

**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2014**



PRESENT: Members – Blake Allison, Russ Hirschler, Matt Stevens, Tom Colgan, Joanna Jaspersohn, Heather Toulmin and Lee Larson (alternate)

PUBLIC: O. Ross McIntyre

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 11/04/2013

- On a motion by **Russ**, seconded by **Joanna**, the 11/04/2013 minutes were approved unanimously. Because the Commission did not meet in either December 2013 or January 2014, there were no minutes to review.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) Warrant Article – Ross McIntyre** appeared before the Commission to express his opposition to the Warrant Article that if approved would rescind the 1993 vote of Town Meeting establishing Conservation Fund to receive money collected by the LUCT. The article would create a new fund, separate from the town's general fund. To receive revenue from the LUCT. Ross indicated he was in contact with several other likeminded residents. During the ensuing discussion the pros and cons of the article were debated. **Tom** suggested that in addition to land conservation perhaps Conservation Fund money could be used for projects such as helping to fund culvert and bridge repair. Those improvements could generate tangible and positive environmental benefits. There was agreement Tom's suggestion was creative and worth pursuing. Further discussion was deferred to the March 3 meeting.

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Upper Valley Land Trust (UFLT) Lyme Trails Event Proposal – Blake** said he had received an e-mail from UFLT Stewardship Coordinator Jason Berard that raised the possibility of the UFLT and the VT's Green Mountain Club working with the Lyme Conservation Commission on a walk that would transverse the town via the Clay Brook and Town Forrest trails. It would take place in late June. He said Jason was looking for an expression of interest and that planning would proceed from there. There was unanimous sentiment the project should be pursued further.
- **Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) Trail Maintenance Program – Russ** said that UVTA would have a high school "trail corps" available to work in the Lyme area during July. Each crew would have 8-10 members and could work on any number of trail projects the Commission might deem worthwhile. Several ideas were floated, and it was agreed the matter warranted further discussion.
- **New Chaffee Trails and Viewing Blind -- Blake and Matt** put forward ideas for enhancing wildlife viewing opportunities in the Chaffee. This could include creating a trail that would depart from the parking area and follow Trout Brook's course and also a spur going north along Clay Brook. They also proposed putting in a viewing blind at Little Post Pond's eastern end. It also was asked whether a bridge linking Chase Beach and the Chaffee might be feasible. It was agreed to study the proposals further.

Trails and Land Management, cont.

- **Culvert and Bridge Assessment on Town and State Properties** – **Matt** noted the town is undertaking a review of roadway stream and wetland crossing structures to prioritize them for repair. He proposed the Commission offer input on issues pertaining to erosion, invasive species, fish passages, etc., that might be affected by repair or replacement. **Lee** noted Selectboard member Sue McKenzie was heading the town's assessment. **Matt** said he would contact her to discuss his concerns further.

4. Project and Application Review

- **Zoning Ordinance Article 8 Follow Up** – **Blake** said he had written Planning Board Chair John Stadler to express the Commission's view regarding any alteration of Article 8, Section 24. He said the contents followed Commission views put forth in the November 4 2013 Meeting Minutes. **Blake** said there had been no response to date from the Planning Board.

5. Outreach and Education

- **Lyme School Playground Renovation** – **Heather** said the school renovation proposal included plans to replace the existing program. The hope was to enhance the neighboring wetland with wildlife friendly plantings and bird feeding and nesting stations to provide educational opportunities for the students. She said a grant proposal to help fund the project had been put in with NH Fish & Game and local matching funds were available. It was agreed that the Commission contribute funding and counsel as needed.
- **Town "Trail-a-thon" Day** – **Matt** asked that the matter be tabled in consideration of shortening the meeting's length.

6. Other Business

- **Eurasian Milfoil Committee** – **Blake** reported that it appeared the current committee had not been meeting and that the Selectboard likely would undertake a reorganization of it. There was discussion regarding whether the Commission should resume oversight of the milfoil issue. It was noted, however, that the intent of forming the committee in the first place was to get broader participation among Post Pond steak holders. It was suggested a meeting at Loch Lyme should be held to bring in interested parties in an effort to jumpstart the process.
- **UVLT Annual Conservation Commission Meeting** – The meeting was to take place Tuesday, the 4th at 6:00 pm. **Matt**, **Lee** and **Joanna** had volunteered to attend.
- **UVTA Membership Renewal** – **Blake** noted **Russ** had reminded him the Commission's membership had elapsed. **Blake** said he would take care of the renewal.
- **Firewood Assistance Using Town Land Resources** – **Matt** asked whether wood from town-owned properties might be used to supplement the supplies of people in need of assistance. **Tom** noted that decision would have to come from the Selectboard as taking wood owned in common by all town residents and distributing it to a limited number of people likely was beyond the Commission's purview. **Russ** noted that other towns had "wood banks" and that perhaps one could be established in Lyme. There was unanimous agreement the proposal had merit and should be pursued.

AS APPROVED 2014-05-05

Other Business, cont.

- **Annual Snow Shoe Walk** – The event is to take place Sunday, February 23 at 1 pm conditions permitting. Participants should gather at the Park 'n Ride lot to car pool to the site.

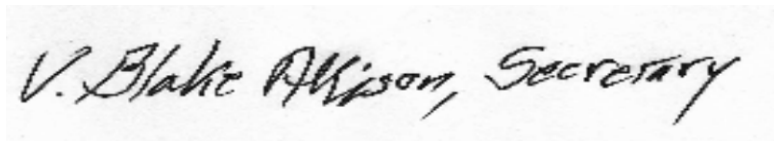
7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News – Blake** said he would take care of the next submission.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

The next scheduled Conservation Commission meeting is on Monday, March 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lyme Center Academy building.

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 *emeritus*