

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes  
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 11, 2020

As a result of the COVID-19 virus, the Conservation Committee conducted the meeting via Zoom remote access as provided by Maine law. Zoom allowed all Conservation Committee members and members of the public to hear all discussion and hear votes, which were taken by roll call, as required by law.

Present: Jim Tasse, Chair, Emily Helliessen Day, Corinne Ketcham, Bruce Moore, Mitch Wacksman

Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

1. Mr. Tasse called the meeting to order and the minutes of the June 9, 2020 meeting were approved 6 - 0. Seven attendees were present, but no member of the public wanted to speak.
2. Trails CIP Assessment Report. FB Environmental, represented by Amanda Gavin and Maggie Kelly, presented the completed report. Mr. Wacksman commented that it was an excellent report.

The report methodology began with a GIS spatial review, then field work. Electronic data forms were completed between April - June 2020 on existing boardwalks and existing trails where boardwalks are recommended. The data form includes physical parameters, photos and site recommendations. The consultants described how they rated existing boardwalk conditions (1-5) and how each photo includes the number of the rating form.

Mr. Tasse asked if the user evaluation was done by observation or a user count. It was by observation. Mr. Moore asked if they could differentiate between users, such as hikers/bikers? The consultants could by observing tracks and encountering people using the trails.

Mr. Wacksman asked if they could link the pictures to the map. This has not been done but will be investigated. The consultants discussed usability of the software *fulcrum* to link to the map. Linking to the GIS system, which the town already operates, or google maps, is another option.

Ms. Gavin explained that wetland delineations were done within 100' of a site, based on a review of NWI maps which DEP uses. A full vernal pool evaluation was not done, but potential vernal pools were identified. Maps prepared should be adequate for permitting. The consultants researched state permitting requirements and some exemptions for public trails may be possible. An inventory of state permits received to date should be done. New boardwalks may need a Tier 1 permit or exemption to Tier 1 and the prepared maps should be Tier 1 quality.

Of 164 sites surveyed, 119 are boardwalks. The report concludes that:

45	new boardwalks
19	boardwalk extensions
46	boardwalks needing maintenance
54	boardwalks in good condition

2,000' of new boardwalk is recommended.

Ms. Gavin recommended that the high priority sites be completed first, followed by signage in wet areas and tracking changes in the database. Ms. Kelly explained that the data base is an excel format, which can be sorted by priority. You can type in the site number in the search bar to pull up photos.

Mr. Tasse complimented the study as very comprehensive. Can you click on the map provided to link to the photos? Ms. Gavin said that you can get lat/long, but they could investigate making the map more interactive. Ms. O'Meara suggested that this might be done using the town's existing GIS system maps. Mr. Wacksman asked about the functionality of fulcrum?

Ms. Day noted that some CELT trails are included. Mr. Wacksman noted that trail users do not care which trails are CELT or Town. Mr. Tasse wants to share the info with CELT. CELT will be attending the meeting next month.

Mr. Tasse expanded the added usefulness of being able to click on the map to bring up the photos. He also asked about batching permits.

Ms. Gavin shared information provided by Rich Brereton. You can obtain a single NRPA permit with multiple boardwalks. The committee discussed starting the permit process for the Town Farm trail improvements. Has the committee decided on a boardwalk design?

Mr. Tasse supports the standard design. Ms. Gavin said that the boardwalk length has been measured. Once the impacts accumulate to 15,000 sq. ft., compensation is required and the count is cumulative to previous permits. Ms. O'Meara said permit batching would need to be by property area and not one town permit. Ms. Gavin said the NRPA permit work must begin in 4 years and be completed within 7 years. The wetland mapping is good for 10 years. If you are replacing with inkind boardwalk, you still need a permit by rule (PBR).

Mr. Tasse wants to start with the Town Farm trail improvements. Ms. O'Meara verified there is approximate \$20,000 available in the greenbelt trails budget.

The committee discussed the differences in installing a Great Pond type boardwalk or a wooden boardwalk. The committee estimated that direct impact using wooden sleepers is about 1,000 sq. ft., less with the Great Pond elevated boardwalk style. In response to a question, Ms. Gavin thought that either boardwalk type could be permitted.

The committee wants to start the process to obtain permitting. FB has provided a proposal for \$3,400 to prepare the permitting. Mr. Wacksman made a motion to fund the FB proposal for \$3,400, seconded by Mr. Moore. The committee discussed the design and agreed to 4" x 4" sleepers on the ground 5' apart and supporting 4 2" x 10' boards butted tight. Mr. Wacksman asked for a % of added boardwalk length to be permitted as a cushion. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

The committee also voted 5-0 by roll call vote to accept the draft final report with revisions discussed.

3. Greenbelt Implementation projects.

Access Ramp Phase 2. Ms. O'Meara displayed the plan for a phase 2 access ramp to be constructed on the school campus in August. The ramp is the same alignment as the Cross Town Trail. The committee would like to look at making the final connection from this access to the Town Center Trail entrance. Mr. Tasse noted that he conducted a bike rodeo on the school campus.

Two Lights Trail. Still underway.

