



City of Keene, New Hampshire

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Monday, June 15, 2020

4:30 PM

ZOOM

Commission Members

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair
Eloise Clark, Vice Chair
Kenneth Bergman
Brian Reilly
Art Walker

Andrew Madison
Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate
Steven Bill, Alternate
Councilor Robert Williams

- This meeting will be conducted using the online meeting platform, Zoom. The public may view the meeting online by visiting www.zoom.us/join and enter the Meeting ID: **834 1238 2706**.*
- If you are unable to attend the meeting online, you may call the toll-free # (888) 475-4499 and enter Meeting ID: **834 1238 2706** to listen to the meeting. *
- More info on how to access this meeting is available on the Conservation Commission webpage at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/conservation-commission>
- If you encounter any issues accessing this meeting, please call **603-757-0622** during the meeting.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – May 18, 2020
3. Communication and Notifications
 - a. Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee (ARLAC) donation
 - b. NH Association of Conservation Commissions renewal
4. Informational
 - a. Roxbury Street Bridge over Beaver Brook – Commencement of Work
 - b. Subcommittee reports
 - Outreach Subcommittee
 - Arm Fund Subcommittee
5. Discussion Items
 - a. Bee City USA – Continued discussion – Mr. John Therriault
 - b. Public Education & City Management of Invasive Species
6. New or Other Business – Land Development Code Update
7. Adjournment – Next meeting date Monday, **July 20, 2020**

**In Emergency Order #12, issued by the Governor pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04, which declared a COVID-19 State of Emergency, the requirement that a quorum of a public body be physically present at the meeting location under RSA 91-A:2, III(b), and the requirement that each part of a meeting of a public body be audible or otherwise discernible to the public at the meeting location under RSA 91-A:2, III(c), have been waived. Public participation may be provided through telephonic and other electronic means.*

THIS PAGE IS INTENDED TO BE BLANK.

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3 CONSERVATION COMMISSION
4 MEETING MINUTES

5 **Monday, May 18, 2020**

6 **4:30 PM**

7 **Remote Meeting via Zoom**

8 **Members Present:**

9 Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair
10 Eloise Clark, Vice Chair
11 Councilor Bobby Williams
12 Ken Bergman
13 Andrew Madison
14 Art Walker
15 Steven Bill, Alternate
16 Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate

8 **Staff Present:**

9 Rhett Lamb, Community Development
10 Director/Assistant City Manager
11 Tara Kessler, Senior Planner
12 Don Lussier, City Engineer

13 **Members Not Present:**

14 Brian Reilly

15 **1) Call to Order**

16 Chair Von Plinsky called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM and read the executive order
17 authorizing a remote meeting: Emergency Order #12, issued by the Governor of the State of New
18 Hampshire pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04. Pursuant to this order, Mr. Lamb called roll.
19 All members were calling alone from their home addresses, minus Mr. Bill, who was calling
20 with his daughter from Poestenkill, NY. Thomas Haynes was present as a non-voting attendee.

21 **2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 18, 2020**

22 Mr. Walker moved to approve the minutes of February 18, 2020, which Councilor Williams
23 seconded, and the motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

24 **3) Communications & Notifications**

25 **a. 43 Production Avenue – Liberty Utilities notification to NHDES Wetlands Bureau**
26 **regarding geotechnical borings within a wetland**

27 Mr. Lamb referenced a letter from Liberty Utilities included in the meeting packet, notifying the
28 NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) of planned geotechnical boring in the
29 wetlands at the end of Production Avenue. The plan in the meeting packet outlined locations of
30 entry into the wetland. Mr. Lamb said that this letter was informational and the Commission
31 needed to take no action.

32 Mr. Bill asked when the project starts and Mr. Lamb said there is no date yet, this is an initial
33 investigation. Mr. Walker asked the purpose of the boring. Mr. Lamb said it is a geotechnical
34 investigation in preparation for Liberty Utilities submitting plans to the City and NHDES
35 Wetlands Bureau for a permanent liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility. Mr. Bergman asked
36 whether there was a map or detailed documentation of the boring locations. Mr. Lamb said that
37 map was omitted mistakenly from the meeting packet and said the site was located at the end of
38 the existing Production Avenue cul-de-sac. Mr. Bill added that the ground conditions in that area
39 are unstable and therefore a good understanding of belowground conditions is essential before
40 any construction.

Mr. Lamb stated his understanding that there would be a significant wetland impact as a part of
constructing the LNG facility and therefore the Commission would have input on the project

41 again later through both the NH DES Wetlands Application and the Keene Planning Board site
42 plan review for a Conditional Use Permit.

