

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Cape Elizabeth Town Hall
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 14, 2022

Present: Corinne Ketcham, Chair, Matt Craig, Emily Helliesen Day, Chris De Vries, Richard Sullivan.

Staff: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

1. Call to Order. Acting Chair Ketcham opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.
2. Election of Chair. With the resignation of former Chair Jim Tasse, the committee voted to name Corinne Ketcham chair by a vote of 5-0. Matt Craig was named vice-chair by a vote of 5-0.
3. Public Comment. No one wished to comment.
4. Minutes. The minutes of May 10, 2022 were approved 5-0.
5. Greenbelt Management.

Maine Pops Concert. Bob Swerdlow, Maine Pops, explained the mission of the Maine Pops musical group and history of performances before covid (80 seasonally), and reinitiating outdoor concerts this summer (50). They are rebuilding the band and would like to hold a concert on the village green on Wednesday, July 27th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. and lasting 70 minutes, which should coincide with sunset at 8:09 p.m. They could consider other dates. They bring everything they need, including chairs, stands, lights, PA system for conductor and asked if there is access to power (there is). They may reach out to the high School or middle school band to sponsor the event.

Ms. O'Meara explained that the Conservation Ordinance establishes a process for events to be approved on town open space. The Town Manager supports the Conservation Committee managing events on the village green as town open space. Is the Conservation Committee comfortable taking on this role? This event falls within the category of up to 150 attendees, which requires Conservation Committee approval. A larger event would require the committee send a recommendation to the Town Council for approval. She has spoken with the Police Chief and he recommends that a shift be on site to generally keep people off Ocean House Rd. Ms. O'Meara said the committee could consider covering the costs of the shift (similar to the implementation of the dog rules at Cliff House Beach Park).

The committee agreed to oversee events on the village green under the Conservation Ordinance.

Mr. Craig asked about a crosswalk for Ocean House Rd and Mr. Swerdlow said a volunteer could help with that.

Mr. De Vries asked about advertising as he would like town residents to know of this opportunity. Ms. O'Meara said information about the event and directing folks to parking can be posted on the town website.

Mr. De Vries made a motion, seconded by Ms. Day, to approve the Maine Pops event on July 27th, for the Conservation Committee to fund one shift of the Police Department for the event, and to request from Dr. Jacobson that the parking on Town Common Circle be made available to musicians. The motion passed 5-0.

Town Farm Trail. Mr. De Vries reported that boardwalk has been constructed, but that volunteer turnout was dismal. Volunteers were Mr. De Vries and his kids, Mr. Wacksman, Mr. Sullivan and a woman and her daughter. More construction is needed and additional 4x4s will also be needed. Ms. Day said she will contact NEMBA for a date that volunteers could come help with the remaining construction. Ms. O'Meara said she had tried to contact builders for pay for trail work but no one has responded.

Chase Email on Stonegate bridge. Dan Chase has replaced a bridge in Stonegate by building it on top of the existing bridge. He is asking for volunteers to lift the new bridge off and remove the old bridge. Ms. O'Meara will contact him about the lack of volunteers and ask that the bridge remain as is with a ramp for access.

Spurwink Bridge and Boardwalk. Mr. Alexander is making progress on replacing the decking.

Tiger Lily Lane. Ms. O'Meara updated the committee on the closure by Mr. Weyrens of the trail on his property and proposed plantings on the trail ramp.

Gazette. The next gazette will include information about the Town Farm Trail, July 27th concert and a call for help to move wood to the construction site at the Town Farm Trail.

Canoe. The committee asked about the status of the community boat at Great Pond. Ms. O'Meara still needs to purchase oars and life preservers. Mr. Sullivan offered to donate both oars and a child's life preserver. Mr. Craig can also donate a life preserver.

Winnick Woods signage replacement. Ms. O'Meara said all the signs are ready and they now need to be installed. Ms. Day said she often visits Winnick Woods and could install the signs.

Great Pond turtles. The committee received an email from a resident that there are turtles at Great Pond and signs should be put up. There is no staff resource to install temporary signs but the notification on turtles can be included in the gazette.

CELT. Nick introduced himself as the intern with CELT. Mr. De Vries praised CELTs efforts with the new trail that crosses the field to Shore Road and the acquisition of the Methodist Church easement.

6. Priority Setting.

The committee reviewed the draft invasives policy.

Maine Audubon has a good reference for native plants, mainenativeplant.org.

Mr. Craig asked if the policy should more specifically address plants in wetlands?

The committee asked what they should do next.? Ms. O'Meara said the draft policy is intended to provide guidance as the committee receives requests and proposals from residents to address invasives, mostly plants. The policy does not lay out a proactive program for the committee to engage with invasives. If the committee wants to be more proactive, the policy should be revised. A more proactive policy will also need to be funded.

The committee discussed use of the terms herbicides and pesticides. Following discussion, the committee agreed to table the draft policy to the July meeting to provide time for more review.

7. Planning Board review.

No item on the Planning Board agenda requires committee action.

Committee members asked about the status of Carr Woods and Ms. O'Meara provided an update.

8. Next meeting.

Chair Ketcham suggested the committee consider cancelling the August meeting. Ms. O'Meara noted that the committee traditionally cancels one meeting during the summer. Two committee members will not be able to attend the August 9th meeting. The committee agreed to cancel the August meeting.

Chair Ketcham asked about a new member. Ms. O'Meara said the Appointments Committee will decide if they want to recommend someone who applied last fall, readvertise, or wait to appoint someone as part of the end of the year appointment process.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.