

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, October 21, 2024**

**4:30 PM**

**Room 22,  
Recreation Center**

**Members Present:**

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair  
Councilor Robert Williams  
Art Walker  
Ken Bergman  
Steven Bill  
Barbara Richter  
Eloise Clark, Alternate (arrived 4:36 PM)  
Thomas Haynes, Alternate  
John Therriault, Alternate (Voting)  
Deborah LeBlanc, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
David Hickling, Airport Director

**Members Not Present:**

Councilor Andrew Madison, Vice Chair  
Lee Stanish, Alternate

**1) Call to Order**

Chair Von Plinsky called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

**2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 16, 2024**

Revisions: Line 144, add “or not” after “whether.” Line 304, indicate that Matt Kelly is still the current Cheshire County Forester.

A motion by Mr. Walker to adopt the September 16, 2024 minutes as amended was duly seconded by Mr. Bergman and the motion carried unanimously.

**3) Report-Outs:**

**A) Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee**

Mr. Haynes reported that since the Commission’s last meeting, the Subcommittee had met for three different work sessions, one on a Friday and two on Saturdays. Most of this work had been on the Rope Tow Trail, as well as an adjacent trail, where crushed stone and rocks were moved

to create a nice, small bridge over a wet area. Weather permitting, the Subcommittee was planning for two more work sessions on the second Friday and third Saturday in November. In December, the Subcommittee would transition to indoor meetings and start planning for 2025 projects. If any Commissioners have ideas for the Subcommittee to consider for 2025, they are encouraged to approach Mr. Haynes, Mr. Walker, and/or Mr. Bill. The initial plans are to continue trail work in addition to more educational outreach. Mr. Haynes added that the bridge over the spillway is still a pretty high priority. He also explained an idea for an all-access trail for the lower pond that connects to the spillway.

Mr. Haynes also reported that on October 9, he led a group of 15 people who do a Wednesday walk through four miles of trails that are not normally used, and he said it was a lot of fun. Additionally, he reported that Mr. Bill would be leading another Goose Pond Through the Seasons fall walk about geology on Saturday, November 9, beginning at the North Trailhead at 9:00 AM.

### **B) Invasive Species**

Councilor Williams reported that there was an invasive species event at Robin Hood Park on October 11 addressing areas of Japanese knotweed for the fourth year, noting that it was starting to make a difference by growing back in lower quantities; in the best case situations, this allows native species to grow back and thrive in its place. Councilor Williams was pleased with this latest event. He reported that the final event of the year would be on November 11, Veterans Day, at 4:00 PM, pulling vines along on Eastern Avenue and the Rail Trail.

### **C) Land Conservation**

Chair Von Plinsky reported that he and Ms. Brunner were able to locate the conservation easement monitoring documents that had been missing that the Commission discussed at the previous meeting. They unpacked the contents for the various conservation easements in the City. He said a Commissioner would need to take the lead on the annual easement monitoring that is required; essentially, walking each property and noting any changes or concerns. Ms. LeBlanc offered, if other Councilors are willing to advise at the beginning. Chair Von Plinsky agreed that she would have plenty of help and guidance.

Ms. Clark arrived.

### **D) Pollinator Updates**

Mr. Therriault said that there were no new pollinator patches in the City to report on. However, he reported that the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation published a guide to creating an integrated pest management plan for public works organizations, highway departments, cities, etc. Because the City of Keene is a Bee City USA via the Xerces Society, this guide is available

to the City. In particular, there is a focus on reducing the use of pesticides. Chair Von Plinsky agreed that would be a fantastic resource.

Mr. Bergman asked if there was an update on the Washington Street Extension Property. Ms. Brunner said she did not have an update.

Chair Von Plinsky asked if there was an update on the Edgewood Neighborhood pollinator garden. Mr. Therriault said it would be bigger than he expected, noting that during every step of the neighborhood's planning process, the garden plans kept getting bigger. Chair Von Plinsky said he looked forward to seeing it in the spring.

#### **4) Airport Proposed Wildlife Control Fence – Project Update**

Chair Von Plinsky welcomed David Hickling, the City of Keene's Director of the Dillant-Hopkins Airport, for an update on the proposed wildlife control fence at the Airport. The Commission had long-term interest in this project and there had been public interest due to wildlife viewing along Airport Road. Mr. Hickling recalled that this project is the scope of the Swanzey Conservation Commission, but he had been keeping Keene's Conservation Commission informed and Mr. Bergman had been contacting Mr. Hickling offering the Keene Commission's help. As such, due to recent project developments, Mr. Hickling felt this was an opportune time for another discussion with this group.

Mr. Hickling explained that over the previous few months, he had been working through the NH Department of Transportation (DOT) Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings, through which he said there had been some pushback on the City's preferred location of the wildlife control fence, which would be in the runway's object free area. The pushback was such that now, the project's engineering consultants—McFarland Johnson—proposed locating the fence at the closest point to the runway possible without entering the object free area. However, this would place 800 feet of the fence in the wetland along its edge, which the NH Department of Environment Services (DES) has said is unacceptable and told the City to consider the other option along Airport Road. However, Mr. Hickling said that the City told NH DES multiple times that siting the fence along Airport Road is not preferred, and further, it is not even practical for the objective of the project, which is to keep wildlife away from the runway. Still, he said DES did not seem to want to budge.