43

44 The Commission acknowledged receiving this informational communication.

45

46 **b. Standard Dredge and Fill Application by City of Keene for Winchester Street**
47 **Reconstruction & Replacement of the Island Street Bridge**

48 The City Engineer, Don Lussier, called alone from his home address to speak about this project.
49 This project will create two new roundabouts on Winchester Street, one at the Key Road
50 intersection and the second at the intersection of Island and Pearl Streets, as well as replacing the
51 Island Street Bridge over the Ashuelot River. As part of the project, there will be substantial
52 drainage reconfiguration that will affect wetlands where the existing and proposed systems
53 discharge into surface water. The first impact will be at the existing roundabout at Winchester
54 Street and RT-101, where a storm water treatment pond will be constructed with overflow
55 discharge going to the same location as currently. Mr. Lussier said that flow patterns would not
56 be altered as a part of this project but that a substantial part of the project runoff would be
57 treated. Mr. Lussier said that the second wetland impact will be to both the north and south sides
58 of the Winchester Street Bridge over the Ashuelot River, where small impacts are necessary to
59 replace the existing drain pipes. Specifically on the north side of the bridge, the drain will be
60 replaced with a storm water treatment feature that will runoff into the river. The final impact will
61 be to the embankments of the Ashuelot River due to Island Street bridge construction of
62 abutments and retaining walls.

63

64 Mr. Lussier reported that he also spoke with the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee
65 (ARLAC) and he wanted to address their questions, some of which were not included in the
66 Wetlands Application. Mr. Lussier said that ARLAC questioned disturbance from the Island
67 Street bridge reconstruction and the subsequent surface and embankment restoration. In a
68 comment letter to NHDES, ARLAC requested a more specific plan for vegetation restoration,
69 and Mr. Lussier said that the project consultant is working on comments in response. ARLAC
70 also asked about treating the pipe discharges from the south side of the Winchester Street Bridge
71 over the Ashuelot River. Mr. Lussier replied that today, the southern drain pipe is 30” with no
72 treatment, whereas the proposed conditions are for a 24” pipe that redirects and captures some
73 storm water that flows there today. Unfortunately, Mr. Lussier said that the right-of-way (ROW)
74 is limited in the area, making it impossible to accommodate storm water treatment to that
75 discharge point on the south side of the bridge without taking more land from Eversource and
76 Keene State College properties. Therefore, the City respectfully declines treatment at that
77 location. However, there will be storm water treatment for substantial discharge points at the
78 north side of the bridge and at the end of RT-101. Mr. Lussier said that ARLAC also commented
79 on the location of flows near the site of another project completed recently on Winchester Street.
80 Mr. Lussier recalled speaking to the Commission more than one year ago about drainage
81 improvements at the intersection of Ralston and Winchester Streets, which resulted in a
82 discharge point on the north side of the bridge/east side of the river. ARLAC expressed concern
83 with the bridge reconstruction project adding flow to a system that is already flood-prone.
84 Mr. Lussier said that due to new surface water treatment ponds and water detainment in new
85 roadway islands, there would be less drainage into the system than currently.

86

87 The Chairman asked if there is a reason not to remove existing bridge abutments. Mr. Lussier
88 said the reason is to minimize stream disturbance. Removing the existing abutments would
89 require excavating below the stable riverbed and likely create more erosion later. He said the

90 plan is to retain the existing abutments, cut them a few feet below the bottom of the new bridge,
91 and use them to stabilize the embankment and prevent erosion.

92

93 Vice Chair Clark is a member of ARLAC and she confirmed the concerns and said that
94 Mr. Lussier explained well the City's position on the issues. She added that ARLAC wanted to
95 emphasize that annual river testing shows a significant decrease in water quality from above to
96 below Keene. She was hopeful that extra storm water treatment would help to reduce any
97 pollution entering the river.

98

99 Mr. Lussier said the Island Street Bridge is 40 years old and the goal is to remove it intact with
100 minimal damage so it can be reused as a future pedestrian path bridge. Mr. Lamb said that
101 Mr. Lussier was underselling that effort, which is part of redeveloping the trail system starting at
102 Eastern Avenue and following the Cheshire Rail Trail to Swanzey and Marlborough. Mr. Lamb
103 said it is a great project that the Commission would hear more about as it gains future support in
104 the Capital Improvement Program.

105

106 Regarding this agenda item, Mr. Lamb stated that the Commission could intervene and ask DES
107 to slow their process until the Commission can provide written recommendations. Otherwise, the
108 Commission could choose not to intervene and allow DES to proceed with their Wetlands Permit
109 process. Commission members expressed no reason not to have this application move forward.

110

111 Chair Von Plinsky moved to accept the communication as informational and allow the process to
112 move forward, which Mr. Walker seconded.

