



Londonderry Conservation Commission

Tuesday, Sept 14, 2010

Minutes

Page 1 of 4

1 **Present: Deb Lievens, Gene Harrington, Mike Considine, Ken Henault, Paul Nickerson, Truda Bloom,**  
2 **Ben LaBrecque, and Mike Speltz**

3  
4 D. Lievens called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

5  
6 Tree farm inspections- Town Forester Charlie Moreno reported that Londonderry tree farm inspections  
7 are due this year per NH Tree Farm Program requirements. He said reports will be submitted and will  
8 indicate that an update of the town's Forest Management Plan is forthcoming.

9  
10 Forest Management Plan- M. Speltz asked Town Forester C. Moreno for an update on the Forest  
11 Management Plan for the Musquash. He replied that the delay has been a result of the additional  
12 acreage added to the Musquash over the last several years. Now that no further acquisitions are  
13 impending, he hoped to have it completed sometime soon, particularly if the NE Cottontail habitat study  
14 commences (see below).

15  
16 New England Cottontail habitat- Emma Carcagno, Wildlife Program Assistant from the UNH Cooperative  
17 Extension, was joined by Town Forester Charlie Moreno to discuss possible use of Town owned land to  
18 connect to the recently established New England Cottontail Rabbit habitat on the Stonyfield Farm  
19 property (map and lot 14-44-13). The goal is to convert forested areas to the kind of dense shrub land  
20 the rabbits depend on for survival. This species is considered endangered in New Hampshire with as few  
21 as 100 believed to be in the state. Recovery efforts across New England have gained momentum,  
22 prompting E. Carcagno to focus again on the existing Dover and Londonderry populations (see previous  
23 presentation in March 10, 2009 minutes). She noted the discovery last winter of evidence indicating  
24 some of the population established at Stonyfield has migrated east in the area of Aviation Park Drive.

25 E. Carcagno noted that although the Dover population is larger, Londonderry's conservation  
26 efforts have provided greater potential habitat for the NE Cottontail. Biologist Steve Fuller of NH Fish  
27 and Game has calculated that in a landscape where the rabbits are known to exist, the ultimate goal is to  
28 create a total of 500 acres of habitat within a 2,000-acre block in order to promote a stable population.  
29 The individual locations would require a minimum of 10 acres each and the commitment to maintain  
30 those areas would be long term.

31 Whereas the Natural Resources Conservation Service can no longer fund wildlife habitat  
32 management of Town owned land (a new farm bill restricts NRCS to supporting efforts on private  
33 property), grant money from both State wildlife agencies and the National Fish and Wildlife Federation  
34 can be used to manage Town property. The latter would hire C. Moreno since he is familiar with the  
35 land and can manage the plan's logistics with their representatives. E. Carcagno said a 10-15 year  
36 management plan could be investigated that would preclude the use of Town resources because a  
37 separate entity such as Fish & Game would implement and maintain it with grant funds provided prior to  
38 its execution. C. Moreno added that the sale of timber cut from the areas could initially endow the  
39 project as well.

40 D. Lievens met with E. Carcagno and C. Moreno recently in the northeastern part of the  
41 Musquash Conservation Area along with a representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It was  
42 thought that if trees were cut in some spots, the variety of shrubby vegetation there could provide  
43 sufficient conditions for the rabbits. P. Nickerson asked if any NE Cottontails are known to inhabit the  
44 Musquash currently. E. Carcagno replied that surveying efforts to date have not shown their presence in  
45 the Musquash, although those surveys have not been extensive enough to verify that conclusively. With



Londonderry Conservation Commission

Tuesday, Sept 14, 2010

Minutes

Page 2 of 4

46 the coming of the snowfall needed to provide the necessary evidence, those assessments can resume.  
47 P. Nickerson said it would be best to be sure before proceeding.

48 The hope is that if NE Cottontails do not already inhabit the Musquash, they can colonize  
49 themselves there via the power lines between the Musquash and Stonyfield. Because of how the land  
50 under power lines is maintained, such corridors are believed to provide a temporary habitat satisfactory  
51 for dispersal of established colonies to other pockets of early successional growth. The corridors  
52 themselves, however, are not preferable for long-term habitat because of a greater threat of predators  
53 in those locations. Other species in decline can also benefit from the NE Cottontail's habitat (e.g.  
54 Blandings turtles, Hog Nosed snakes, etc.), although development of those surroundings will be done in  
55 a way to minimize impact on this wildlife.

