

City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission
February 26, 2025 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees:

Richard Rhames, Erik Heumiller, Peter Robbins, Patrick Conlon

Staff:

David Galbraith

Call to order: 6:05 pm

1.

Adjustment(s) to Agenda

2.

Secretary Report

2.a Approval of Meeting Minutes from Jan. 30th, 2025

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

3.

Updates

3.a Solar Ordinance Updates

- Next step is for the Policy Committee to review on 3/24.
- Following their approval, it will go to City Council.
- Any changes, it may need to be reviewed by Planning Board again.

3.b Swan Pond Lot - Conservation Easement (Map-1, Lot-19)

- Erik has drafted a recommendation to send to the City Council to encourage the transfer of the parcel at Map-1, Lot-19 to a title-in-fee conservation structure.
- Erik to circulate the revised document and we'll vote on it in March.

3.c Comp Plan Update

- Comp Plan implementation document is nearly complete.
- BCC looking to review the suggested ownership/oversight plan for key elements of the plan, to provide comments if needed.

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4.

New Business

- 4.a Discussion of article: Winter Salt & Roads ([article linked here](#))
- Nothing likely to happen this year, so we'll focus on having these conversations in a less hectic time for Public Works.
 - Richard to connect with Jeff Demers to attend a future meeting
 - Our questions include:
 - Can Public Works provide insight into what materials the City uses for road operations, and how much?
 - Can the city request data from snow removal contractors about the locations they dump their snow?
 - Goal would be to map out where the salt-laden snow is dumped to see how it impacts watersheds.
 - Erik is planning to collect some water data at Swan Pond Brook near the City's snow removal dumping this winter and compare it to summer data.
 - Could inform recommendations for the City's snow management.
- 4.b Collaboration with the Recreation Commission re: Clifford Park
- Brad Favreau will connect with Lisa Thompson to schedule a meeting/working session with the BCC.
- 4.c Discussion of the GPCOG's "Regional Trail Plan"
- D. Galbraith will be attending the GPCOG meeting on 2/27.
 - P. Conlon will also be attending the meeting.
 - Want to make sure that any trails we include don't lead to an increase in pressures on sensitive habitat areas.
- 4.d Discussion of BCC website changes
- E. Heumiller to resubmit the current draft.
 - BCC all to review and vote in March.
 - Can also bring recommendations for other documents to include in terms of land-use planning documents and resources.

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5.

Other Business

- 5.a Policy Commission potentially reviewing the number of committees.
 - Some committees are in the City's charter, some exist by ordinance, and some are driven by state language.
 - Conservation Commission established by ordinance, but also has state mandated language to support our mission.

- 5.b Housing discussion about vacant homes within Biddeford
 - P. Conlon participated in Sustainability Committee and Policy Committee discussions on this topic.
 - Sanford has an ordinance that requires the registration of empty/vacant home, facing fees per 6-month period that housing is left vacant.
 - Biddeford is taking up this idea to get vacant houses filled.
 - This can help reduce new construction pressures in rural areas by creating housing availability within the city limits in our priority zones.

- 5.c SVLT Walk & Talk Event
 - No date scheduled yet, TBD after snow melts.
 - BCC can co-sponsor and promote.
 - Potentially focus on invasive-plants near a Little River property or elsewhere (Eastern Trail, Clifford Park).
 - Buckthorn, Bittersweet, Knotweed
 - Need to educate on how to tackle invasives without impacting the rest of the native plants.

6.

Adjourn

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, March 17, 2025

Motion to Adjourn: P. Robbins, Second: E. Heumiller, Vote: Unanimous