Lancaster Conservation Commission (LCC) Meeting Minutes
Town Hall Second Floor – June 12, 2023

LCC Members present: Kathy-Jean Lavoie, Kim Votta, Sam Mayne, Nancy Southworth, Vickie Gibbs, Leon Rideout

LCC Members absent: None

Others present: Heidi Chester

Initial Business: Lavoie called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Welcome & introductions were made to Leon Rideout, as Selectboard Member recently appointed to LCC.

Approval of minutes:
Votta made a motion to approve the March 13, 2023 minutes as written. Mayne seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ongoing Business / NHDES:
Lavoie shared with members an NHDES permit approval re: a Dredge & Fill on Wetlands (Rowell Rd).

Ongoing Business / LCC Workplan Topics:

Riparian Restoration Project / ARM Fund (Mayne)
Mayne reported the ARM Fund pre-application has been submitted on schedule. If granted, the funds ($137,000) would be applied to excavation & plantings as outlined; in the event of expenses exceeding what the ARM Fund may cover, there may be additional funding sources and partners suitable for this project. The proposal includes a 2-acre x 4 ft. deep dredge, helpful in removing invasives. Mayne expects to receive a reply to pre-application by end of June.

2023 Easement Monitoring Schedule (Votta)
Votta proposed August 5 and August 19 for easement monitoring in 2023. Members agreed this summer is preferable to October, with its threat of unpredictable weather. Votta said easement monitoring team is best kept to three LCC members to avoid unnoticed meeting conflict, but community volunteers could be a welcome addition. Votta said boundary tags could be applied this year, for ease of future monitoring. She reported no response to the LCC's letter of reply regarding Smith's Forestry Management & Agricultural Reclamation Plan; the landowner will be contacted.

Knotweed Mitigation (Lavoie)
Lavoie reported last year's knotweed mitigation was successful, estimating treatment areas as 85-90% clear of noticeable return growth. She reminded members of the 3-year treatment plan. The 2023 budget allows for two days of spraying, so last year's treatment areas will be repeated while new locations along local waterways will be treated on the second day this year. The required application to treat along waterways has been submitted to DES. Securing abutting landowner permissions are underway. An anonymous donor will help support a summer hire to assist with CISMA's efforts this season.

Heritage Trail Restoration (Gibbs)
Gibbs reported a Granite Outdoor Alliance "Gloves for Mugs" Day being planned for July 13, 1-4pm. This event will involve clean-up & clipping of an established trail segment. Gibbs will forward details when planning is complete. She's been attending trails committee meetings & promoting Heritage Trail restoration, noting some overlap with AMC & NFC in the Town Forest area. A possible bridge/boardwalk section has been recently proposed. Gibbs stated the remaining segments of

Heritage Trail (Weeks State Park & Route 2) require considerable rebuild. Once restored, clear roles for management of the trail would be paramount. Town Rec Department (Col. Town) is being explored as an option, but increased funding would likely be required. Mayne asserted that any wetland bridge/boardwalk plans should be brought before the LCC. Votta agreed, proposing alignment with the Stewardship Plan. Gibbs agreed to advocate for the LCC as a partner in the planning process.

LCC Membership Leadership & New Member Recruitment

Members discussed continued rotation of current members acting as Chairperson until new members & a new Chairperson can be instated. Members determined there wouldn't be a quorum for July 10 meeting, so it was cancelled. Mayne committed to acting as Chairperson for August 14 meeting.

Mayne reported approaching a Lancaster resident he finds suited for the LCC; the candidate noted service on other committees, but did not decline outright. Mayne will continue to encourage. Gibbs suggested a post to the town's Facebook page may bring some good candidates forward; Rideout agreed. Lavoie will speak with Town Manager Ben Gaetjens-Oleson for additional ideas. Southworth felt a description of LCC member responsibilities would be useful. Votta agreed, she will search the LCC Drive for this information.

Communications directed to Commission:

Lavoie shared a letter from a town resident pertaining to awareness of a zoning board application, with hearing to be held this month.

Other Business:

Treasurer's Update on 2023 LCC Budget (Lavoie)

Lavoie reported no new expenditures since No Mow May signage reimbursement last month; 92% of 2023 Budget remains.

Votta posed the question of whether to keep or cancel an LCC email account which has not been used in recent past (cost to town is $12/mo). *Votta made a motion to cancel the town LCC email account. Southworth seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

Votta confirmed she gave Town Manager Ben Gaetjens-Oleson access to the LCC Google Drive in May. Members discussed ways to ensure town ownership of LCC documents & materials, amid a continuum of LCC Chairpersons & members. They agreed a Google account would be practical & cost-effective. Mayne plans to establish & transfer files to an LCC Google account at a future indeterminate date. He said there may be a yearly fee for cloud storage, but it should be less than $12/mo.

Lavoie asked if there was any other business to be discussed; none offered.

Mayne moved to adjourn; Gibbs seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:46pm.

Respectfully submitted, Heidi Chester

Approved August 14, 2023

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Kim Votta, Vice Chair Kathy-Jean Lavoie, Treasurer