56 K. Henault stated that Town owned land on map and lot 5-12 (a/k/a the George property)  
57 supports rabbits, although he is not sure of the exact species. The conserved land to the east of that on  
58 map and lot 5-17 (a/k/a the Lorden piece), could be another possibility since it was cleared not long  
59 before the Town purchased it in 2001. E. Carcagno noted both for future reference. M. Considine  
60 identified trails recently added to the Musquash that C. Moreno did not have on the map he supplied at  
61 the meeting, along with potential trails under consideration. At the same time, he identified two spots,  
62 one on map and lot 11-48-1 and the other just west of Red Fern Circle (near the area of the  
63 aforementioned site walk), where he thought suitable habitat could be found.

64 M. Considine asked whether walking/biking trails could be placed in the maintained habitat. E.  
65 Carcagno replied that although it would be ideal to keep them secluded, it is better to have some habitat  
66 than none at all. Funding for "demonstration areas" could be utilized to protect the core of the habitat  
67 area while still allowing public access and promoting additional education. M. Speltz asked whether the  
68 NE Cottontail's prime competitor, the more established Eastern Cottontail, would simply overtake  
69 habitats once they are created. E. Carcagno said that the very existence of the NE Cottontail suggests  
70 that the Eastern Cottontail is not as prevalent in those areas but added that Eastern Cottontails are not  
71 as dependant on the cover of dense shrubs and can sustain their population in areas opened by  
72 development. When asked if the two species have interbred, E. Carcagno said genetic testing has shown  
73 they have not.

74 The consensus of the LCC was they could support the concept presented "with the caveat that it  
75 cannot detract from scenic value of the Musquash as a public asset." E. Carcagno and C. Moreno will  
76 return in approximately two months with more specifics based on this meeting and further feedback  
77 from Fish & Game. Assuming the LCC supports those details, a public meeting can be advertised to  
78 receive input from residents. A formal presentation can then be made to the Town Council.

79 **P. Nickerson made a motion that the LCC supports proceeding with the exploration of options**  
80 **for creating New England Cottontail habitat on Town owned land. K. Henault seconded. The motion**  
81 **was approved, 7-0-0.**

82  
83 Town Forest- Monadnock Forest Products has performed the tree cutting at the Town Common along  
84 with a selective cut in the Town Forest and need only to finish processing the wood. The majority of  
85 trees cut were pine, which C. Moreno said would help to demonstrate the scenic hardwoods. He did not  
86 receive any reply from the Heritage Commission for input regarding the specifics for the picnic area but  
87 used the direction provided by the LCC to instruct MFP. M. Oswald reported at the August 24 meeting  
88 that the Public Works Department should be able to remove and grind the leftover stumps. D. Lievens  
89 will follow up with DPW to determine whether they can also loam and seed the picnic area.



Londonderry Conservation Commission

Tuesday, Sept 14, 2010

Minutes

Page 3 of 4

90 Funds from the sale of the timber and wood chips will be used to remove the significant amount  
91 of invasive Oriental Bittersweet within the Town Forest. The State licensed pesticide professional has  
92 advised that an aggressive spraying approach will be needed to sufficiently eradicate the overwhelming  
93 species, although the herbicide will cause some "collateral damage." The consensus was to support the  
94 approach since the bittersweet has already suppressed so much of the forest understory and its  
95 eventual regeneration is dependent on successful elimination. C. Moreno agreed with the expert,  
96 adding that the actions will preempt the bittersweet from gaining hold in other parts of the forest. D.  
97 Lievens will inform the pesticide professional that he can begin the work immediately.

98  
99 Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund- When the surveyors hired to develop the wetland restoration plan on  
100 map and lot 6-113 began their research, they uncovered a question of ownership regarding the eastern  
101 half of the lot which was once a separate property (see August 24 minutes).

102 Town Counsel has since forwarded to the attorney of the past owner the materials necessary to  
103 resolve the situation. If D. Lievens has not heard from him in another week, she will follow up again.

104  
105 Membership- D. Lievens informed K. Henault, P. Nickerson, T. Bloom, and B. LaBrecque that their terms  
106 as Commissioners will end as of December 31 and that if they are interested in remaining on the LCC,  
107 they should contact the Town Manager's secretary. Alternate G. Herrmann's term will also expire on  
108 December 31. T. Bloom stated she talked with him recently and learned he is interested in keeping his  
109 alternate position.

