

Hollis Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022

Present: Catherine Hewitt; Joanne Toone, Doris Luther
Guests: Terry Walters; Sarah Coppi

1. Annual Conference of Maine Association of Conservation Commissions (MEACC): October 22, Brunswick Library. We need to renew our membership with them. Joanne and John will be attending and possibly Madison? Keynote Speaker will be Julie Isbill from the National Park Service's Brunswick office. Marcel Polak, Woodstock CC member and former MEACC executive director will speak about his experience with land protection projects. This is a great place to hear what's happening in the rest of the state with like-minded folks volunteering their time to conservation.
2. Bar Mills Dam update: Terry believes it's a foregone conclusion that the dam will be breached, but his concerns are that it be done properly and safely. Mark Blier, Buxton selectman and state representative, is planning a meeting to discuss the issue. The power plant boat ramp and dam they want to decommission are on the Hollis side, so it's important to include Hollis residents' input. Joanne will check with Dave McCubrey, (Hollis Selectman) regarding having a meeting in Hollis. Catherine will check with Mark Blier.
3. Poland Spring Request to increase water extraction has been withdrawn by the company.
4. Status of the Tea House at Indian Cellar: Unknown if the Packards are still interested in taking it for an addition to the Saco River Theater. Discussion ensued regarding what to do with it as an alternative – perhaps have volunteers demolish and remove it. Catherine envisions clearing it out and returning it to natural condition. She also noted that the area between the abutment and the kiosk is loaded with poison ivy and that people are shoring up there with rafts, which is causing erosion. She suggested putting up signs cautioning against the poison ivy and erosion, and to encourage people not to raft there.
5. Terry brought up the cluster housing ordinance. He'd be interested in working on re-working the ordinance to make it more palatable to everyone. Madison had offered that HCC would take a look at the ordinance and try to improve it. This has not happened yet.
6. Discussion re: the new Maine law allowing multiple residences on one lot. The goal of it was to accommodate family members without changing zoning laws, however set-backs and septic regulations still apply.
7. Comprehensive Plan status: This is in the hands of the Southern Maine Planning Commission, which also plans to address cluster housing.
8. Note: John Sheehan has passed away. John was a member of the HCC and long-time advocate for conservation. He was instrumental in procuring the Indian Cellar preserve for the town. We want to thank him for all of his public service. We are very grateful to him. We send heartfelt condolences to his family.
9. HCC member and Maine Master Naturalist Program member Joanne, and Ruth Leavitt, Hollis resident, have been cataloguing Googins Woods' botany and is putting together a presentation for the Hollis community, creating a self-guided brochure or to use for guided tours. Joanne suggested putting in a QR code to link our website to a PDF of a guided tour.

Terry is a forester by profession and offered his expertise in tree identification. Catherine suggested it as a school project or Eagles or Girl Scout project. Joanne suggested that they could earn a badge for this at either Indian Cellar or Googins Woods.

10. Catherine asked if we need to re-print maps for Indian Cellar. She'll check with Madison. She suggested that we reassess the picture of a Native American and questioned if it's authentic. Joanne said she was also surprised that nobody in the town or the community had yet brought up the name given controversy in the news these last few years. Sarah asked which Native tribe occupied the area – an idea was presented that we could discuss if changing the name to that of the local indigenous people was something the commission was interested in. It was decided to PUT THIS ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING AND DISCUSS IT THEN.
11. Terry asked if the boundaries of IC are marked. Discussion ensued re: re-doing them and clearly marking the boundaries. NEXT TIME SOMEONE IS AT IC, PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF WHETHER OR NOT WE NEED TO RE-MARK THE TRAILS AND BOUNDARIES.
12. Joanne will help John, if needed, look for files on the maps/brochures for IC.
13. Catherine will let us know what she finds out about the dam.
14. Catherine spoke with Deb Soule on 202. She has done a lot of work around dams. She said water quality improves when dams are removed because the flow is increased – it's also good for fish migration.
15. Discussion re: the effects of removing the dam. Terry is concerned we will lose access to the river because the water may be too low. Brookfield's contract/license requires that they address recreation on the river. If they are going to breach the dam, we should make it as positive for the town as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Doris Luther