

1 Canterbury Conservation Commission

2 Canterbury, NH

3 Draft Minutes of March 21, 2024

4 Present: Kelly Short, Bob Steenson, Audra Klumb, Steve Seron, Theresa Wyman, Lance Messinger and
5 Ken Stern (Zoom).

6 Guests: Charlie Comey, Joshua Gordon

7 Kelly chaired the meeting and it was called to order at 7:00 PM. Charlie Comey is present to observe
8 meeting and possibly become an alternate member of CCC. Joshua Gordon is a member of the Planning
9 Board but he attended the CCC meeting as a citizen concerned about the potential use of contaminated
10 soils on road beds.

- 11 1. **Approval of February 8, 2024 Minutes**-Kelly requested deleting content accidentally carried
12 forward from the previous meeting's minute: lines 72-74 beginning with "Additional
13 conservation" and lines 82-85 beginning with "Sumner updated". Steve Seron moved to
14 approve the minutes as amended; Bob Steenson seconded. All members voted to approve the
15 minutes as amended.

16
17 **2. Conservation Projects:**

- 18 a. **Deepwood Forest Tour**-Kelly reported that she submitted a Save the Date notice to the April
19 newsletter regarding the May 4, 2024 event to celebrate conservation of Deepwood Forest.
20 Kelly will submit a more detailed notice for the May newsletter and the town email list.
21 There will be some small group walks arranged. No refreshments.

- 22
23 b. **Meadowsend Update**- Kelly reported that Brian Hotz from the Society for the Protection of
24 New Hampshire Forests contacted the owners of the Meadowsend land parcel (520 acres)
25 that is located next to the Shaker Village Conservation land. It was hoped that CCC and
26 Forest Society would be able to conserve this land through a purchased conservation
27 easement. However, Brian said that Meadowsend is considering a potential future Private
28 Recreational Lease. This activity would eliminate the possibility of guaranteed public access
29 to the property. After discussion, members agreed they felt it was inappropriate to use
30 public money (funds the conservation account funded by Land Use Change Tax fees) if the
31 project would not allow public access. Kelly will ask Brian about possibilities of conserving
32 part of the property with public access assured.

- 33
34 c. **Other Potential Projects**-Since the Meadowsend project seems unlikely to proceed at this
35 time, the Commission will explore other potential conservation opportunities. Kelly
36 obtained a list of Canterbury land parcels that are more than 200 acres. She said there is a
37 relatively short list of properties and we will consider whether any of them have high

38 conservation value and then reach out to see if the landowners have interest in conserving
39 their property.

40

41 **3. Conservation Easement Monitoring:**

42 Three responses (Matthew Morris, Moosewood, Emily Landry/Pete Helm) to the RFP to
43 monitor conservation easements held by the Town were received and reviewed by the CCC.

44 Two of the proposals were submitted by experienced contractors and it was unanimously
45 decided to allow Kelly and Ken to make the final determination for contractor approval.

46

47 **4. Disposal of Treated Contaminated Soils on Road Beds**

48 **Environmental Hazards of Sludge Use on Agricultural Land**

49 Joshua Gordon was present to discuss the first issue, but also remained to participate in
50 discussion of second issue of Sludge Use and possible recommendation for town to ban its use.

51 Joshua reported that there has been an application from a resident of Wyven Road to subdivide
52 his property for residential lots. In order to subdivide the property into residential lots he will

53 need to upgrade the road. It is reported that he plans to use thermally treated contaminated
54 soils i.e. "dirty dirt" for the road bed. This soil product may contain toxic substances or heavy

55 metals that could be hazardous to water quality and public health, particularly if the soil is

56 disturbed. The Commission discussed a letter dated February 14, 2024 from the NH Department
57 of Environmental Services that related to "Thermally Treated Soils" being used as a "roadway

58 subbase". There are many limitations on its potential use in addition to risks and liabilities

59 should it be disturbed or found to be toxic in the future. Canterbury does not have any rule or

60 ordinance banning this substance, but apparently Belmont does have a provision in their codes.

61 Canterbury does have a provision in Article 2.1 entitled Obnoxious Uses which was discussed.

62 All of the members of CCC are concerned that this material might be hazardous to the public

63 and pose a risk in the future. It was agreed that the CCC should send a letter to the Board of

64 Selectmen stating our objection to the use of this potentially hazardous soil anywhere in town.

65

66 Joshua asked if the CCC would write up a list of its general environmental concerns that the

67 Planning Board could use when reviewing subdivision proposals.

68

69 Sewage Sludge has been used in the past on agricultural areas since it has high nitrogen and

70 phosphate content. The state of [Maine has prohibited the use](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/mar/12/sewage-us-crop-farming-lawsuit-pfas) of sewerage on farmland

