

Biddeford Conservation Commission
Special Meeting

Thursday, January 20, 2022

6:04 - 8:03 pm

Special meeting

Virtual Attendees: C. Gastelum, M. Atlas, K. Buechs, R. Rhames

Absent: T. Craven

Virtual guests: D. Rioux, H. Bonine, M. Ward

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:04 pm
- II. *K. Buechs motion to approve minutes from 12/16/21, 1/3/22, and 1/11/2022 at 6:27*
 - *Second by R. Rhames at 6:28*
 - *Unanimous approval*
- III. Discussion throughout meeting minute review:
 - Expression of confusion as to whether we are required in the bylaws to approve the spending of funds. Seeking clarity.
 - D. Rioux notes that this was not the case during his time as Chair
 - K. Buechs expresses concern about this change and a desire to have the directive clarified
 - @C. Gastelum to make budget request
 - @C. Gastelum to check with M. Eddy about whether deploying funds must be approved by the City manager
- IV. Mark Ward Discussion of the GIS map update sent by
 - M. Ward question: is this the format we were desiring?
 - R. Rhames found the lack of “working lands” to be unhelpful
 - Agricultural current use versus farmland layers, is this correct?
 - The agricultural current use is just one layer, not the end all be all
 - Are the proposed four maps categories the format we see as suitable to their needs
 - D. Rioux supports the four maps
 - R. Rhames would like the added feature of being able to search parcels or at least see the outlines as a layer (similar to what is viewable in the soil map)
 - H. Bonine - clarifies that the parcel option is a toggle that can be set to “on”
 - C. Gastelum notes that the Wildlife Habitat parcel layer is not working currently
 - K. Buechs – are the Wetlands and Waterbody maps redundant with other existing maps?
 - M. Atlas – how useful are these maps to the discussions we’ve had as a group. Are there holes in these categories, or content that is often
 - R. Rhames – our mission was to come up with an index of open space, not sure that we have accomplished this
 - H. Bonine Process:
 - M. Ward and H. Bonine paired down list of request
 - H. Bonine identified layers that could have GIS data
 - Now we need to identify if the data sets work for us, or if there are holes
 - If there are holes, we have to identify them and request further data
 - @H. Bonine to provide the list of data sets

- @H. Bonine – find out when this data is from? How often does it get updates
 - Current use were pulled from Vision (assessing database) in early January
 - R. Rhames – changes are made April 1 every year
- Clarify “current use” and how it is defined
- K. Buechs - Would like to validate the data (when was it compiled) and the source
- R. Rhames + C. Gastelum suggest finding a way to collect data from landowners about how land is being used
- M. Ward confirms that this is a planning tool not a regulatory tool
- CONCLUSIONS:
 - Four maps are good
 - R. Rhames **working landscapes** should be included somehow but we need further discussion for how that is assembled
 - @R. Rhames to take a look at M. Ward's memo to investigate how to strengthen the **working landscapes data and how it is presented**

V. Discussion of Winding Creek Development

- C. Gastelum notes that the developers should consult Chris DiMatteo and BRI
- K. Buechs makes a motion that we send a memo to the PB that states that the Conservation Commission agrees with the comment made in the last PB meeting at which it was expressed by the PB that the developer should have a conversation with BRI at 7:25p
 - R. Rhames second 7:25p
 - Discussion
 - R. Rhames and D. Rioux think we should send the whole thing right now
 - K. Buechs expresses that he would like the memo to be withheld until we can clarify the clerical process for hiring M. Ward's services
 - Unanimous approval
- @C. Gastelum – please submit the memo proposed in the above motion

VI. Hidden Hills Update

- D. Rioux notes that the planning board meeting alluded to a “discussion” but there are no further details of what was discussed
- Members are encouraged to watch the recording of the previous meeting
- R. Rhames makes a motion to approve M. Ward's proposal to do a walk of the Hidden Hills parcels at 7:47
 - Second by M. Atlas 7:48
 - Discussion:
 - K. Buechs – do we go forward, or do we still need to wait for approval?
 - R. Rhames says we vote to approve considering that Mark cannot even do the walk if the property owners do not allow it.
 - K. Buechs – no object, but if we get a response we will have to re-address the issue
 - H. Bonine doesn't see an issue on voting to approve the funds now, and if we do need approval, that will be the next step
 - K. Buechs – @H. Bonine please communicate that to M. Eddy and J. Bennett
 - Unanimous; motion carries

VII. Comp Plan Updates

- H. Bonine - Comp plan schedule was presented at the Planning Board meeting
 - Hesitation around the format of public sessions has slowed the approval process

- There will be a mock public session next week with the Planning Board to introduce them to the format we plan to use and to get feedback, before they move forward with approving the schedule.

- R. Rhames expresses concerns about how demographics will be chosen

VIII. Other Business

- Budget last year was \$5,000
 - Must include verbiage to describe the intent of the use
 - Classroom work
 - Contract work with field biologist
 - Inventory work towards working landscapes
 - Water quality projects
 - Climate education
 - Fulfilling the mission
 - Community engagement like (Yard Smart)
 - H. Bonine suggests working with us to update our website
 - Hiring UNE Student
- *K. Buechs made a motion to request \$5,000 budget for the next year at 7:59p*
 - *Second by R Rhames 8:00p*
 - *Unanimous; motion carries*
- @C. Gastelum to make the proposal for the budget
- *M. Atlas makes a motion to adjourn at 8:03p*
 - *Second by K. Buechs at 8:03p*
 - *Unanimous; motion carries*