# CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
November 13, 2013
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall
41 Green Street, Concord, NH

#### **Attendance**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present at the meeting included: Frederick Chormann; Christopher Kane; Chair Christopher Morgan; Vice Chair James Owers; and Tracey Boisvert. Senior Planner Rebecca Hebert and Patricia Murray, Administrative Specialist from the Planning Division also attended the meeting.

Christopher Morgan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00.

#### 1. Minutes

Mr. Chormann noted that his name was misspelled and requested the following change: Change "Chorman" to "Chormann". Christopher Kane also noted that he was not at the meeting and his name was included in the members present.

James Owers moved to accept the minutes of the October 9, 2013 meeting with the changes, and Rick Chormann seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

### 2. Wetlands Bureau

a. Standard Dredge and Fill Application of Public Service of New Hampshire for wetland impacts in the P-145 transmission line through Concord

Sherrie Trefry of GZA Environmental and Laura Games of PSNH were present to discuss the application. Ms. Trefry explained that PSNH is planning five pole replacements in Concord and some pole modifications to add new splicers within the P-145 transmission line. The project is a thermal uprate of the existing line to increase the electricity load. There will be impacts to both wetlands and buffers throughout the corridor. She said there would be 36 sq. ft. of permanent wetland impact and 49,630 sq. ft. of temporary impact for vehicle access to the line. She said that there are also a few archeological surveys being done along the corridor at known resource sites. GZA Environmental will oversee the project during construction and will ensure the wetland impacts are kept to a minimum. Becky Hebert mentioned that the proposed replacement pole closest to the Merrimack River will need a Conditional Use Permit for impacts to the bluff. The group discussed the need to use special construction techniques to prevent erosion of the steep slopes along the bluff. The Commission questioned the height of the new poles. Ms. Trefry said that currently two of the existing poles are 55 feet and the replacements will be 70 feet, two poles are 70 feet and the replacement pole will be 100 feet and one existing pole is 60 feet and the replacement will be 100 feet tall. Ms. Trefry reviewed each of the locations of the wetland and buffer impacts along the corridor and noted that within the corridor there are several rare, threatened and endangered species that needed to be accommodated. The group discussed special accommodations for the Blandings Turtle along the shoreline of Turtle Pond. Ms. Trefry said that PSNH would be using timber mats to cross sensitive wetland areas. The Commission

had no objections to the wetlands application or buffer impacts.

Kit Morgan made a motion to recommend to the Planning Board that they receive more information on the construction techniques within the bluff to ensure that the slopes and erodible soils are protected. Tracey Boisvert seconded the motion. James Owers abstained. Motion passed.

b. Permit by Notification for property at 60 Thayer Pond Road for the installation of an underground utility line

Peter Schauer of Schauer Environmetal was present to explain the application and answer any questions. He said that this is a residential lot that was subdivided in 2006. The property at 60 Thayer Pond was not developed at that time and the property owner is now in the process of constructing a house. The proposed sewer and water utility lines need to connect to the municipal utilities in King Street because the utilities are not available along Thayer Pond Road. The utility lines will cross a small wetland drainage ditch. The Commission noted that the impacts were very minor and the wetland was not large enough to qualify for a buffer. The group unanimously agreed not to object to the permit. Kit Morgan signed the permit.

#### 3. City Council/Planning Board

a. Other Business - None

## 4. City Open Space

a. Whispering Heights property

Becky Hebert reported that the closing for the Whispering Heights property is scheduled for tomorrow, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:15. The group will be meeting at the law offices of Mark Dunn on Montgomery Street in Concord.

b. Public Service of New Hampshire mitigation for impacts at the Oak Hill Substation off of Farmwood Road

Tracey Boisvert moved to enter into a nonpublic session for the discussion of real estate in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(d). Christopher Kane seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Commission entered into non-public session. Following the discussion, the Commission moved to exit the nonpublic session and seal the minutes. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

#### c. Other business –

James Owers said he been talking with Tim Blagden about the effort to create a rail trail form Concord to Sunapee along the former Concord to Claremont rail line. He said the trail planning group is looking for letters of support from the communities along the rail line to send to the Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration stating support for the project and support for a crossing of Interstate 89. He will draft a letter of support for the project and sent it to Commission members for approval.

Becky Hebert said she has received a call regarding the removal of downed and/or dead trees at Swope Park for personal firewood use. She did not know what the City's policy was and wanted to check with the Commission. The Commission agreed that they could not support the removal of trees from City property even if they were dead.

# 5. Easement Stewardship/Monitoring

## a. Conservation easement monitoring -

Becky Hebert reported that Tanner Starmer, the intern, is putting the finishing touches on his reports which should be available for the next meeting. She said that he has monitored all but three easements and should be finished by next week. She also said that there have been no violations reported.

# 6. Other Business

Jan McClure said that she would like to reconvene discussions on the street tree effort. She suggested setting up a separate meeting with General Services to discuss the City Council referral and street trees in Concord.

Becky Hebert said that she has received a request from Frank Harrison, the contact for the High School ROPES course, to camp overnight on Oak Hill property for two nights during Nov 22 – 24. She explained the City Code of Ordinances permits camping by permit only and requires permission from the Conservation Commission. James Owers made a motion for approval. Fred Chormann seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The group discussed Conservation Commission membership. Currently there are vacancies for one full time member and two alternate members. Becky Hebert said that if anyone knows of possible members, the process for appointment is to send a letter of interest and resume to the City Manager.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST: Rebecca Hebert, Senior Planner