time on DCAT 1:23:56]

Town Council: **Brian** reported on the election of Chair and Vice-Chair. There was also a first reading to establish a “Public Transportation Advisory Committee”. The second reading will be at the next meeting.

Planning Board/Town Planner: Prime Wetlands – PREPA Grant

Jeff reported about the recent meetings. The PB is making their way through the 3-5 Railroad Street project. The only concern was possible impacts on Moonlight Brook and how water would traverse the property. He is pleased to have been reappointed to be the PB Rep to the ConCom. He also noted that Patrick Reynolds has been reappointed to the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee.

Bart noted that there will be a community event on proposed zoning changes at the Mill Space. The folks invited will be from the N. Main Street area. He is working with Ivy Vann and Kerrie Diers on the agenda for the multiple meetings scheduled for April 17 and 18.

Melissa plans to attend. The PB expects to develop the new zoning ordinances in May/June. **Jeff** indicated that he would like to see the area to be rezoned in order to make a recommendation.

Ellen said that Mark West, West Environmental Inc., is available to remap the Prime

Wetlands Map for Newmarket. The current map, which he prepared many years ago, needs to be updated. He said that he can provide a proposal so that we can go forward and seek a grant from PREPA (Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership). The grant would be due April 26. She asked for permission to pursue. Members agreed.

Ellen mentioned the New Hampshire Municipal Association workshop on May 9 from 9 – 1:30. The talk is entitled: A Hard Road to Travel. Join NHMA Legal Services Counsel Stephen Buckley and Municipal Services Counsel Jonathan Cowal for this year's workshop. Not only will this workshop delve into the details of how roads are formed, classified and maintained, but how weight limits are established, and the basics of development on Class VI roads. **Bart** has money for admission if anyone would like to attend – just let him know if you would like to go. You can attend in person or virtually.

Riverfront Advisory Committee/Schanda Park: Rec Dept permit Appl.; New Signage

We have received a Recreation Department request for the use of Schanda Park for the annual 'Arts in the Park' concerts this summer.

Action

Motion: **Melissa Sharples** made a motion to approve the use of Schanda Park by the Recreation Department for the Annual Arts in the Park concerts on Tuesday nights from July 2 to August 20, 2024 from 5-8 PM.

Second: **Tom Jones**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

Bart recently attended the Riverfront Advisory meeting where they discussed signage. They are still working on the wildlife sign. However, the approved "Caution- water quality sign" for Moonlight Brook was handed out to members. The QR code will take you to the ConCom web page. **Ellen** spoke about where the signs would be placed and the requirement for hardware funds. They will be changed to 'portrait' oriented signs on metal posts.

Action

Motion: **Melissa Sharples** made a motion to approve the printing and hardware for the signs to be funded from the Richard Schanda Fund.

Second: **Julianna Tyson**

Discussion: **Bart** mentioned that we have the support from the Town Manager, LRAC, and the Riverfront Advisory Committee.

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

Energy and Environment Advisory Committee: **Julianna** had no report.

Newmarket 300th Birthday Committee: **Melissa** reported that the Committee is still pulling things together. All are welcome to attend the meetings to help with the planning!

9. Trails

[time on DCAT 1:46:59]

Old Lee Class A Trail: trail improvement proposal and grant applications

Ellen invited Greg DiSanto, Martin Forestry Consulting LLC, to review the damage to the trail. The very serious erosion issues persist. Greg would like to make a rock dip by adding material and then crowning the road. She plans to make an application to LRAC for approximately \$7,000 and seeks ConCom permission. No work could be undertaken

until the road dries up. The bridge on Old Lee is kittywampus! Lindsay Butler will be helping to get the engineer who is doing the work on the Ash Swamp Road bridge to take a look and offer some suggestions on possible repairs. The ConCom would like her to pursue funding.

10. Projects

Ash Swamp Road: turtle crossing/aquatic passage

Lindsay Butler is currently working on some big grants for Ash Swamp Road. **Ellen** and **Jeff** will meet with DPW to discuss additional measures which could be done while waiting for a grant to be funded. The Neal Mill Culvert: **Ellen** would like to ask SRPC to install a traffic counter to determine road use – this would be helpful. The DPW has to frequently work on the two, side-by-side perched culverts – which are totally useless.

11. Land Stewardship

[time on DCAT 1:51:24]

Heron Point Boundaries and Trees

One abutter, Jon Steer, is getting a new boundary survey done to recheck his line for tree removal. **Ellen** met with the HOA recently and they have plans to remove trees and the boundary lines are a little confusing.

Piscassic River-Loiselle: parking area fence

Melissa reported that the parking lot fence has approximately 6-8 broken rails once again this spring. There could be a more long-term solution? Maybe cedar posts, granite posts, boulders, chains between the posts... She will look at the costs of chains between the posts and report back. She will also send out an email for a “trail work day” for tree cutting along the trails. **Dave** has agreed to help.

Wiggin Farm: bridge re-build

Ellen reported on the repairs completed on the footbridge. Unfortunately, the bridge needs to be replaced. Greg DiSanto will be meeting with **Ellen** tomorrow to look at the bridge and make a proposal for a wider and less steep replacement – making the bridge more accessible. She would also like to apply to LRAC for financial assistance.

12. Events

[time on DCAT 1:59:07]

Wiggin Farm kiosk raising and other tasks: Earth Day April 20th 9:00 – Noon

Ellen will post this on Nature Groupie. Projects: replace the kiosk, place some new interpretive signs, clean-up in the parking lot, and possibly get to brush work along the stone wall.

Roadside Cleanup: April 21

Thank you Toni Weinstein for coordinating this annual event! **Ellen** had some blue trash bags to hand out this evening.

Heron Point Clean-Up: Newmarket Cares Day-May 3

The High School students are ready to go!

13. Outreach and Education

Backyard Bash: August 2 5-8:00 PM

We plan to have a table this year – so come prepared to discuss ideas in May.

With \$200 remaining in the budget for supplies, **Ellen** would like to create a ConCom Handbook (smallish 3 ring binder) for every member which would include maps, rules,

guidelines, etc. The members were very receptive! Thank you Ellen!

14. Adjourn

[time on DCAT 2:03:15]

Action

Motion: Tom Jones made a motion to adjourn at 9:01 PM.

Second: Melissa Sharples

Discussion: none

Vote: Unanimously Approved 6-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary

DCAT:

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHQVHAvKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos

ADDENDUM Page 1

Master Plan: Vision Chapter
Town of Newmarket, New Hampshire



Newmarket's Vision Statement

In 2025, Newmarket continues to encompass the characteristics of a traditional New England coastal town that offers residents a high quality of life. The historic downtown is in the heart of the community and supports a diverse business mix that helps sustain the local economy. A multi-modal transportation system provides residents with a variety of options. Public transit routes, improved sidewalks, and an extensive bike network are strategically connected to allow for access between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Newmarket offers attractive and affordable housing opportunities that are compatible with the town's existing development and character. New development is focused in areas that already have infrastructure and is intelligently designed to reduce negative environmental impacts to the Great Bay and surrounding watershed. The community is more resilient against coastal and riverine flooding in large part due to local land use policies and regulations that reduce risk and vulnerability.

Newmarket's valuable natural resources and open spaces are well protected and offer outdoor enthusiasts a variety of water and land-based recreational opportunities. Residents and visitors benefit from small agricultural activities that offer access to fresh, local foods year-round.

A strong sense of place is maintained through an active and engaged citizenry. Public involvement during civic activities generates enthusiasm and promotes innovative planning for the future of the town.