113

114 Mr. Bergman said he appreciated Vice Chair Clark's comments and asked if ARLAC had any
115 other concerns that merited discussion before voting on the motion. Vice Chair Clark said that
116 ARLAC spent a long time discussing the type of vegetation that would be replanted on land
117 around the new Island Street Bridge. Currently, the application states that vegetation would be
118 allowed to regrow naturally and ARLAC was insistent that native shrubs be planted instead to
119 avoid emergence of invasive species like Japanese knotweed. She said the application also
120 mentioned removing larger trees around the river, in which case the river would warm. Vice
121 Chair Clark asked Mr. Lussier to confirm the vegetation plan. Mr. Lussier said that when DES
122 finishes reviewing comments – including those from the Commission and ARLAC – the City
123 would receive a request for more information that includes a compilation of all comments DES
124 received. At that time, the City can respond with additional information like further details on
125 reestablishing vegetation. Mr. Lussier said that the project consultant received ARLAC's
126 comments and has started to address them before receiving the formal request. Mr. Lussier said
127 that vegetation is not his expertise and he has not yet spoken to the consultants about their
128 recommendations. Regarding tree removal, Mr. Lussier confirmed that only one large tree would
129 be removed as a part of the wetland impacts as well as a few more mature upland trees in the
130 park due to changing the road configuration. Mr. Lussier is working with the Director of Parks,
131 Recreation, & Facilities to determine where those trees can be replaced elsewhere in the City.

132

133 Mr. Bill asked how this project would affect discharge and flood storage in the area. Mr. Lussier
134 said there would be an inconsequential net increase in flood impacts due to lowering the existing
135 abutments, where the ground water will lower.

136

137 Vice Chair Clark said that while not included in the comments to DES, ARLAC also discussed
138 deepening some sumps in the drainage area from 2' to 4', which Mr. Lussier said he thinks is a
139 great idea and he would like that in catch basins City-wide. Still, more information is needed and

140 so the consultant is looking at ground water surface elevations from bore logs because there is
141 concern that adding 2' below the surface table could be problematic for excavations.

142

143 Chair Von Plinsky moved to support ARLAC's request regarding native vegetation and
144 otherwise to support the process moving forward, which Mr. Walker seconded.

145

146 Vice Chair Clark and Councilor Williams supported the amended motion because the property
147 already has many invasive species.

148

149 The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

150

151 **4) Informational**

152 **a. Email from Bob King – West Hill Property**

153 Mr. Lamb referred to this email included in the meeting packet from Bob King, owner of a
154 significant chunk of West Hill near the Horatio Colony Nature Preserve. Mr. Lamb said that the
155 property is well cared for, including some two-track roads. Mr. King said he is taking any actions
156 that he can to limit increasing damage from off-road vehicles on the property. The email was
157 simply informational so the Commission knew the actions taken with regard to walking and
158 other respectful use of the property. Mr. King was concerned that if this is occurring on his
159 property then it could be on other properties of the Commission's concern as well.

160

161 Councilor Williams asked how off-road vehicles are governed in State and City policies.

162 Mr. Lamb said he was not an expert and it was best to return for a conversation when he is more
163 familiar. The Chairman asked members to be watchful for similar activity on City-owned
164 properties. Mr. Madison said his understanding was that ATVs are regulated by NH Fish &
165 Game; when off-road vehicles are found traveling on private properties, it is first addressed by
166 local police as trespassing and on subsequent occasions by NH Fish & Game.

167

168 The Commission acknowledged the email as informational.

169

170 **b. Outreach Subcommittee Report**

171 Vice Chair Clark reported that unfortunately the wonderful planned spring programs were
172 canceled due to Covid-19.

173

174 **5) Discussion Items**

175 **a. Bee City USA – Mr. John Therriault**

176 The Chairman welcomed John Therriault, who was calling alone from 76 Bradford Road, Keene.

177 Mr. Therriault recalled visiting Council a few months ago asking them to consider becoming a
178 Bee City, meaning it is committed to raising awareness and preservation of pollinators.

179 Mr. Therriault said that pollinators are important for our food chain and biodiversity. All
180 pollinators have their place in the ecosystem. In the US, pollination equals approximately \$20
181 billion in products. Mr. Therriault said that for example, one native leafcutter bee can do the
182 same pollination of 20 non-native bees. However, the leafcutter and other native pollinators have
183 a small niche of activity, as little as a few weeks, depending on the growing season of the nectar
184 and pollen sources with which they coevolved. Many non-native pollinators, however, are active
185 in many seasons. Mr. Therriault credited this information to the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

186

187 Mr. Therriault referred to Keene's 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan's second of six vision focus
188 areas, A Unique Natural Environment, which states that, "The natural environment addresses the
189 natural areas (green spaces, plants and animals, hillsides and waterways) within and around our

190 City, as well as the man-made areas (green infrastructure, parks, agriculture, and gardens) (page
191 19). With the proper design, open spaces and the greenway connections between them can
192 provide an important opportunity for environmental stewardship and education (page 95).”
193 Mr. Therriault said that if Keene were a Bee City, pollinators would be an important component
194 of any environmental stewardship and education. He was interested in the earlier discussion of
195 replanting after Island Street bridge reconstruction and suggested considering not just native
196 plants, but those that support native pollinators.

