



**Lyme Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 2 at 7:00 p.m.  
Lyme Center Academy Building**

**Present:** Blake Allison (Chair), Tom Colgan (Secretary *pro tem*), Rebecca Hanissian (Alternate), David Lysy (Alternate), Meg Sheehan, Ian Smith and James Munroe (Alternate)

**Public:** Philip Harrison, Rusty Keith, Don Metz, Phil Pochoda and Sue MacKenzie

Chair Allison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He named Rebecca, David and James as a full voting member for the meeting.

**1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2020-01-06 & 2020-02-03**

- The January and February minutes were approved as submitted.

**2. Land Protection and Easements**

- **No Items Submitted**

**3. Trails and Land Management**

- **Lyme Foundation Grant Approved** – Blake noted that Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) Exec. Dir. Russell Hirschler reported last week that the Lyme Foundation has approved the UVTA's grant proposal for trail work in Lyme during the 2020 season. As noted in the 2020-12-16 CC Minutes, the work will be done by the UVTA's HS Trails Corps and will involve installing two, wet area crossings in the Town Forest and a new trailhead at the Big Rock's NH Route 10 entrance.
- **Japanese Knotweed Eradication Update** – Meg reported that preparations are underway for the 2020 season. The management team is seeking interns to spearhead the program's field work. The project's focus will again be in the Big Rock Preserve.

**4. Project and Application Review**

- **Crossroads Academy Swale Repair and Driveway Reroute** – Phil Harrison, representing Crossroads Academy, appeared before the Commission to present two matters. The first was to submit the revised plan for the storm swale repair proposal he and Rod Finley presented at the Commission's 2020-01-06 meeting. He said the revision incorporates the Commission's suggestion that the swale be directed so it diverts water away from Hews Brook. He reported that the ZBA said that if the Commission approves, the project would be approved. The revision was approved unanimously, and Blake said he would forward that decision to the ZBA.



## **Project and Application Review, cont.**

The second item of business was a proposal to relocate the Academy's main driveway entrance. Also involved in the proposal is the expansion of some existing onsite parking. Harrison explained that one of the plan's goals is to make the traffic area safer for pedestrian and cyclist traffic. At issue is that part of the work will take place within the wetland conservation district and the steep slope conservation district.

Reviewing the proposal, members of the Commission observed that the area already had been substantially disturbed by activity over the years and that the plan's new construction would have a minimal impact on the two conservation districts. It was also noted that the intention to enhance pedestrian safety was a desirable goal.

The Commission voted unanimously to endorse the plan as presented with two conditions. First that "best practices" be implemented during construction and, second, that native species plantings be used for stabilization and landscaping where needed. The Commission said it was available for a site visit to offer its input on landscaping desired. Harrison said the Academy would be happy for guidance in that regard.

## **5. Outreach and Education**

- **Lyme School "Trout in the Classroom" Update** – Blake said he exchanged e-mails with Lyme School science teacher Skip Pendleton to get a program update. Skip said that the aquarium chiller was purchased in December. He wrote the following. "I obtained 200 trout eggs at about 37% development from the state fish hatchery on January 10. We have been checking on the tank temperature and egg health daily. They are now at about 67% development. Weirdly, three of the eggs have already hatched. This is most unusual. We will be checking with other schools to see if this is occurring in other tanks." Blake said that Skip extended an open invitation to Commission members to come see the tank firsthand.

## **6. Other Business**

**Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles** – Blake raised the question of whether the Conservation Commission should take a public position as a body on several Warrant Articles that in one way or the other intersect with conservation concerns. These are Articles 2, 16, 20, 22 & 23. He noted that historically this is something that has not been done by the Commission, but he suggested it might be appropriate in cases where the Articles fall within the Commission's purview.

**Article 2: NH Route 10 Zoning Modification** – On a motion by Meg, seconded by Ian, the Commission voted five-to-one, with one recusal, to recommend that the measure be rejected. Commission members agreed that there are significant concerns on how the loosening of current zoning ordinances might affect environmentally sensitive areas within the NH Route 10 corridor. This would include streams, wetlands and agricultural soils. It was argued that the revisions do not offer a clear statement regarding protections for those features. It was noted that the Commission supports residential and commercial development that generates more income for Lyme but maintains it must clearly address attendant environmental concerns.



## Other Business, cont.

**Article 16: Discontinuing By-passed River Road Section --** On a motion by David, seconded by Tom, the Commission voted unanimously not to recommend this measure's passage. Commission members supported keeping the old roadway, because it provides a rare opportunity to create a space where walkers, joggers and cyclists could move alongside of and enjoy the river without the threat of traffic. Blake suggested that a park with a path could be created at not great expense, and the Conservation Commission could maintain it as it does for other Town-owned properties. Further, he said, the path could be made accessible for mobility-challenged people. Presently, among Lyme's nearly 900 acres of parkland, there is no such access.

**Article 20: Post Pond 2020 Eurasian Milfoil Treatment Appropriation –** On a motion by Meg, seconded by Rebecca, the Conservation Commission voted seven-to-none to withdraw \$12,210 from the Conservation Fund to help pay for Post Pond's 2020 anti-Eurasian milfoil treatment.

**Article 22: Town Renewable Energy Goals –** The Commission took no position on this Article.

**Article 23: Connecticut River Erosion Resolution --** The Conservation Commission: voted seven-to-none to support this Article's passage. In stating opposition, it was noted that the impact of raising and lowering the river's water level for electricity generation at Wilder Dam has been a matter of contention between the dam's owners and river towns for decades. The Wilder Dam is in the process of being relicensed. The resolution asks the licensing body, the Federal Energy Licensing Commission, to require the present owner Great River Hydro to develop a water flow management plan that minimizes impact on the river's banks. The owner also would be required to create a fund for riverbank restoration and property owner compensation.

## 7. Publicity

- Blake said he will supply an article for the March/April Lyme Community and Church News

## 8. Adjournment

On a motion from Ian, seconded by Tom, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

The minutes were recorded by Tom Colgan with edits made by Blake.

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*

The next meeting of the Lyme Conservation Commission will be held on Monday, April 6, 2020 at the Lyme Center Academy Building beginning 7 p.m.