71 ([https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/mar/12/sewage-us-crop-farming-lawsuit-](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/mar/12/sewage-us-crop-farming-lawsuit-pfas)

72 [pfas](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/mar/12/sewage-us-crop-farming-lawsuit-pfas)). There are concerns that pathogens and other contaminants such as PFAS and toxic metals

73 contained in the sludge can be hazardous to humans, animals, plants and water quality. The

74 Planning Board has asked for the CCC's input on this issue.

75

76 **5. Property Management**

77 **a. Kimball Pond-Beaver Deceiver**

78 Apparently the Beaver Deceiver is non-functional and Lance reported that the drain pipe has

79 been removed from the overflow and placed at the bottom of the hill. It appears that the

80 beavers may have started building a dam, or debris is currently restricting water outflow.
81 Steve Seron agreed to investigate and take pictures of the overflow and send to CCC. The
82 Beaver Deceiver will need to be replaced. Ken reported talking with Tom Osmer who was
83 involved in the original construction and installation, along with Bob Fife. Tom agreed to
84 help us with a replacement. Once the water is warmer, we will need to explore the situation
85 and come up with a solution. In the meantime, we will need to periodically remove the
86 beaver debris from the outlet over the dam.

87
88 **b. Riverland-Signage Improvement Project**

89 Kelly forwarded to the signage subcommittee the 2013 Regulations approved by Board of
90 Selectmen to see if there are any other changes to propose. Ken and the trail sub-
91 committee will need to provide proposed language for the signage and submit it to the
92 Board of Selectmen for approval.

93
94 Kelly contacted NH Fish & Game about using Safety Zone Signs to limit hunting on a
95 portion of the property. Signs are provided free of charge and can be used to restrict smaller
96 portions of the land from hunting. Some hunters may shoot from boats on the Merrimack
97 River and we would have no control over that. The signs would still be required to be
98 posted every 100 yards. The next step is to map the entire property and proposed where we
99 would like the Safety Zones to be, then submit to NHF&G to see if this will qualify for the
100 program.

101
102 **c. Riverland Trail Enhancements-Brush Control-Boardwalk Sign Removal**

103 Kelly and Audra visited Riverland to review area for brush control. They report that the
104 primary area to work on next will be in the open area along the northern border fence with
105 Lucy Nichols' property. An area about 10 feet deep by 200 feet long is choked with Autumn
106 Olive, glossy buckthorn, and bittersweet that needs to be removed. Lance offered to bring
107 chain saw.

108
109 Kelly also discussed removal of bridges and sign of Wetlands Walk that was developed many
110 years ago with help from several organizations. The flow into the oxbow has changed,
111 creating problems along the old trail route. The existing bench and viewing platform on the
112 ox bow pond is leaning badly. Lance suggested that we might build a new platform and
113 bench closer to the parking lot where there is already a small path and would only be about
114 50 yards. Ken says that every winter there are major ice upheavals that impact the
115 structures and maybe we should reconsider.

116 **THE WORK DAY FOR RIVERLAND BRUSH REMOVAL WILL BE APRIL 20 FROM 9-12 NOON.**

117
118 **d. Robert S. Fife Conservation Area-Brush Control Work Day**

119 The original workday schedule was discussed and it was decided to change the date to:
120 **APRIL 13TH 9:00-Noon.**

121

- 122 6. **Permits**- DES notified us of of a shoreland permit request related to construction of a new home
123 on an existing lot at 31 Harmony Lane South (Lot 51). This is a shoreline lot on Rocky Pond. No
124 action necessary by the Canterbury Conservation Commission.
125
- 126 7. **Board of Selectmen Update**- Kelly attended the Select Board meeting March 4 to find out
127 whether the BOS wants to form a town trails committee and, if so, whether they would like it to
128 report to them directly or be a subcommittee of the CCC. The Select Board decided to wait for
129 its new member to discuss this further.
130
- 131 8. **Officers and Membership**-The only membership for renewal is Steve Seron and he agreed to
132 another three (3) year term. The CCC will make this recommendation to the Board of
133 Selectmen.
134
- 135 9. **Website Update**-The town approved \$10,000 for upgrading the website. Lance had previously
136 agreed to list recommendations for changes to the Conservation Commission's section of the
137 website. The CCC should summarize its priorities and share them with Kathleen McCay.
138
- 139 10. **Other Business**-Audra discussed recent conference by the UNH Cooperative Extension on Taking
140 Action for Wildlife. She reported that there are resources available to assist towns in taking
141 action on wetlands. UNH will work with 3 communities to support wildlife/habitat projects.
142 Applications are due May 1 and preference will be given to towns that attended the Taking
143 Action fo Wildlife webinars. Ken suggested that it might be a good idea to review culverts and
144 how they impact wildlife.
145

146 Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM after motion by Steve Seron and seconded by Audra Klumb

147 Respectfully submitted by Lance Messinger