197

198 Mr. Therriault read §2-774(3) of the Conservation Commission’s Powers, Duties, & Guidelines
199 to, “Regard land as an extremely important asset, whose use should be consistent with the long-
200 range community values.” Mr. Therriault thought those values demonstrated an opportunity for
201 the Commission to be important in Bee City USA activities.

202

203 Mr. Therriault explained that the Bee City USA program endorses a set of commitments, defined
204 in a resolution, for creating sustainable habitats for native pollinators, which are vital to feeding
205 the planet. As a Bee City, Keene would need to:

- 206 ▪ Establish a standing Bee City USA committee to advocate for pollinators,
- 207 ▪ Create and enhance pollinator habitat on public and private land,
- 208 ▪ Incorporate pollinator-conscious practices into City policies and plans,
- 209 ▪ Host annual pollinator awareness events, and
- 210 ▪ Publically acknowledge Bee City USA affiliation with signs and an online presence.

211

212 Mr. Therriault said that a Bee City committee could be a subcommittee of this Commission, that
213 opportunities to support pollinator habitat include City policies on chemical use, and that annual
214 events could be as simple as a walk through a park cataloguing pollinator sightings.

215

216 Mr. Therriault listed the steps to becoming a Bee City:

- 217 1. Complete the application form and resolution template (on website),
- 218 2. Assign facilitation to a local government body or non-profit organization,
- 219 3. Designate a local government department as a sponsor,
- 220 4. Draft your Bee City USA resolution and review with Bee City USA headquarters,
- 221 5. Submit application & resolution to local government for approval, and
- 222 6. Finalize your Bee City USA designation by submitting the final application, the adopted
223 resolution, and fee payment. *Mr. Therriault has offered to pay the fee.*

224

225 Mr. Therriault listed some benefits of becoming a Bee City:

- 226 ▪ Ensure survival of vital animal species,
- 227 ▪ Improve local food production,
- 228 ▪ Stimulate local plant nursery market,
- 229 ▪ Engage community in removing invasive species,
- 230 ▪ Address pest problems less toxically,
- 231 ▪ Heighten awareness of seasonal changes, and
- 232 ▪ Increase small business opportunities.

233

234 Beyond these benefits listed on BeeCityUSA.org, Mr. Therriault said a benefit of the program is
235 making the environment more welcoming to native pollinators. He recalled a study from the
236 University of New Hampshire a few years ago, which showed a 50% decline in native pollinator
237 species, for some because the flowers they coevolved with are less available.

238

239 Mr. Bergman recalled that a few years ago, Amanda Littleton and the Cheshire County
240 Conservation District worked on native pollinator plantings/gardens on approximately 20 sites
241 throughout the county. Mr. Therriault said he was familiar and received seed mixes as part of the
242 project. The public was asked to plant and then provide feedback on germination and pollinator
243 activity, but he had not yet seen the results. Mr. Bergman recalled a project in the athletic fields
244 at Keene State College and another site on the east side of East Surry Road. Mr. Bergman said
245 the Xerces Society is a very worth organization and he saw nothing negative about the proposal.
246

247 The Chairman, Councilor Williams, and Mr. Bill agreed that if the Commission is also absorbing
248 duties of the Agricultural Commission that assuming responsibility of Bee City USA would align
249 well, but all were concerned that it would be adding to much work to the Commission. Councilor
250 Williams questioned the best route forward in deciding the Commission's role in this project.
251 The Chairman thought the Commission was to first recommend to Council whether to become a
252 Bee City and if the Council so chose, they would then draft a resolution and determine where the
253 duties would fall within the City structure.
254

255 Mr. Bergman asked if there are other Bee Cities in NH/New England and if so, whether they
256 encountered any implementation challenges. Mr. Therriault said there are two Bee Cities in New
257 England in addition to many university campuses enrolled as Bee City affiliates. To his
258 knowledge, there were no issues with implementation but he had not asked specifically.
259

260 Vice Chair Clark said she supported the idea but questioned the mechanisms of implementation
261 and whether the Commission has the work force for another subcommittee. Chair Von Plinsky
262 was inclined to recommend that Council move forward drafting a resolution, but he was unsure
263 what it would look like after. Councilor Williams expected that if the Commission sends the
264 Council such a recommendation, that the matter would be sent right back to the Commission
265 questioning how to implement. While the Commission did not need to tell Council exactly how it
266 should work, Councilor Williams thought they would appreciate any ideas this Commission has.
267 Mr. Walker suggested placing the matter on more time for one month to give the Commission an
268 opportunity to work out some of these answers.
269

