

City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission
August 27, 2025 at 6:45 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees:

Richard Rhames, Peter Robbins, Denis Rioux, Erik Heumiller, Patrick Conlon, Mike Lowell

Staff:

Adi Iriqat, Assistant Planner

Guest:

Grace Little, FB Environmental

Mindee Goodrum, FB Environmental

Kayla Lewis, Planning Board (Associate Member)

Call to order: 6:57 pm

1. Declaration of Quorum / Voting Members
2. Adjustment(s) to Agenda
3. Secretary Report
 - 3.a Approval of Meeting Minutes for July 23, 2025
 - Motion to Approve: E. Heumiller, Second: P. Robbins, Vote: Unanimous
4. Presentations
 - 4.a Thatcher Brook Watershed Management Plan - Proposal from FB Environmental
 - E. Heumiller presented a brief history of the existing WMP
 - E. Heumiller reached out to Tom Milligan (Engineering) for any updates on deliverables from the 2015 WMP projects (8/27)
 - There is no current Workgroup active on Thatcher Brook
 - M. Lowell has observed bare landscapes in Thatcher Brook Watershed around the Hidden Hills development that he suspects will impact the water temperatures and habitat viability
 - Discussion of FBE proposal
 - R. Rhames would like to know what was agreed upon in the original document between the City and DEP
 - Including how much regulation the City has to adhere to for Thatcher Brook (what level of enforcement)
 - Original TB WMP was implemented to avoid a situation like the Long Creek WMP (residual designation authority)
 - Mindee to reach out to Addie Halligan at DEP about current plans/data/next steps
 - R. Rhames is interested in hearing from DEP at our September meeting
 - BCC will review and vote on the proposal at our September meeting

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5. New Business

5.a BCC Collaboration with the Planning Board - RE: Zoning Updates

- Current Zoning plan was established in the 1960s and does not account for the updated understanding of critical habitat and natural resources
- Specific areas that need updates include the whole of the Biddeford-Kennebunkport Vernal Pool Complex
 - Currently a mix of R1A, SR1, and RF
- Send an outline to gauge Planning Board interest in a working session
 - E. Heumiller to summarize the ordinances, suggestions, and intentions of the meeting and send to Adi
 - D. Galbraith to present to PB on 9/17, with a workshop to follow

6. Updates & Discussions

6.a Bedard Subdivision Update

- Site walk with the Planning Board taking place on 9/3 at 4:30 PM
 - Meeting location: 268 Pool Street

6.b UNE Pier

- No new discussions

6.c Conservation Update - TAP Lot (Map 1, Lot 19)

- The BCC spoke on a number of issues to the City Council on 8/6
- Council referred the matter to City Planner to summarize the process/actions required by their November 2025 meeting
- BCC desires to simplify the work for the City Planner by sharing a draft recommendation/process outline to expedite the process
 - Quick title search
 - City to relinquish all interest
 - Not an easement
 - Organizational recommendations (SVLT, MCHT)

6.d BCC Website

- Contacted staff to make an update to the “Conservation Partners” logos
- E. Heumiller and R. Rhames to review conservation video archives at Biddeford Public Access in September

6.e Water Monitoring Update

- Water levels are very low due to dry conditions
- Monitoring continues through October
- Data recap will be shared in Oct/Nov

7. Other Business

7.a Science on Main Street Initiative

- Community input identified the river and the community itself as valuable assets, with this update from Heart of Biddeford follow:
 - *HOB is developing a community-centered art project (voted on by the community) that celebrates the river and the deep connection people have with it*
 - *The concept currently taking shape is a series of small, interactive art installations that will include scientific elements to engage visitors in both artistic and educational ways. We are hoping that we could possibly integrate these installations into the River Walk improvements that are currently underway, but we are not totally sure if that is a viable option yet.*
 - *Planning to submit an application for the implementation grant by the end of August. The turnaround is fairly quick, and we expect to hear back sometime in September.*
 - *Currently for the fellowship and the grant I am writing up a report that goes through all the community engagement and they are happy to share if it's of interest.*

7.b R. Rhames notes that Maine Calling episode from 8/27 was relevant to our work

- Included conversations about rare and endangered turtles
- [Listen to the episode here](#)

7.c City staff presented updates on a new development in the pipeline at 674 Sout St

- No plans submitted yet, but proposing 33-36 homes in roughly 45 acres
- Falls within the RF Zone and would be an example of cluster mandate

8. Adjourn

- Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025 - 6:45 PM
- Motion to Adjourn: P. Robbins, Second: P. Conlon, Vote: Unanimous