

**Lyme Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
January 5, 2015**



Present: Blake Allison, Russell Hirschler, Matt Stevens, James Munroe, Sue MacKenzie, Lee Larson and MaryBeth Keifer

Public: Jeanie McIntyre and Peg Merrens from the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT)

Blake appointed Lee and MaryBeth full voting members to establish a quorum.

### **1. Review and Approve Minutes from 12/01/2014**

- On a motion by Russ, seconded by Sue, the minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

### **2. Land Protection and Easements**

- **UVLT re Whipple Hill Rd./Clay Brook Easement – Jeanie McIntyre & Peg Merrens** appeared to present an update on the Upper Valley Land Trust's ongoing plan to purchase a conservation easement on a property encompassing a hay field at the junction of Rt. 10 and Whipple Hill Rd. that also included 2000 feet of frontage along Clay Brook (see 2014-12-01 CC Minutes). They said some progress had been made toward securing funding from neighboring property holders and foundations. They noted that despite that progress, there remains a large gap in funding and asked whether the Conservation Commission would contribute \$30,000 to the project. That commitment at this point would not only provide important support but also would encourage other community-based participation.

**Blake** noted that five members of the Commission visited the site on December 5 but had not discussed their findings yet due to "open meeting" restrictions. A discussion ensued with Commission members sharing their views. There was general agreement the parcel had high conservation value. Conserving it would be consistent with the Commission's commitment to protecting town waterways and, as the UVLT had noted, would provide significant "connectivity" with abutting properties already conserved. There also was agreement that fulfilling \$30K request was likely, although some Commissioners expressed concerns about whether the project was worth that amount of money.

Commission members agreed the next step should be a public hearing for comment on the proposed Conservation Fund withdrawal. Blake said he would schedule it for the Commission's February 2 meeting.

### **3. Trails and Land Management**

- **Trail Development on Property Abutting Trout Pond Forest? – Matt** asked whether the Commission might approach Alfred Balch regarding a combined effort to develop some trails on his property that would enhance the Trout Pond Trail system as outlined in the 2012 Management Plan revision. It was agreed that project should be pursued. Lee said he would talk to Alfred.

#### 4. Project and Application Review

- **River Road Repair Update – Sue** reported that engineer Charles Hirschberg was scheduled to meet with the Select Board on Tuesday, January 6 to discuss possible solutions for stabilizing the stretch of River Rd. that has subsided (see 2014-10-06 minutes and 2014-11-03).

#### 5. Outreach and Education

- **No items submitted**

#### 6. Other Business

- **Chaffee Wildlife Viewing Blind – Russ** reported that the Upper Valley Trails Alliance was preparing a grant proposal for the Lyme Foundation in an effort to secure funding for the project. He said his colleague John Taylor was going to Cornish to inspect a blind recently built that might serve as a model.
- **Annual UVLT Conservation Commissions Meeting – Blake** noted that the meeting is to take place in late January or early February, but a firm date has not yet been set.

#### 7. Publicity

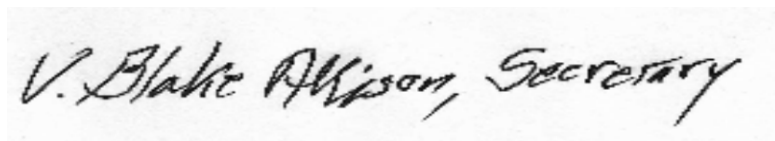
- **Lyme Community and Church News Item – Blake** said he would submit a piece regarding recreational safety on ice.

#### 8. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 2 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 *pro tem*