

These minutes were approved at the March 27, 2023 meeting.

DURHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Monday, February 27, 2023 - 7:00 pm
DURHAM TOWN HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jake Kritzer (Chair), James Bubar (Planning Board Rep), Erin Hardie Hale, Nicholas Lanzer (alternate), Roanne Robbins, Neil Slepian, Dwight Trueblood (alternate) and Carden Welsh (Town Council Rep)

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Nachilly (Vice Chair)

ALSO PRESENT: Town Planner Michael Behrendt; Land Stewardship Coordinator Sara Callaghan; Town Council member Sally Needell; Planning Board chair Paul Rasmussen; Planning Board member Emily Friedrichs

I. Call to Order

Jake called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

II. Land Acknowledgment Statement

III. Roll Call

IV. Approval of Agenda

James moved and Carden seconded approving the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Public Comments

There were none.

VI. **14 Riverview Road – Stairway to Dock.**

Jay Aube, wetland scientist with TF Moran explained the project. Keith Carney, property owner helped answer questions. Neil asked if there had ever been steps there before. Mr. Carney said no. Mr. Carney said it is unsafe now. Carden said adding the steps might reduce erosion. Dwight asked if the posts will be made of wood. Mr. Carney said yes. There will be footings for each post.

Roanne asked if they considered a plan for infiltration. Mr. Aube said it is pretty rocky there and there is no opportunity for infiltration. James asked if the dock is existing. Mr. Carney said yes. The dock is not changing. James asked if there is erosion control. Mr. Aube said they will have silt socks.

Jake went through the four conditional use criteria. Erin moved to approve and Dwight seconded. Dwight was seated to vote in place of John Nachilly.

Emily Friedrichs suggested that the commission also review the eight general criteria. Jake said they have never reviewed them in the past. He did not want to start now in the middle of an application but the commission might consider that in the future. Mr. Aube said they will also need approval from NHDES who will look at the application carefully. The motion carried 7-0.

- VII. **Land Stewardship Update.** Sara Callaghan, Land Stewardship Coordinator. Sara said she has been working with some UNH professors about a project at Wagon Hill Farm. She attended a meeting of the Doe Farm trustees. They have been spraying there for years to get the buckthorn under control. They will need to keep spraying and more money may be needed. Nick asked about coordinating with abutters since they may also have buckthorn. Sara said they have a good relationship with Ray Laroche who could possibly partner with them. Carden asked if it is possible to control the buckthorn. We may not have a choice but to use pesticides. He asked if there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Sara said we have to keep attacking the buckthorn if we are going to have a healthy forest.

- VIII. **Pike Property Management Plan.** Sara said the Land Stewardship Committee reviewed the plan and recommended approval. The field would be maintained with regular mowing and invasives would be dealt with. Those are the main goals.

Carden asked about a conflict between the easement and the management plan in the purpose statement and the regulations regarding forestry management and selling the timber. There was much discussion. Sara said the purpose statement is often boilerplate language. She will talk with Duane Hyde of SELT about this. She said the management plan can change over time. Carden moved to approve the management plan. Neil seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

- IX. **WCOD and SPOD.** Sally Needell, Paul Rasmussen, and Emily Friedrichs serve on the Wetlands and Shorelands Committee along with Neil and Dwight. They joined the commission to talk about proposed changes to the four conditional use criteria and other minor changes to the opening paragraphs for permitted and conditional uses (not including the list of uses) for the WCOD and the SPOD (wetland and shoreland overlay districts).

There was much discussion. Possible changes to Section 175-61 include removing “on the parcel” under criterion B.1., looking more at the language in B.4., and adding “lowlands” to C. The review was continued to the March meeting.

- X. Review of Minutes: January 30, 2023
This was not discussed.

XI. Other Business:

- Discussion about potential new chair

The commission did not get to this item.

XII. Roundtable. Updates from Conservation Commission members.

The commission did not get to this item.

XIII. Adjournment (*by 9:30 unless extended by the commission*)

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Behrendt, Durham Town Planner