270 Mr. Bergman wondered whether one Commission member could act as a point person and he
271 asked if there could then be a hybrid working group with non-Commission members involved, so
272 not all Commission members would have to be continuously engaged. Ms. Kessler thought that
273 would be possible as long as it is clear that those subcommittee participants are not voting
274 members of the Commission. The Chairman asked if there are examples of such hybrid
275 subcommittees in the City and Ms. Kessler said those instances are most commonly a
276 subcommittee of two existing committees working together, like the Historic District and
277 Heritage Commissions. A Council recommendation might be needed to determine roles and
278 formality of such a group. Vice Chair Clark cited a recent example of the Goose Pond Land
279 Management Plan subcommittee, which included non-members. Ms. Kessler said that was an Ad
280 Hoc Committee overseeing the project. Ms. Kessler thought there were many options for
281 deciding what the Commission wants and how to formalize it, but there need to be some clearly
282 defined rules and procedures as well as clear location within the City structure. Those details
283 would need to be worked out moving forward. Mr. Bergman thought Mr. Therriault's proposal
284 was worthy but shared concern accomplishing what the Council has tasked the Commission with
285 already. The Chairman agreed and suggested accepting this presentation as informational until
286 next month, allowing him to speak with Councilor Williams and Mr. Lamb about specific ideas
287 to send to Council, which the Commission to review at the next meeting. Councilor Williams
288 agreed that would help speed the overall Council decision-making process.

289 Mr. Therriault said he was unsure that becoming a Bee City would require an entirely new
290 committee because once established, the only ongoing activities are one annual event and one
291 annual report that should be no more than 30 minutes of work. He urged the Commission not to
292 feel a need to create unnecessary administrative burden. If the Commission committed to
293 considering pollinator protection as a criterion of their decision-making, he thought one member
294 of the Commission would then be a sufficient point-of-contact for Bee City USA. The Chairman
295 thought that sounded reasonable. Councilor Williams still expressed concern not of how to
296 handle the Bee City commitment in the long-term, but rather the short-term decisions related to
297 where this fits in the government structure, and what points of intervention in the City that the
298 program should target. Councilor Williams wanted to do due diligence to make the program as
299 strong as possible. Mr. Therriault agreed to meet with Chair Von Plinsky, Councilor Williams,
300 and Mr. Lamb before the next meeting to formalize a recommendation.

301
302 The Commission accepted this presentation as informational, with continued work planned
303 before the next meeting.

304

305 **b. ARM Fund Project Concept – North Lincoln Street**

306 Vice Chair Clark reported that the City owns an eight-acre parcel abutting Woodland Cemetery,
307 one half-acre of which is fill that was added before the City's purchase in 2008. Before purchase,
308 the City did its due diligence conducting a phase one environmental assessment in search of
309 anything toxic, which revealed little of concern. Today, the area is significantly invaded by
310 Japanese knotweed and to some degree garlic mustard. Vice Chair Clark said the subcommittee
311 thought to apply for Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) funds to remove some or all of the fill
312 in an effort to eliminate the invasive species, return the area to productive wetlands for wildlife
313 such as the annual amphibian crossing, and increase floodwater storage that is needed in east
314 Keene. Vice Chair Clark referenced a letter of support from Brett Amy Thelen and the Harris
315 Center, who lead the annual amphibian crossing volunteer efforts. Vice Chair Clark has tried to
316 contact the Director of Parks, Recreation, & Facilities, Andy Bohannon, with no response.

317

318 The Chairman expressed excitement about the possibility. Mr. Bill agreed and noted that south of
319 that site toward Roxbury Street there is a section natural old growth forest and he imagined no
320 problem removing the fill if regraded to that same slope. Councilor Williams was also
321 enthusiastic because he walks past the area daily, which he said could use some help. The
322 Councilor noted that a sidewalk is needed in that area and the Commission should consider
323 whether to leave a 6' ROW for walking. Mr. Bergman asked if there would be sufficient ARM
324 funds for the project. Vice Chair Clark replied that she needs more help from the City in
325 determining a cost estimate and she has felt unsupported by City staff after reaching out a few
326 times. The Chairman heard more discussion before returning to the matter of cost.

327

328 Mr. Madison questioned where the parcel is on North Lincoln Street and Vice Chair Clark said
329 by the southernmost speed hump, just south of the easterly cemetery entrance. She said there is a
330 fairly intact wetland, minus an understory of honeysuckle, and a nice alder swamp. Vice Chair
331 Clark did not propose removing the honeysuckle at this point and to instead focus on the
332 knotweed, which Mr. Madison supported. Vice Chair Clark confirmed the City owns the parcel.

