

City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission
November 18, 2024 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees: Richard Rhames, Maya Atlas, Erik Heumiller, Peter Robbins, Denis Rioux

Guests: Adi Iriqat

Call to order: 6:05pm

1.
Adjustment(s) to Agenda

2.
Secretary Report

2.a Approval of Meeting Minutes from 7/23 + 9/25 + 10/23

- 7/24 meeting - item 4 edits
 - Nicole Rogers (outreach coordinator)

Motion to approve: Maya Atlas, Second: Peter Robbins, Vote: Unanimous

3.
Presentations/Discussions

3.a Project Canopy - Clifford Park Management Plan — NEXT STEPS

- IRA Funds (from Jan discussion)
- Good idea to identify the forester we want to work with prior to applying, to have concrete quotes/costs identified
 - R. Rhames to reach out to Dave Parker for a quote
 - TBD member of Biddeford-Saco Climate Group
- Need to connect with David to confirm City staff availability to support the application and volunteer time
 - E. Heumiller to reach out to Christine Ohman to confirm her ability to support
- Concerns over staff vacancies and federal government changes that could impact the availability of grant funds in 2025 (R. Rhames)
- City dissolving the downtown development corporation (M. Atlas)
 - Being replaced by a “traffic commission”
 - Need to follow up to see who is managing parks/green spaces

3.b Swan Pond Brook — Lot Update

- E. Heumiller to email David to follow up on the status of this parcel

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3.c Solar Ordinance Draft / Process

- David Galbraith provided the draft document to the Conservation Commission on 11/18/2024
- Joint working session between the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission is suggested for Wednesday, 12/18/2024
- Conservation Commission to review independently for a thorough discussion at our next meeting, Monday 12/16/2024
 - Goal is to determine a consolidated list of our edits, with context and research that we can bring to the working session
- Notes on the current draft:
 - Section D-4-H: should go beyond “intent” and developers should have funds set aside in escrow
 - Interest on funds could also help support conservation?
 - Or a surety bond? (third party to set amounts)

3.d Comp Plan Deficiencies “Not Finds” (see memo, 6/26/2024)

- The Conservation Commission will review the comp plan independently and discuss sections we would be able to contribute to/or be responsible for in our 12/16 meeting. (E. Heumiller)
- **Not found:** Plan Implementation section that prioritizes how implementation strategies will be carried out, pursuant to 30-A MRSA §4326(3). The plan must identify the responsible party and anticipated timeline for each strategy in the plan.
 - RECOMMEND THAT THE BCC REVIEWS THE COMP PLAN AND SUGGESTS SECTIONS WHERE WE CAN BE THE RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR CARRYING OUT, CONFIRMING, OR APPROVING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.
- **Not found:** Evaluation measures that describe how the community will periodically (at least every five years) evaluate the following:
 - A. The degree to which future land use plan strategies have been implemented;
 - SUGGEST THE BCC IS PART OF THIS REVIEW
 - B. Percent of municipal growth-related capital investments in growth areas;
 - C. Location and amount of new development in relation to community’s designated growth areas, rural areas, and transition areas (if applicable)
 - SUGGEST THAT THIS FALL UNDER OUR REVIEW, AND GIS MAP UPDATES ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

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- D. Amount of critical natural resource, critical rural, and critical waterfront areas protected through acquisition, easements, or other measures.
 - THIS WOULD ABSOLUTELY FALL UNDER OUR PERVIEW AND GENERAL OPERATIONS
 - INCLUDE LANGUAGE ABOUT SUPPORTING WORKING LANDSCAPES (R. RHAMES)
- **Not found:** (FLUP appears to not have any policies or strategies): Future Land Use Plan that meets the requirements of Section 4 of Chapter 208. This section will be the focus of the Office's review for consistency with the Act.

3.e Family Forest Carbon Update

Erik to identify parcels over 30+ acres to send mail. (winter project)

- Document will contain this program as well as conservation easement details, NRCS info, and project canopy info.
- Could use the opportunity to collect emails to aid in hosting future events or communicating with landowners.
- E. Heumiller to contact office of forest management (or review documents Denis found)
- Results from this outreach could inform parts of the comprehensive plan surrounding working landscapes (forest resources)
 - Registered for "tree growth"

3.f UNE Interns

- The BCC has the option for two possible interns from UNE
- Spring semester runs Jan. 15 - May 9, typically 8-10 hours/week
- Erik to serve as point person for intern management/support
- Intern option #1 - Environmental Science Major (SPRING)
 - Able to help with vernal pool documentation, observations, GPS location info, egg mass counts and more within Clifford Park
 - Could also perform similar activities within the Blanding Preserve to work towards a holistic habitat recommendation for newly acquired land adjacent to Clifford Park
- ~~● Intern option #2 - Marine Affairs Major, GIS Minor (SPRING)~~
 - ~~○ Water quality monitoring support~~
 - ~~○ Requires work in the early morning hours~~

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3.g Climate - COP29

- [UN website for reference](#)
- Comments on Angus King proposal to house Mainers in rural farm housing — increasing sprawl and need to drive

3.h Bunny Cut Event

- Next event could be bird focused in the Spring

4.

New Business

4.a Cataract Dam Licensing (up for renewal)

- Only a single (1) Atlantic Salmon was observed at the Skelton dam, and it may be due to passage issues at downstream dams
- FERC is hosting an environmental site review on 11/19/2024
- FERC is also hosting two “scoping sessions” the same day for discussion and feedback on the dam licensing plan

5.

Other Business

5.a December meeting date - planning for Monday 12/16/2024

6.

Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: P. Robbins, Second: D. Rioux, Vote: Unanimous