

City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission
July 24, 2024 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees: Richard Rhames, Denis Rioux, Mike Lowell, Maya Atlas, Erik Heumiller, Peter Robbins, Patrick Conlon

Guests: David Galbraith

Call to order: 6:13pm

1.
Adjustment(s) to Agenda

1.1
West Brook/Winding Creek Development update.

- Planning Board special meeting on 6/24 was to review and accept the history of the documents to accept the correct version of the disputed documents.
 - Signed into the public record a document of findings and facts.
 - Goes back to the judge from here.
- Question about the checklist the Planning Board/Planning Staff use to evaluate projects — can we get access to this checklist? (M. Atlas)

2.
Secretary Report

Approving meeting minutes for 3/27, 4/24, 5/22, and 6/26 meetings.

- Motion to approve: M. Atlas, Second: P. Robbins, Vote: Unanimous

3.
Presentations/Discussions

3.a

Consult with Joe McKenney (Rec. Commission Chair) RE: update on Clifford Park trail design, management, easement, etc.

- R. Rhames met with Joe, who was supposed to join our meeting tonight, but Richard is targeting our August/Sept. meeting as a date for a joint discussion.
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust was a potential easement holder. (R. Rhames)
- It would be good to react to documents/notes to react to during the meeting, to make it more productive. (M. Atlas)
 - Review the current MCHT easement language.
 - Draft bullets for discussion around other needs (trail maintenance).
 - Smith Preserve, Saco Valley Land Trust

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4.

Management Plan Cost-Share Update

- R. Rhames discovered that NRCS does not do cost-sharing with municipalities.
- Project Canopy does have a cost-share program.
 - R. Rhames spoke with Nicole ??, Outreach Coordinator
 - District Forester believes there are funds available for municipalities.
 - State funds are also available for invasive control.
 - May require multiple “management plans” to address the different funding sources.

5.

Swan Pond Brook Lot - Update from Planner

- D. Galbraith update:
 - Original discussion took place on 6/21/2022.
 - Talk of possibly selling the parcel to someone else.
 - Took off the agenda, Jim Bennett thought it was a good candidate for a conservation easement.
 - D. Galbraith to bring the item back to City Council to revisit the topic.

6.

Water Quality Monitoring Update

- E. Heumiller provided a link to the virtual training video for all BCC members.
- The unit was delivered today and will be tested in the near future.
 - Plan is to test it in comparison with the DEP units (YSI Pro Solo).

7.

Climate Cluster - Maxwell's Farm Closure, etc.

- Poor harvest and development pressures.
 - Spotted wing drosophila (fruit flies) were a major impact on harvests.
 - These are heading north and arriving earlier in the season due to changing climate.

8.

Solar Ordinance Update

- Mayor's Sustainability Committee met on 7/15 to discuss Solar Ordinances
 - They reviewed ordinances from Fryeburg, Sandford, South Portland, and the [Maine Audubon's Model Site Plan Regulations](#).
 - B. Favreau is spearheading the ordinance in collaboration with the Sustainability Committee to draft an ordinance that will likely be delivered to the Policy Committee.
- Maine Audubon also has a Solar Advocacy page on "[Thoughtfully Sited Solar](#)"

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- Reaffirming that the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Sustainability Committee should all be at the table for these discussions. (E. Heumiller)
 - E. Heumiller to reach out B. Favreau to coordinate a meeting.
- Henry Barrett (caller) - listening and curious about next steps.

9.

Other Business

9.a

Next meeting scheduled for 8/28

9.b

Request a 10-year-lookback at approved developments 2014-2023

- D. Galbraith will work with Nan Whitten to pull what data is available.
- Looking for number of development proposals, number of units, etc.

10.

Adjourn at 7:17pm.