

## **Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of Meeting of February 5, 2018**

**Present:** Catherine Fisher, Antoinette Hartgerink, Bill Humm (Chair), David Shay, Anne Tappan

**Ex Officio:** Scott Bugbee, Select Board Representative

**Visitors:** Lee Carbonneau, Normandeau Associates; Matthew Cardin, Eversource Energy; Marc Jacobs, Consulting Environmental Scientist

**Approval of Previous Minutes:** Minutes of meeting held on January 8, 2018, approved as written.

### **Updates and Announcements:**

**Deliberative Session (Warrant Articles 19 and 20):** Both Warrant Articles had minimal discussion and both were moved to the warrant with a strong positive vote.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Dick Weyrick Memorial:**

**Permission of BOS for Chestnut Plantings Behind Public Safety Complex:** B. Humm is planning to meet with the BOS to explain what the LCC and Weyrick family would like to do regarding planting 3-4 chestnut seedlings to add to the grove behind the PSC planted some years ago by Dick using seedlings obtained from Kevin Shenefiel, who had grown them from seeds collected from fruiting chestnut trees in the Town Forest. With the exception of one tree that was planted over ledge, these trees have done well, with one producing many chestnuts last fall.

**Permission of BOS for White Pine at Little River Park:** On display at Dick's memorial service, the Weyrick family had a small white pine, a species that was one of his favorites. The family would like to plant this tree as part of Dick's memorial, and while the original plan was to plant this pine at LRP, a less complicated alternative would be to plant it near the chestnuts behind the PSC; Don Quigley has advised that this shouldn't be a problem.

**Join The American Chestnut Foundation:** In order to provide some genetic variation in the PSC chestnut grove, B. Humm spoke with a member of the Foundation to inquire about obtaining a tree. He was referred to an individual from Plymouth, NH, who has a number of saplings grown from local seed. In consideration of the assistance the Foundation has provided, B. Humm suggested having the LCC become a member. The \$40.00 membership fee would cover the cost of the tree provided by the Foundation.

**Logistics for Earth Day (4/22) celebration:** To determine whether all five trees (4 chestnuts and one pine) will fit in the space at the PSC, B. Humm and C. Fisher will visit the site on Feb. 6. If there isn't enough space for four chestnuts, then three will be planted.

**Joe Ford Wildlife Reserve:** A. Tappan reported that the town attorney has informed B. Humm that the Town is the legal grantor of the easement, with Southeast Land Trust being the grantee and Audubon secondary grantee. Though this issue is now settled, she described unintended conflicts in the easement and also discussed her continued work on various aspects of the project:

1) "Existing Field" - When the easement was written, the field was significantly smaller than it's original 14 acres. The easement does not permit tree cutting in the "existing field", but in order to manage and maintain the field (or bring it back to its earlier, larger area), tree cutting must take place. Using the format used by Charles Moreno in the

Town Forest Management Plan, A. Tappan, with approval from SELT, will write a management plan for the field and have it reviewed by all of the property's stake-holders.

2) Confirmed with Ted Kendziora, US Fish and Wildlife Service, that agency's interest in doing a project.

3) With other available LCC members, begin delineating areas for management. She anticipates this will require several visits.

B. Humm asked if there was any downside to having the Fish and Wildlife Service develop a management plan; A. Tappan specified time as the most limiting factor. The timeline she envisions is one in which field enlargement occurs during winter, before any cottontails are present. Scheduling the work during winter would also minimize vegetative disturbance and compacting of soil.

S. Bugbee asked what would be done with the woody debris from cutting. A. Tappan explained that most of the encroaching trees are low quality timber, such as poplar and pine; some would be left on site, others chipped.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Eversource Pole Replacement in Wetlands:** Lee Carbonneau, Matt Cardin and Marc Jacobs described Eversource's structure replacement project along an existing utility corridor. After assessing wood poles along this corridor for damages, five were found to be in need of replacement. As three of these structures are located in wet areas, a Wetlands Special Exception Application has been filed. M. Jacobs described a field visit during which wetlands were reflagged and soils assessed. The project will involve imbedding pairs of weathered steel poles, either five feet in front of, or behind, the existing wood structures. Once these replacements are up, the old structures will be taken down. It is anticipated that this project will occur in spring and early summer. As the project will be located within an area designated for NE cottontail habitat, a minimal amount of mowing, to facilitate access to the structures, will take place in early spring. A meeting with the ZBA is scheduled for March 21.

**Mast Way Tree Cutting:** B Humm briefly discussed plans to take down several white pines growing on town-owned land abutting Mast Way School. An addition is planned along the northeast side of the school which may require a temporary access road through the adjacent town-owned property. This will likely necessitate the removal of several pines. Caren Rossi is organizing a site visit and will notify B. Humm when it is scheduled.

**Next Meeting: March 5, 2018**

Submitted By \_\_\_\_\_  
Catherine Fisher