

Lyme Common

Management and Use Policy

1. Introduction:

The area known as Lyme's Common is central to the Lyme Historic District. A Town common does not appear on the original Town Plan, but was the result of several transactions including those of 1785 and 1794 in which individual citizens deeded parcels to the Town. The earliest reference to "The Common" appears in the 1794 deed. For most of its existence the Common was a hayfield crossed by roads and footpaths. In 1917 the Civil War Monument was added in memory of Lyme's soldiers and sailors from 1861 – 1865. It is only since 1926 that the Common has been seeded and mowed, taking on its present appearance. Today the central Common consists of a well-kept lawn with maple trees around the perimeter replacing the diseased and damaged elms which were removed. In 1976 the current flagpole was donated by the American Legion. In 1987 the Memory Stone was added "to all those from Lyme who served their country in times of conflict or peace".

2. Authority:

New Hampshire RSA 41:11-a 1. The Selectmen shall have authority to manage all real property owned by the Town and to regulate its use, unless such management and regulation is delegated to other public officers by vote of the Town or is governed by other statutes, including but not limited to RSA 31:112, RSA 35-B, RSA 36-A:4 and RSA 202-A:6.

3. Purpose:

The Select Board is particularly sensitive to the historic nature of the Common and its significance to the citizens of the Town of Lyme. The Select Board researched prior Select Board meetings back to 1997 and found that the average number of times a Select Board had to deal with the use of the Common was 4-5 times a month. Issues ranged from simple parking requests from the Congregational Church to more complex issues of event organizers using the Common to stage the event and complaints from Common neighbors about illegal parking and noise issues. Prior Select Boards tried to address this with the "Parking on the Common" form which provided certain rules and restrictions. Since it was called a "parking request" there was a perception that any use was okay as long as you weren't parking. To try and make it clearer the current Select Board changed the name to the "Common Use Request Form". This alone has not cleared up the confusion.

As a result the Select Board felt it necessary to have a "Common Use Policy which clearly articulates its intent which is to manage the Common for the use of all residents, to maintain its appearance and to prevent those actions which have the potential to cause damage to the property. In designing a policy the Board members understand that it would be impossible to set hard and fast rules since most uses need to be evaluated on a case by case basis. By setting guidelines it is

the Boards intent to create a process to evaluate each request and make the process more transparent and consistent.

4. General Use Policies:

- The Common is for the use of all the citizens of Lyme and Town Organizations.
- During the winter months and into early spring when the ground is wet, December 15th to April 15th, parking on the Common is prohibited. Parking on the Common at other times is generally discouraged and persons sponsoring events may be required to submit a parking plan.
- Persons wishing to hold an event on the Common must submit a “Use of the Common Application” at least thirty (30) days prior to the event. Persons submitting a request or their representative may be required to attend a Select Board meeting to provide additional information.
- Depending on the event and/or the sponsor separate insurance may be required. The New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) now offers reasonably priced event insurance for those events not covered under the Town’s policy. If insurance is required the Administrative Assistant can help you to obtain this.
- Persons hosting an event are responsible to provide trash cans or garbage bags if required and for removing same and cleaning up any litter or waste left on the Common Area after the event.
- Persons walking or exercising their dogs are required to clean up after their animals. Bag dispensers are provided however it is a good idea to bring your own in case bags are not available.
- In winter months when snow is on the ground walking paths will be provided across the Common by the Town using a snow blower.

**TOWN OF LYME
SELECT BOARD
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Use of Common Application

Please submit this application to the Town Office at least one month prior to the date of the event/function.

Date of application: _____ Submitted by: _____ Telephone # _____

Town of Lyme Organization or person responsible: _____

Address: _____

Date of event: _____ Time to start: _____ Time to end: _____

Number of participants in the event: _____ Number of vehicles expected: _____

•I understand that during the winter months and into early spring when the ground is wet, December 15th to April 15th, parking is not available on the Common. Please make every effort to secure “off street” parking for your events before the winter weather approaches. This may even require you to have parking attendants available to direct your guests. The Town of Lyme does not plow the Common and parking is not permitted on the roads around the Common.

•I understand that this use of the common permit is issued for events taking place on the common and that I am responsible for making sure that vehicles do not obstruct the travel portion of the roadway and do not park on or around the Rt. 10 side of the Common.

•I hereby agree to accept responsibility for cleaning up any litter/waste left on the Common Area after the permitted event.

•I understand that if I am unable to comply with these restrictions, the permit that has been issued may be revoked.

•I have established a Parking plan. The contact person for parking issues on the day of the event is _____ . His/Her best phone number on the day of the event is _____. I have read the Lyme Common Management and use policy.

Signature of Applicant

Approval is / is not recommended. _____ for Lyme PD

Approved / Denied _____ Select Board Representative