333

334 The Chairman said the deadline for ARM fund preproposals is May 29 and one element is to
335 provide a cost estimate, which has become the tripping point for the subcommittee completing
336 the preproposal. He questioned if the Commission could get such an estimate from staff in time.
337 Ms. Kessler would have to discuss with Mr. Lamb (who had departed the meeting at 5:25 PM)
338 but she was certain he had more information. In past ARM projects, a consultant was typically

339 used to provide an estimate and ultimately write the full grant proposal. Alternatively,
340 Ms. Kessler thought she could coordinate with Mr. Lamb to request an estimate from the
341 Engineering Division. Ms. Kessler would follow-up with Mr. Lamb. Vice Chair Clark agreed
342 that professional help was needed to determine first how much fill to clear in order to specify
343 costs. The Chairman recalled that the May 29 deadline is only for a preproposal and he thought
344 they only needed an estimate. After the preproposal is approved, the Commission could work on
345 engineering and cost details. Ms. Kessler thought that was a good idea and she added that
346 \$330,000 of ARM funding is available for this watershed. Mr. Bill did not think it would be
347 difficult to estimate how many cubic yards of fill to remove to develop a cost estimate. Vice
348 Chair Clark said her elevation estimates show 9' at one end progressing to even with the
349 roadway at the other end. Mr. Bill offered to work on an estimate of fill to remove, which
350 Ms. Kessler said would help the Engineering Division's cost calculation.

351
352 Chair Von Plinsky asked who sends the preproposal; does staff do that? Vice Chair Clark said
353 she had a great head start on the preproposal. Ms. Kessler would consult with Mr. Lamb but
354 assumed that staff could do that on behalf of the Commission to keep communication clearer
355 with DES. Vice Chair Clark has the form completed, minus cost estimates, and she has sent it to
356 Mr. Lamb twice. If Mr. Lamb is unable then Ms. Kessler was willing to facilitate an estimate
357 from the Engineering Division. She said it is just a matter of staff's time right now.

358
359 Vice Chair Clark moved to authorize staff to send forward an ARM fund preproposal for the
360 North Lincoln Street project, which Mr. Walker seconded, and the Commission passed by
361 unanimous roll call vote.

362
363 **c. Proposed Land Acquisition off Old Gilsum Road – Gary Boes**
364 *[The Chairman heard this item out of order, before item 5.a., at staff's request.]*
365 Mr. Lamb recalled that Mr. Boes came to Council when the Commission recommended using the
366 Land Use Tax Fund to acquire his six-acre property. The City's acquisition of that parcel is
367 complete and in the end stages, Mr. Boes returned to the City offering another smaller 0.86-acre
368 parcel. Mr. Lamb used a map to demonstrate that minus a few outparcels with access right onto
369 Old Gilsum Road, almost all parcels in the area are owned by the City as a part of the Greater
370 Goose Pond Forest. The City's long-term goal has been to acquire these parcels through
371 purchase or gift when possible because most are minimally used and could not be developed.
372 Mr. Boes' smaller parcel is entirely wooded and directly adjacent to Old Gilsum Road. You can
373 find the parcel by walking from Timberlane Drive to across from the water tank at the top of
374 Meetinghouse Road. If walked recently, one could see the parcel across from a recent forestry
375 clearing that is starting to grow back. The parcel is unrecognizable as a separate lot when
376 walking past, but it is a separate holding. Staff recommended acquiring this parcel like the other.

377
378 Chair Von Plinsky moved to recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager to do
379 negotiate the acquisition of the 0.86-acre parcel on Old Gilsum Road owned by Gary Boes using
380 the Conservation Land Use Tax Fund, which Mr. Walker seconded, and the Commission passed
381 unanimously by roll call vote.

382

383 **6) New or Other Business – Invasive Species – Councilor Williams**

384 Councilor Williams introduced the topic of how the City and this Commission are handling
385 invasive species for discussion at the next meeting. Councilor Williams presented three specific
386 subtopics:

- 387 1. Ways to educate the public and engage people in invasive species control. For example,
388 engagement to show members of the public that it is okay and how to pull garlic mustard on
389 the City ROW.
- 390 2. What the City can do when particularly bad areas of invasive species are found, like the one
391 on North Lincoln Street.
- 392 3. How to address the newly pervasive ornamental “Bradford” pear trees, which were initially
393 thought incapable of seeding because they are a hybrid, but other pear trees can cross-
394 pollinate with them. Seed dispersal by birds now has Councilor Williams and others finding
395 the ornamental trees in the wild where they could grow problematic.

