



**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
Lyme Center Academy Building**

PRESENT: Blake Allison (Chair and Secretary *pro tem*), Tom Colgan, James Munroe & Jay Smith (Select Board Rep.)

PUBLIC PRESENT: Curtis Cote (property owner 22 Canaan Ledge Lane)

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

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2016-08-01

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **No items submitted**

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Knotweed Removal – Blake** raised concerns about knotweed incursions at the Chaffee's north end and at the bridge area of Hewes Brook. **Tom** recommended a program of herbicide application commencing next spring as the new plants emerged. It was agreed to implement such a program using Tom's proposed time frame.
- **Trout Pond Management Fund Re-assignment – Blake** informed Commissioners present that the money (\$15, 927.08) in the Trout Pond Management Fund had been transferred to the Conservation Commission account in the town's general fund. He said that The Trustees of the Trust Funds had notified the Select Board that the Board had improperly assigned management of the money to the Trustees. Under state statute, the Trustees can only manage funds created by a vote at Annual Town Meeting. The Select Board created the Trout Pond Management Fund in 1997 as a vehicle for managing a gift of \$10,000 made to the Town for upkeep of the Trout Pond Forest. Blake noted that disbursements from the fund are under the Conservation Commission's oversight as is the Trout Pond Management Fund created by Annual Town Meeting in 1998. The Trustees manage the fund.
- **Pinnacle Clearing Project –** For informational purposes, **Blake** noted that a group of private citizens residing in the Pinnacle Hill area has organized to re-open views from the Pinnacle's summit. He said the group had received permission from the summit's property owner Helen Darion to do the proposed clearing. Blake said the group intended to retain a forester to develop a plan and do the cutting. As a first step, he said, Charlie Devaux has been hired to do preliminary brush clearing.
- **Holt's Ledge Intrusion Update – Jay** said the Town is developing a management plan for the its holding at Holt's Ledge in order to deter illegal use of the property such as was discovered in May 2016.



4. Project and Application Review

- **261 River Road Solar Panels Update – Blake** said the property owner had again postponed a hearing before the ZBA and that no action by the Commission was required at this time.
- **22 Canaan Ledge Lane** – Land owner Curtis Cote appeared before the Commission to discuss his application to the ZBA for a special exception (after the fact) application regarding a garden shed that was constructed on his property. The structure falls within the Shoreland Conservation District buffer of a stream that runs through the back of the parcel.

An issue central to considering the application is whether the stream is seasonal or year round. He said that ZBA Administrator David Robbins asked the Commission if it could provide a determination regarding that question.

After deliberation, the Commission declined to make such a finding. First, no one on the Commission has training as a hydrologist that would qualify them to make such a determination. Second, the stream presently is dry due to the season's uneven precipitation pattern. As a result, it is not possible to assess whether the lack of water in the stream is an aberration due to this year's weather or is typical of an annual intermittent flow.

The Commission did note that anecdotal evidence suggests the stream is intermittent. Commission member James Munroe, who also lives on Canaan Ledge Lane, reported that his experience over several years of residency there has shown that the stream often is dry suggesting it is intermittent. It was also noted that the shed is not a permanent structure.

Blake said he would report the Commission's decision to the ZBA.

5. Outreach and Education

- **Lyme School 3rd Grade Return to Big Rock** – **Blake** said that 3rd Grade teacher Trisha Shipton had asked whether her class could again set up an outdoor classroom in the Big Rock Preserve. She said last year's Memorandum of Understanding would govern all activity there. Commission members present unanimously agreed that learning first hand about the natural world should be encouraged. Ms. Shipton's request was approved with no dissent.
- **Lyme School 4th and 6th Grade in Lower Grant Brook** – **Blake** said Lyme School teacher Steve Dayno had contacted him requesting permission to allow his 4th and 6th grade classes to conduct outdoor studies along the Lower Grant Brook Trail. Steve said the same Memorandum of Understanding used by Trisha Shipton's 3rd Grade class would guide their activities. The Commission members present gave his request unanimous approval.



6. Other Business

- **Snelling Family Hewes Brook Car Top Boat Launch Maintenance -- Blake** noted that as in years past, the Snelling family had again during the past summer months maintained the grounds at the boat launch. In keeping with past practice, He asked that the Commission reimburse them for gas and other materials. It was moved and passed unanimously to give them \$100, the same amount as appropriated in previous years.
- **Lyme Day of Service on Oct. 1 – Blake** reported that the Erin Wetherell of Community Care of Lyme had contacted him regarding the upcoming “Lyme Day of Service” offering volunteers for any project(s) the Commission might have. After discussion, it was agreed help with trail projects would be welcomed. Blake said he would contact Erin to arrange the help.

7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item – Blake** said he would write a piece on safety in the woods during hunting season

8. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*

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