McAuley Connector. Done. Benches are getting installed. The trail has been added to Chris Thompson's maintenance list. Mr. Tasse recognized the fine trail maintenance work done by Chris Thompson, and would like to have him attend a meeting to thank him.

Gull Crest. Mr. Wacksman, with help from volunteers, completed repairs (board replacement) on the Outer Loop trail. The boardwalks should last another 2 years. Mr. Tasse noted that his wife is a runner and the trail is alot safer now.

Ledgewood Ln. Ms. O'Meara reported that she has spoken and/or met with all of the landowners and everyone is thinking about providing the town with a license. Mr. Wacksman noted that lumber has been placed to block the trail with a sign that no motorized vehicles are allowed.

Other signage. Mr. Tasse summarized that NEMBA would like to install signage on the greenbelt. He is opposed because multiple groups have contributed to trail improvements and they were not involved in the Winnick Wander. Mr. Wacksman said this was discussed in the past and he does not support it. Ms. Ketcham noted we have just updated our signs and this looks like solicitation. The committee consensus is not to grant

permission for NEMBA signs to be installed on the town greenbelt trails. Mr. Tasse really likes the new greenbelt signs and thanks Public Works for installing them.

Spurwink Bridge and boardwalk redecking. Ms. O'Meara provided an update that she has tried to contact the contractor without success. She reviewed the timeline of project approval, funding, unsuccessful RFP process, current contractor and need for complete it. Mr. Tasse recommended that the town contact Brian Alexander, a trail builder in central maine. Ms. Day said if the contractor is unresponsive, we should move on. Ms. O'Meara will work with Mr. Alexander.

4. Cliff House Beach Park. The Conservation Committee has been asked by the Town Council to provide advice on traffic issues related to Cliff House Beach Park. A report from the Police Chief has been provided.

Mr. Tasse questioned the responsibility of the Conservation Committee for traffic issues regulated by ordinance. Ms. O'Meara explained that the traffic is regulated by ordinance, and the Town Council has asked the Conservation Committee for advice based on the good work done on management in the past. No other town body has more depth of understanding of Cliff House Beach Park.

Ms. Ketcham shares Jim's concerns, but is willing to look at parking. It is inherent that if you live on the beach/on the coast there will be parking. The beach is on social media. Noting the Police Chief's report, if you restrict parking, it will flow into other areas.

Mr. Tasse mused that limiting parking to one side to preserve emergency vehicle access, reserving 2 spaces on road and bike corrals might be reasonable, and may alleviate some parking pressure. Mr. Wacksman wanted to confirm that the Conservation Committee will be making a *recommendation* to the Town Council and Ms. O'Meara confirmed that.

Mr. Tasse opened the meeting to public comment.

Tom Mikulka, 4 Mountainview Rd - It's not just a parking problem. The beach is accessible to the Greater Portland area. There can be 75 people on the beach and he doesn't want to visit it anymore. Parking spills over to Mountainview Rd.

Tom Meyers, 4 Seaview Ave - He appreciates the attention to the beach. There is a churn problem throughout the day, with parking of 200 cars in shifts. There are traffic jams, safety issues, turnover. People walk up the middle of the street and cars honk. He is ok that it is a public beach, but notes that 1/4 of the cars are from out of state, NY, NJ, MA. This is a quality of life issue and he is proactive by parking his car in front of his house. There is a problem turning around on a dead-end. Can we put at

cone at the intersection of Glen/Seaview with signage that you should turn here if there is no parking?

Michael Messerschmidt, 8 Seaview Ave - He's been going to the beach for 39 years and the last 5 years it has been unpleasant due to the crowds during the day. He does not agree with the Police tally and has seen 115 people on the beach. He has worked from home the last 5 months and there is a constant churn. Traffic is barreling down Seaview all day turning, engines, slamming doors. He wants parking restrictions tied to dump sticker. Lots of beach users are neighbors, but 20%-30% have out of state plates.

Tony Owens, 19 Seaview Ave- The Dog Ordinance changes are a success and we are capable of good work. He wants Cape only parking on Seaview Ave. It would limit traffic, even if it would push it elsewhere. He wants parking slips painted at the end of Seaview. He supports a bike rack. Maybe we can use the survey tool again and work on this over the winter.

The committee tried to allow Andre Guimond to speak but there were technical issues.

Public comment period closed.

Mr. Wacksman asked Ms. O'Meara about a similar issue at Two Lights. Ms. O'Meara said that neighborhood residents met with the Town Manager, but there was not support for options such as a resident parking only program because residents want the flexibility to allow their adult children and guests to park on the road.

Mr. Tasse agreed it would be helpful if the Police Chief could attend the September meeting, and then the committee can make an informed recommendation at that meeting.

Ms. Day asked if the Town Council wanted the committee to review usage, intensity of beach and related issues?

Ms. Ketcham observed that this season is different from other seasons, and noted that a house under construction in the neighborhood is also taking up spaces.

Ms. O'Meara noted that the last time the committee looked at management issues at Cliff House Beach Park, a neighborhood survey managed by Chris Campbell, Tom Meyers and Wyman Briggs was helpful, but she was not sure that group was interested in another effort.

The committee agreed to discuss this at the next meeting with the goal to also make a recommendation to the Town Council.

5. Planning Board. No items need committee review.
6. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.