

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Remote
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Public proceedings by remote access for Town Council meetings are authorized by the Town of Cape Elizabeth's Remote Participation Policy adopted August 30, 2021 and the Order Declaring a Limited Emergency extended to December 31, 2021.

Present: Mitch Wacksman, Chair, Emily Helliesen Day, Matt Craig, Chris De Vries, Corinne Ketcham, Bruce Moore, Jim Tasse.

Staff: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

Chair Wacksman opened the meeting and asked for public comment on items not on the agenda.

1. Public Comment.

Pamela Schubert, 3 Woodcrest Rd - She said that the Oakhurst neighborhood no longer has access to the greenbelt trail system. Access has been cut off and she would like to look at options, such as access from lots 100 or 100A off Oakhurst Rd, which are marshland.

Susan Steinman, 10 Woodcrest Rd- She referenced her 31 year history of accessing Robinson Woods trails via the Loveitt Woods connections. Her 34 year old daughter ran around the blocked trail and was yelled at. The trail connection was convenient to access Fort Williams and Robinson Woods, where parking is often filled.

Public comment was closed.

Chair Wacksman shared that he had spoken with the abutters to the Glenden Rd access. They have lived there 13 years and have overuse issues, and are not comfortable with public access. His email will be forwarded to the committee members. The public access has been closed off and we will need to look for another access point.

Mr. Tasse asked if the abutters are willing to work with the Town. Chair Wacksman said they are not, so other abutters should step forward. It looks like there are about 20 abutters to the Loveitt property.

Mr. Tasse said that the trail should adjusted in light of the closure. The committee agreed to look at the issue at the December meeting. Staff will prepare a summary of past efforts to look at access.

2. Minutes. The minutes of the October 12, 2021 meeting were approved 7-0.

3. Development Review Training. Ms. O'Meara gave a powerpoint presentation outlining the Conservation Committee's role and responsibilities for development review, specifically Resource Protection Permit and open space/greenbelt trails in subdivisions. Mr. Craig asked that the powerpoint presentation be sent to the committee for reference.

3. Greenbelt Management.

Tiny trails. Chair Wacksman asked for a summary of the proposed event. Mari Balow represented Kenneth Krogsrud, who submitted the application and who owns the Tiny Trails event. This event would be the same as last year, starting at the high school. The school has approved use of the parking lot from 7am-11am, and they expect the event to really span 8:00 am-9:30 am. They rerouted last year to avoid a trail in poor condition and will do that again.

Mr. Craig asked if the committee has polled abutters and staff responded that no polling was done last year. Ms. Day said the boardwalk is still under construction, and hopefully the Spurwink bridge and boardwalk will be done this year. Chair Wacksman asked the applicant to send a reminder in May that the event will be happening and Ms. Balow agreed. The application was approved by a vote of 7-0 and the committee expressed appreciation for the completeness of the application.

Outer Loop boardwalk rehab. Chair Wacksman reported that the boardwalk is not done and there is 150' left. Staff asked how the committee wants to proceed to finish it? Chair Wacksman suggested that students could volunteer to carry out the old boardwalk wood. Chair Wacksman said he is working to finish the boardwalk, building a bridge over the existing and is close to finished. Mr. Tasse suggested that we place boards as an interim and finish in May. Chair Wacksman responded that placing boards would be just as time-consuming as finishing it and we should just finish it. Mr. Tasse observed the risk of interim measures becoming permanent. The committee agreed to a site visit on Thursday, November 11th at 8:00 a.m. to assess and Wacksman, Tasse and DeVries committed to be there.

Great Pond. Ms. O'Meara reported that, in response to an abutter complaint about trespassing, ropes have been installed at Great Pond to keep the public within the 15' wide public access easement. This has been coordinated with CELT. Chair Wacksman said the little bridge is crooked and he will look at adjusting it, but it is very heavy.

Spurwink Bridge and Boardwalk. Ms. O'Meara reported that decking replacement is on track for Brian Alexander to start in December. Chair Wacksman wants confirmed that demolition and rebuild will be conducted so that the boardwalk remains passable.

Nordic Trail culverts. Ms. O'Meara reported that the Public Works Department has added cover to 5 culverts. Chair Wacksman noted that the Nordic group wants help with

disseminating trail etiquette information about using the Nordic trail. This will be added to the Gazette, as well as getting it posted to the town website.

Littlejohn Rd invasives. The committee received an email regarding invasives adjacent to the Littlejohn Rd trail connection. Staff provided context that the committee has received other inquiries about invasives in other areas, and that invasive treatment can easily consume the entire greenbelt trail management budget. Chair Wacksman said this is a low priority.

Mr. Craig said that the committee should have a policy discussion and it was agreed to put this on the January, 2022 agenda. Mr. Tasse suggested the town identify areas of critical sensitivity on a town-wide scale. Fort Williams is a discrete and separate location and manageable. We will need expert advice and the committee does not have the capacity for this work.

Gazette. Items will include Nordic trail etiquette, searching for a landowner to partner with on access at Loveitt Woods and explanation of the ropes installed at Great Pond. Ms. Day said we should ask for help carrying out old lumber at the Outer Loop Trail. Chair Wacksman wants to put up a sign indicating where old wood should be deposited.

Other. Mr. Tasse would like the committee to adopt a policy that electric assist bikes, Class 1 and 2, which have no significant difference in impact as other trail users, be allowed. This helps trail users with physical limitations. He made a motion to amend the Greenbelt Management Plan, and then withdrew the motion. Staff explained that the Town Council adopted the Management Plan, so it would need to be a recommendation to the Town Council, to be taken up at a public meeting. Chair Wacksman observed that amending the policy is not worth doing and no one in the group has a problem with current practice.

4. Planning Board review. The committee reviewed the plans for a Resource Protection Permit for the Willow Brook culvert replacement. Mr. Craig asked about the size of the riprap, which is noted on the plan at 3". The committee recommended that the application is complete by a vote of 7-0. The applicant has asked for expedited review, and the committee also voted 7-0 to recommend that the permit be issued. Staff will draft the committee recommendations for review and approval by Chair Wacksman.

The committee received a summary of the Turkey Hill Farm Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit requested by CELT. No action by the committee is required and no recommendation was made.

5. Next meeting. The committee discussed items for the December 14th meeting, which will be the last meeting for Chair Wacksman. Staff will prepare a status report of the current budget. The committee also recognized Ardath Dixon, the new CELT Stewardship coordinator. Chair Wacksman thanked the outgoing Stewardship

coordination Philip Mathieu for his attendance, insight and general helpfulness. Ms. Dixon hopes to continue in that spirit. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.