396
397 Mr. Bergman stated that he appreciated Councilor Williams’ comments as he also walks past
398 areas of invasive species daily, including two extensive but not yet thick patches of knotweed at
399 Ladies Wildwood Park. He said now is the time to remove them before they are out of control.
400 He was unsure if that was a matter for the Director of Parks, Recreation, & Facilities or a more
401 formal invasive species plan from this Commission.

402
403 Vice Chair Clark said that if the ARM fund project moves forward on North Lincoln Street, that
404 it would be an opportunity for education that Councilor Williams seeks. The Chairman agreed
405 that education is important for invasive species control. Mr. Bergman also suggested posting QR
406 code signs to help people know and learn about invasive species. The Chairman welcomed
407 further discussion when this item is on the next month’s agenda.

408
409 The Chairman recognized Chuck Redfern, who called alone from 9 Colby Street, Keene.
410 Mr. Redfern requested to be on the next month’s agenda as a representative of Pathways for
411 Keene, which is seeking support from various public bodies for a heritage trail proposal that the
412 Public Works Department and City Engineer are working on. The Chairman agreed.

413
414 **7) Adjournment – Next Meeting Date Monday, June 15, 2020**

415 There being no further business, Chair Von Plinsky adjourned the meeting at 6:10 PM.

416
417 Respectfully submitted by, Katie Kibler, Minute Taker
418 May 25, 2020

419 Reviewed by, Rhett Lamb, ACM/Community Development Director

THIS PAGE IS INTENDED TO BE BLANK.

Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee

Washington Lempster Marlow Gilsum Sullivan Surry Keene Swanzey Winchester Hinsdale

May 12, 2020

Keene Conservation Commission
3 Washington St.
Keene, NH 03431

RE: Ashuelot River monitoring program

Dear Conservation Commissioners:

It is an unusual season this year trying to cope and plan during the Covid-19 pandemic, and I hope this finds you all doing well. We have opted to cancel our May sampling but expect to begin with the full parameters in the end of June and continue monthly through September. The Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee thanks you for your past support enabling us to continue our surveillance of E.coli in the River, and additional funding enabled us to procure three new dissolved oxygen/conductivity meters.

This past summer 150+ hours were logged by 21 volunteers to accomplish the various aspects of the program. The Ashuelot River is classified as "Class B," meaning that it is considered suitable for fishing, swimming and other recreational uses. It continues to maintain its designation as Class B waters for **dissolved oxygen, specific conductance, chloride and turbidity.**

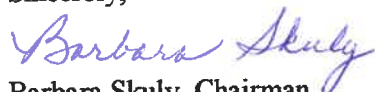
E. coli counts remained within standards for most of the summer but continued to be high after a heavy rainfall. Good precautions after a heavy rain include avoiding swimming in the river because of the increase in run-off which typically means high bacteria counts. **Specific conductance** measures ions in the water and while within standards, does show an increase from Keene and downstream, evidence of human impact. **Phosphorus** levels continue to be reduced and below the level of concern with one exception from the South Branch being just over this level. **Acidity** continues as an ongoing concern with low pH in the headwaters, slowly becoming less acidic as the river flows through Keene and downstream to Hinsdale where it tends to be at the required level.

Please access the full data report with state standards at <https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/vrap/ashuelot/index.htm>. All collected data is submitted to the EPA and used by the NHDES in assessing the status of the river.

The Ashuelot River is a valuable asset to your community who benefits by the maintenance of its healthy River ecosystem. With this in mind, ARLAC is asking for your continued support of our Ashuelot River monitoring. \$125 from each town would once again assure that our bacteria monitoring continues.

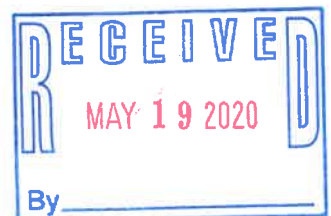
Our season starts June 23rd and we hope we can count on your support! If you are interested in joining as a volunteer, let me know, we'd love to see you!

Sincerely,



Barbara Skuly, Chairman
bskuly@ne.rr.com

19 Spring St., Swanzey, NH 03446, (603) 352-0987



THIS PAGE IS INTENDED TO BE BLANK.



New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions

SERVING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S COMMUNITIES SINCE 1970
54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301 | (603) 224-7867 | www.nhacc.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Zachary Boyajian
Chichester
President

Lesley Johnson
Surrey
Vice President

Jim Owers
Concord
Treasurer

Kristen Murphy
Dover
Secretary

Bruce Allen
Springfield
Past President

Jennifer Beck
Wilton

Cris Blackstone
Newmarket

Lisa Morin
Laconia

David Nieman
Goffstown

Kathy Schillemat
Nelson

Larry Spencer
Holderness

STAFF

Barbara Richter
Executive Director

Linda Griebisch
Administration

May 27, 2020


Dear Keene Conservation Commission,
We hope all of you are well and healthy during this trying time. At NHACC we are working hard to make sure you have updated information to help you continue to protect natural resources in your community. People are visiting town conservation lands more than ever to stay healthy and have a chance to get outside. Your work is critical to your community. Thank you for all you do.

