

**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2015**



Members Present:

Blake Allison (Chair), Russell Hirschler (Vice Chair), Joanna Jaspersohn, Lee Larson, James Munroe, Jay Smith (Select Board Rep.) and Matt Stevens

Public Present:

Ben Hudson, Paul Guyre, Jason Berard, Ian Smith and Jiyeon Yoon

Blake called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed Jay Smith to the Commission. Jay replaces Sue McKenzie as Select Board Rep. Sue stepped down due to commitments on other town matters including serving as Select Board Chair for the coming year. Blake also introduced Ian Smith who is a prospective Commission member.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2015-03-02

- The Minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Lyme Town Forest Conservation Easement Proposal – Lee** noted that the properties managed by the Conservation Commission are protected by conservation easements with the exception of the Town Forest. He pointed out that the Town Forest was created by a vote of Town Meeting, adding that there was no prohibition against the voters deciding to undo that action. As such, it could make the forest susceptible to non-conservation related purposes.

Lee provided information showing that many NH municipalities with a Town Forest have it protected by an easement. He said that in talking to Upper Valley Land Trust President Jeanie McIntyre it was determined that the cost of setting up an easement and an attendant stewardship program would be minimal, perhaps about \$5000. All of this, Lee said, could be funded out of the Conservation Fund, It would not cost tax payers anything and would not raise the tax rate.

There was agreement, Lee's proposal had merit and that it should be pursued further.

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Invasive Species Management Plan – Blake** observed that warmer weather should arrive some day and that the Commission should start laying out plans to deal with terrestrial invasives on town properties. He suggested that the focus be on one area and proposed that it should be the "Big Rock Preserve." Matt and James indicated a willingness to help put together an action plan.
- **Post Pond Eurasian Milfoil Program Update – Jay** said that six people had volunteered to help with milfoil pulling and that Amy P. Smagula, NH Dept. of Environmental Services Limnologist/Exotic Species Program Coordinator, has agreed to lead a training seminar in the near future.

4. Project and Application Review

- **Upper Valley Land Trust Lyme Hill Trail Work – Jason Berard**, Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) Stewardship Director appeared before the Commission to present plans for a proposed trail at the Lyme Hill Conservation Area. It would connect the area's parking lot with the northern end of preserve's wetland, a distance of about 800 feet, and would be in compliance with U.S. Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines. He said those standards require the trail be three feet wide and have a "durable" surface. He said constructing the trail would require disturbing the wetland buffer thereby requiring a special exemption from Lyme's ZBA. Some questions were raised the trail's route and how much leveling would have to be done. In the end it was agreed the project was a worthy one and was consistent with the Commission's position that town properties should afford Lyme's citizenry as much access as possible. It was concluded the exemption be granted.
- **Ben Hudson – Re Grant Brook Stabilization at Guyre Property** – Ben and property owner Paul Guyre came in to present plans for a bank stabilization and restoration project along about 50 feet of Grant Brook that passes through the Guyre land. The area was subject to a bank collapse last year. Ben said he plans to use a new technique called a "root wad" for the remediation. Root wad uses trees embedded in the embankment with their roots protruding outward to capture debris and sediment. That allows the embankment to fill in over time. He said willow saplings also would be planted to help with the stabilization. Ben said they would like an expedited permit from the NH Dept. of Environmental Services (DES). That requires the Conservation Commission to forgo an extended review process. After discussion it was agreed the waiver would be granted.

5. Outreach and Education

- **Rivendell Trails Association Annual Meeting Recap – James** attended the meeting and reported that the discussion focused on mutual cooperation and information sharing between the area's conservation commissions.

6. Other Business

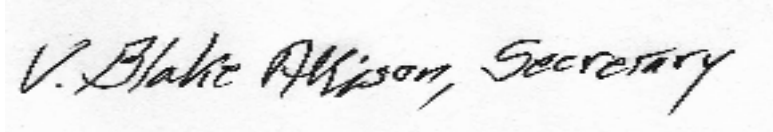
- **Various Updates – Russ** said the Lyme Foundation was reviewing a grant proposal that would provide funding for the proposed Chaffee Sanctuary wildlife viewing blind. He also noted the Upper Valley Trails Alliance "Trails Finder" web site was completely rebuilt with better ease of use and other enhancements resulting.
- **Volunteer Lake Assessment Program 2014 Report – Lee** said the reports on Reservoir Pond and Post Pond indicated both water bodies were in good shape. He noted a full account of the report can be accessed at the following site:
<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/vlap/>

7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item re Trails – Blake** said he would write about "Green Up Day," scheduled to take place Saturday, May 2nd and trail care during wet conditions.

8. Adjournment

- 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 style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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- Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*

The next Conservation Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 4 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Lyme Center Academy Building.