



**Lyme Conservation Commission
Minutes
Monday, July 1, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Blake Allison (Chair/Secretary *pro tem*), Rebecca Hanissian (Alternate), Ben Kilham (Select Board Rep), David Lysy (Alternate), Meg Sheehan, Ian Smith and Matt Stevens

Chair Allison called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He named Rebecca and David as full voting members for the meeting.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2019-06-03

- On a motion by Meg, seconded by Rebecca, the June meeting minutes were approved as submitted with Ian abstaining because he was not at the June meeting.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Holt's Ledge Rare Plant Communities Follow Up** – Blake noted that Tim Burdick's recent resignation as Dartmouth's Director of the Outdoor Programs Office means that the Commission is back to square one regarding establishing a line of communications for coordinating protection Holt's Ledge's rare plant communities. It was agreed that efforts to begin a conversation with Dartmouth about plant protection should be continued.

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Lyme Biodiversity Group Committee Update** – Meg presented a report regarding the group's recent activities. Included were several work days with volunteer groups. She said the group had been offered office space and tool storage at the Northern Woodlands building (16 on the Common). Members of the Commission thanked Meg for her initiative in forming the group and getting it into action.
- **Big Rock Route 10 Trailhead Damage** – Blake announced he had taped off the Route 10 entrance to Big Rock and said he would put up signage directing users to the trail's Market Street entrance. What to do next was a matter of some concern. It was agreed that simply restoring the trail without addressing the water flow issue only would make it vulnerable to another failure the next time a heavy rain occurred. Solutions discussed included diverting the water flow away from the trailhead and/or restoring the curb cut that was removed to facilitate parking. It was agreed that a site visit should be scheduled.
- **Seating in Town-owned Properties** – Blake reported that Karen Keane had approached him regarding placing some kind of seating in town-owned properties such as the Town Forest. The ensuing discussion raised concerns about how the seating would be funded, what it might look like, where it would be placed and who would be responsible for maintaining it. There was general agreement that more specifics were needed. Blake said he would ask Karen to attend a meeting to make a more detailed presentation.



4. Project and Application Review

- **River Road Special Exception Sought for Drilling Well within Setback** – Blake presented for consideration a special exception request submitted by Don Graham and Carol Barr who want to drill a well at their “camp” at 301 River Road (Map 401/Lot16). The proposed excavation and installation would take place within a variety of setbacks associated with the property including road, shoreline and lot lines. After some discussion, the Commission unanimously agreed that it had no objection to the project going forward as presented.

5. Outreach and Education

- **Lower Grant Brook Trail Work** – Blake reported that the Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) High School Trails Corps is scheduled to begin its previously approved work (CC 2019-02-04 Minutes) on Wednesday, July 10. A second date is scheduled for Wednesday, July 17. He said that the UVTA had submitted an invoice for \$1300 to fund the effort. On a motion by Meg, seconded by Matt, the Commission unanimously approved the withdrawal of \$1300 from the Conservation Fund to pay for the work.
- **Re-siting Trout Brook Footbridge** – Blake said that Lee Larson had contacted him with an update on Brett Ryan’s schedule for re-siting the footbridge. He said Brett’s excavator would soon be available and that Brett was awaiting word from the person transporting the machine about when it would be moved. Blake said he would try to provide people with advance notice so they could participate should they want to do so.
- **Chaffee Sanctuary Old Bog Bridges Debris** – Blake noted that there remained a large pile of wooden debris from last year’s bog bridge replacement at The Chaffee. It was proposed that if the pile is not in the way and out of view that it could be left in place to rot or be burned when conditions allow rather than be transported to the transfer station’s compactor.

6. Other Business

- **Chaffee Pollinator Garden Update** – There was discussion about how best to proceed. One option raised was getting a “master gardener” involved as a consultant or perhaps project leader. Blake said there likely is someone in town who has earned a “master gardener” certificate and that he would contact Anne Bair of the Lyme Gardeners to find out who that person, or persons, might be.
- **White Pine Needle Damage** – Matt said he had a recent, chance encounter with Thetford-based forester Jeff Smith who raised the subject of white pine health in the Town Forest. Jeff had in 2012 developed a management plan for the Town Forest. White pine needle damage is of increasing concern throughout northern New England brought on by a virus that thrives during the region’s increasingly warm and damp springtime, according to various sources. Blake said he would contact Jeff about arranging an inspection visit to the Town Forest.
- **Culvert Project** – Ben noted that there is a “perched” culvert near the Skiway that if improved could open up currently blocked upstream habitat to native fish species. It was agreed an investigation should be instigated to assess what might be done to improve the situation.



7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item** – Blake said he would supply an article.

8. Adjournment

On a motion by Matt, seconded by Meg, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "V. Blake Allison, Secretary". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*

The next regular meeting of the Lyme Conservation Commission will be held on Monday, August 5, 2019 beginning 7:00 p.m. in the Lyme Center Academy building.