This is just a friendly reminder that we need your conservation commission to renew your NHACC membership so we can continue to provide technical assistance and strong leadership. Attached is your invoice for easy payment. We understand that these are uncertain times and if you have any questions about your membership please feel free to contact me at Barbara@NHACC.org.

Your annual dues provide so much more than access to expert advice. Remember, the benefits of membership include:

- Discounted rate at our **Annual Conference in November**;
- Representation in the state legislature and on state-wide commissions to make sure your voice is heard;
- Access to technical assistance and guidance on conservation funding, natural resource inventory, and many other issues;
- Educational opportunities focused on wetland permit review, conservation planning and wildlife habitat protection;
- Networking opportunities including roundtables, hikes, and potluck gatherings;
- Up-to-date publications from our E-newsletter and Legislative Updates.
- **Most importantly, your support of NHACC helps build a stronger New Hampshire conservation community.**

NHACC's goal is to ensure that all NH commissions remain strong and relevant within their communities, making NH a healthy, desirable place to live and work. We cannot accomplish this goal alone; we need your help. Please renew your NHACC membership for 2020. We look forward to working with you again this year.

Sincerely,

Barbara Richter,
Executive Director

NH Association of Conservation Commissions
54 Portsmouth Street
Concord, NH 03301

www.nhacc.org

info@nhacc.org

Invoice

Invoice No.


895

Date

10/01/19

Bill To

Keene Conservation Commission
City of Keene
3 Washington St
Keene, NH 03431

Item	Amount
FY 2020 Membership Dues	900.00
	

Thank you for your membership!

Total

\$900.00



City of Keene

New Hampshire

City of Keene Conservation Commission
c/o Mr. Rhett Lamb, Staff Liaison
3 Washington St.
Keene, NH 03431

May 15, 2020

RE: Roxbury Street Bridge over Beaver Brook – Commencement of Work

Dear Mr. Lamb,

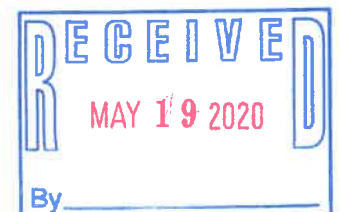
In accordance with condition 7 of wetlands and non-site specific permit 2019-00438 for the Roxbury Street Bridge, the City of Keene is providing notice of construction commencement for the items covered by this permit. A separate copy of this notice will be provided to the NHDES Wetlands Bureau. We expect the contractor to mobilize to the site on June 1 to begin construction.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 603-352-6550.

Sincerely,

Brett Rusnock, P.E.
Civil Engineer

Cc: Rob Maccini, Project Manager, Kingsbury Companies LLC (via email)
Josh Lund, Project Manager, McFarland-Johnson, Inc. (via email)



K:\ENGNRNG_2017 Projects\17-36 - Bridge Roxbury Street Rehab\0-Public Interaction\20200515 letter to conservation commission, construction starts.docx

City of Keene, Public Works Department • 350 Marlboro Street • Keene, NH • 03431 • www.ci.keene.nh.us

THIS PAGE IS INTENDED TO BE BLANK.

January 22, 2020

Mayor George Hansel

Keene City Council

3 Washington Street

Keene, NH 03431

Subject: Bee City USA Application

All,

A Bee City promotes a healthy and sustainable environment for pollinators. This is important because much of the food the citizens of Keene live on depends on the services of our insect and bird pollinators to set fruit or fertilize the seeds necessary for the next generation. I suggest that the City of Keene consider becoming a Bee City.

The Xerces Society has established criteria to become a Bee City. In broad terms the steps needed are to: Raise Pollinator Awareness, Enhance Habitat and Celebrate Success. The administrative steps include an application, assigning a liaison for Bee City USA within a city committee, working with Bee City USA on a draft resolution, approving the resolution, making the formal application and following up with annual reports on activities and successes.

Currently there are only two cities within New England that have been approved for the program: Burlington VT and Durham NH.

There is more detailed information on this program at www.beecityusa.org. I would be happy to make a presentation explaining this program to any committee designated by the city to review this suggestion.

In the event that the city decided to move forward, I would also be honored to volunteer to be a Grassroots Leader on the effort and as an officer of the Monadnock Beekeepers' Association I could also be a liaison to our local pollinator stewards.

Should you have any questions please contact me as indicated below.

Respectfully,



John Therriault

76 Bradford Road

Phone: 903-0213