



**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 6, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
Lyme Center Academy Building**

Present: Blake Allison (Chair/Secretary *pro tem*), Tom Colgan, James Munroe (Alternate), Meg Sheehan, Ian Smith and Matt Stevens

Member Elect: David Lysy

Chair Allison called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2019-04-01

On a motion by Matt, seconded by Ian, the April meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Holt's Ledge Rare Plant Communities** – Blake led off on a discussion regarding the status and care of the Holt's Ledge rare plant communities that were surveyed in 2017. He noted that some of the plants are on land now identified as Dartmouth-owned. Matt said Dartmouth did receive a copy of the report compiled by Canaan, consulting botanist Alice Schori but what happened thereafter is not known. It was agreed that an appropriate Dartmouth contact should be sought out. Once that has been achieved, Blake will write a letter offering the Commission's assistance

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Lyme Biodiversity Group Committee Update** – Meg reported that the group had a good outing at Big Rock on "Green Up Day" with ten volunteers on hand to help out clearing Japanese knotweed. She also said two high school students had been hired to work during the summer. Meg said a working calendar has been drafted to plan summer activities.
- **Trails Inventory to Plan Coming Season's Work** – Blake noted that "Trails Day" is coming up on Saturday, June 1. He said trails on the town's conserved properties should be monitored to see what work might be needed. Blake said he had walked The Chaffee and Big Rock and observed no problems with those trails. Matt reported that the Lower Grant Brook Trail is OK. James volunteered to inspect the Trout Pond Forest Trail.
- **Snowmobile Trail in Trout Pond Forest?** – Blake reported that Wayne Pike of the Pinnacle Snowmobile Club had contacted him to explore whether a former snowmobile trail that cut through a piece of the Trout Pond Forest could be revived. Wayne told Blake that the route would follow an existing woodland road. Blake said Wayne had promised him a map detailing the proposed route. Blake said he had spoken with the Upper Valley Land Trust's (UVLT) Jason Berard and learned that the easement held by the UVLT does not prohibit snowmobiles in the forest. It was agreed the map needs to be seen and reviewed and that a public hearing probably will be necessary regarding any proposed snowmobile route plan.



- **Management Plans Update** – Blake said that in the course of speaking with UVLT's Berard, it was learned that the Town's Trout Pond Forest Management Plan poses an impediment to the snowmobile proposal, because it excludes motorized vehicles from the forest. Jason said changing the plan is the Conservation Commission's prerogative and that could be done within the context of updating the forest's management plan which is supposed to happen every five years but has not been done since the last plan was issued in 2012. Tom opined that because there are no proposed logging projects for either the Trout Pond or Town Forest, the Commission could review the plans without retaining a forester. It was agreed to do that.

4. Project and Application Review

- **E. Thetford Road Bridge Rehabilitation Project** – Blake presented a review of the State of NH's plan to renovate the E. Thetford Rd. (Lyme) Bridge. The State DOT's wetlands permit application indicates that the project will take two years. During that time the central support pier will be replaced as will be all the decking and sills. This will necessitate closure of the bridge for much of the project's duration. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Commission did not need to review the project.

5. Outreach and Education

- **iNaturalist Presentation Follow Up** – Blake reported that the *iNaturalist* presentation given in cooperation with the Converse Free Library was well attended and enthusiastically received. The talk and demonstration were given by the Vermont Center for Ecostudies "Citizen Science Outreach Naturalist" Nathaniel Sharp, and it took place in two episodes. The first was Tuesday, April 23 at the library where Jason demonstrated how to use the *iNaturalist* app. That was followed up by a field session at Lyme Hill Conservation Area on Sunday, May 5.
- **"Green Up Day" Report** – Blake said turnout was good for the day's activity with over 60 people participating. An informal survey he conducted confirmed that the Town's main roadways appeared to have been well patrolled by the volunteers. He said a report detailing the results would be forthcoming.
- **"Trails Day" Organization** – Once the trails have been assessed, a work schedule for "Trails Day" will be drawn up.

6. Other Business

- **Crossroads Academy Conservation Easement Issue** – Blake reported that in the course of a review to approve a lot line adjustment at Crossroads Academy, it was discovered that the Academy's recently constructed "outdoor classroom" sits on land protected by a conservation easement that expressly prohibits structures of any kind within its boundaries. He said the matter is in the Select Board's hands and is being reviewed by counsel for both sides. Blake said the Conservation Commission would not be involved in any resolution.
- **Trout Brook Bank Stabilization in Chaffee** – There was discussion about the need for a bank stabilization effort along Trout Brook where it crosses under NH Route 10 and enters The Chaffee. Matt said a previous, bank stabilization effort along Lower Grant Brook had involved implanting cuttings from nearby shrubs into the stream bank. He said that was effective.



- **Repair Fence at Ballfield Pullout** – Matt said he would lead efforts to reset the posts and replace the broken rails as needed.
- **Pollinator Garden in the Chaffee** – There was general agreement that the pollinator garden planted two years ago needs to be reseeded. Matt and Tom agreed to do the prep work. David Lysy said he has a source for seeds.

7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item** – Blake indicated he will submit notes promoting the “Trails Day” event, and Meg said she will provide an account of the Lyme Biodiversity Working Group’s recent activity and plans for the future.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The meeting minutes were kept by Tom Colgan with some editorial assistance from Secretary *pro tem* Blake Allison.

A handwritten signature in black ink. The text 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, June 3, 2019 beginning at 7 p.m. in the Lyme Center Academy Building.