110  
111 Open Space Task Force- **G. Harrington made a motion to nominate M. Speltz as the representative of**  
112 **the LCC on the Open Space Task Force Committee. B. LaBrecque seconded. The motion was**  
113 **approved, 7-0-0.**

114  
115 Woodmont design charette- D. Lievens, G. Harrington, and M. Speltz attended this week-long charette  
116 regarding the future development of Woodmont Orchards on Pillsbury Road. M. Speltz said a  
117 PowerPoint presentation will be made available soon and he suggested the LCC request it be posted on  
118 the Town website if it is not done so automatically. D. Lievens reported the potential conversion of the  
119 Duck Swamp wetland into a large pond. At the least, this is something that would have to meet with  
120 approval from Department of Environmental Services. M. Speltz noted that if the pond is created or the  
121 wetland is compromised in some other way by development, some mitigation could be required to  
122 preserve another part of that land or other land in town.

123  
124 Potential easement acquisition- D. Lievens spoke with the appraiser previously associated with a  
125 property discussed in the August 24 non-public session. The appraiser performed an evaluation of the  
126 property when it was sold in 2009 and the new owners approached the LCC about the possibility of  
127 purchasing a conservation easement on part of it. D. Lievens forwarded the appraiser a copy of the  
128 subdivision plan the owners had approved after the purchase. She will update the LCC again at a future  
129 meeting.

130  
131 Beaver Brook & NH RMPP- M. Speltz forwarded information to LCC members prior to the meeting about  
132 providing more protection for Beaver Brook by having it nominated for state designation under the New  
133 Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program. He asked for a volunteer to head the effort  
134 since he will be focusing on the update to the Open Space Place mandated by the Town Council.



Londonderry Conservation Commission

Tuesday, Sept 14, 2010

Minutes

Page 4 of 4

135

136 1 Commons Drive D+F (conceptual)- Joe Maynard of Benchmark Engineering presented a conceptual  
137 plan at the June 22 meeting regarding a new 7,750 square foot commercial building on map and lot 10-  
138 1C (see June 22 minutes). Commissioners reviewed the recently submitted Standard Dredge and Fill  
139 application showing an impact of 9,300 square feet of wetland. The consensus was that the Chair write  
140 a letter to the Wetlands Bureau that the LCC had no comments or objections.

141

142 Monitoring- D. Lievens contacted the Rockingham County Conservation District regarding several  
143 easement monitoring issues. She has not received any answers to date, but will follow up again to:  
144 1) Learn when RCCD will monitor the Ingersoll easement; 2) Investigate whether RCCD will take  
145 ownership of the first phase of Sunnycrest easements since they own the second and third and; 3)  
146 Obtain a cost estimate to hire RCCD to monitor a potential easement on a property discussed in the  
147 August 24 non-public session that abuts an easement already monitored by RCCD.

148

149 The LCC then discussed annual monitoring efforts of various conservation easements, some of  
150 which are done annually and others that are due to be performed. The discussion resulted in M. Speltz  
151 offering to assist staff in reorganizing the suspense file provided by D. Lievens and creating field files for  
152 each easement. It was also decided to hire Chris Kane to perform baseline studies for those properties  
153 not previously done.

153

154 August 24, 2010 minutes - The following corrections were suggested for the minutes of the August 24,  
155 2010 public session:

156

1. Line 127; Delete "the UNH Coop Ext will be funding the project in the hopes of sustaining," (D.  
157 Lievens)

158

2. Line 192; Replace "to" with "by" (M. Speltz)

159

3. Lines 194-195; Replace "J. Weigler" with "the subsequent owner," (M. Speltz)

160

4. Lines 196-197; Replace "J. Weigler" with "the succeeding owner," (M. Speltz)

161

5. Line 199; Replace "J. Weigler" with "the subsequent owner," (M. Speltz)

162

6. Lines 199-200; Delete "for finding the party," (M. Speltz).

163

164 **G. Harrington made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2010 public session as**  
165 **corrected. K. Henault seconded. The motion was approved, 6-0-1 with B. LaBrecque abstaining as he**  
166 **had not attended the meeting.**

167

168 **P. Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2010 non-public session**  
169 **as written. T. Bloom seconded. The motion was approved, 5-0-2 with K. Henault abstaining as he was**  
170 **not present for that portion of the meeting and B. LaBrecque abstaining as he had not attended the**  
171 **meeting.**

172

173 The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:10 PM.

174

175 Respectfully submitted,

176

177

178

Jaye Trottier

Secretary