So, due to these challenges, Mr. Hickling said that McFarland Johnson's environmental specialist reviewed the possibility of putting the fence along Airport Road. Environmentally, Mr. Hickling said that the specialist told Mr. Hickling that it would be better to locate the fence along the edge of the runway (the City's preferred location) because the fence could not actually be constructed right along Airport road but would have to be offset into the wetland. This would include enclosed utility poles farther from the fence into the wetland that would have to be accessible to the utilities. Significantly, though, Mr. Hickling said that if the fence was along Airport Road, approximately 136 acres of habitat—including approximately 108 acres of

wetland habitat—would be fenced into the Airport property and separated from other habitat. From an environmental standpoint, Mr. Hickling said this was the greatest standout to the consulting environmental specialist. Further, Mr. Hickling recalled the strong public opposition to a fence along Airport Road due to the popular wildlife viewing and bird watching. He said it seemed that NH DES might have been more focused on their concern for direct physical impacts on the wetland from the object free area. However, Mr. Hickling recalled that the wetland impact would only really be from the installation of the fence. Once the fence is installed, he said there would really be no overall impacts on the functions or values of the wetland, which are part of the criteria that NH DES are supposed to use when making these determinations. Rather, Mr. Hickling said that Mr. Hoffman indicated that DES was not looking at those criteria but were focused on the impact of installing the fence along the edge of the runway.

Mr. Hickling continued, explaining that following a site visit at the Airport with all parties involved, NH DES still wanted the City to consider alternatives to siting the fence along the runway, which he said left Mr. Hoffman from McFarland Johnson unsure how to proceed. The agency asked Mr. Hickling to ask the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) if they would allow for placing the fence further from the wetland and closer to the runway. Mr. Hickling agreed to inquire, but doubted it would be approved because the object free area is generally a no pass zone.

Mr. Therriault asked about the length of the runway. Mr. Hickling said 6,200 feet. Mr. Therriault asked if it would make a difference if the runway was 6,000 feet. Mr. Hickling said no, the runway length is not a factor; the object free area is parallel to the runway, not off the end of it, and the wetland issue is not at the end of the runway. The issue is along the edge parallel to the runway running north–south.

Mr. Hickling explained that due to these challenges, the consultants at McFarland Johnson advised that he should bring these updates to the Keene Conservation Commission so this would be documented in the minutes, which would reflect that the Keene Commission supports siting the fence closer to the runway object free area as the better environmental alternative, and not along Airport Road. He hoped the Commission would consider writing a letter in this regard.

Chair Von Plinsky welcomed a discussion from the Commission.

Ms. LeBlanc asked how much of the wetland would be enclosed in the runway area if the fence was closer to the runway. Mr. Hickling said 800 feet. Mr. Therriault said 800 running feet and Mr. Hickling said yes. Mr. Bergman said roughly parallel to the terminus of the short runway and Mr. Hickling said south of that, so Mr. Bergman said it would be somewhat parallel to Airport Road but at the upper far end of the marsh. Mr. Bergman asked about the shape of the object free area. Mr. Hickling explained that the object free area runs 500 feet from the center line of the runway and within that area, there can be no objects unless they are frangible and used for navigation (e.g., runway lights). Mr. Hickling said it was possible that he could ask the FAA to move the fence 5 feet closer to the runway and they might say yes, but it is a static object, so it

technically is not allowed in the object free zone. NH DES asked the City to pursue an alternative that takes the fence out of the wetland and as close to the runway as possible.

Chair Von Plinsky asked about the footprint of the fence; 800 feet long and 5 feet wide, so approximately 4,000 square feet. Mr. Hickling said it would not even be 5 feet wide because the footprint of the fence posts would only be a cement block. Once the fence is installed, Mr. Hickling said there should be no impact to the wetland.

Mr. Bergman asked if the Swanze Conservation Commission participated in the most recent site visit. Mr. Hickling did not think so. Mr. Hickling noted that the project consultants would be presenting before the Swanze Conservation Commission on November 4.

Chair Von Plinsky discussed next steps the Commission could take. He suggested that Mr. Bergman could draft a letter on behalf of the Keene Conservation Commission to discuss and vote on at the November meeting (after the Swanze meeting on 11/4). The letter would expressly outline the Commission's concerns about the different possibilities for the fence. Mr. Hickling said that voting on the letter at the November 18 meeting would be timely; these meeting minutes demonstrating the Commission's position would also be approved then. Mr. Hickling said he could ask the Swanze Conservation Commission to write a letter as well; Mr. Bergman hoped their letter would not be contradictory, and Mr. Therriault suggested that they could receive a copy of Keene's draft letter in advance of their meeting to reference.

Mr. Bergman agreed to draft a letter on Keene Conservation Commission advocating for siting the Airport's wildlife control fence closer to the runway, not along Airport Road, as well as to attend the Swanze Conservation Commission's meeting on November 4. Then, the draft letter would be submitted to Ms. Brunner in advance of the November Commission meeting to share with the whole Commission for discussion. Mr. Bergman asked to have an additional conversation with Mr. Hickling and/or Mr. Hoffman before drafting the letter to ensure he accurately understood the options and Mr. Hickling agreed.

Mr. Haynes commented on the fact that this is meant to be a wildlife control fence—keeping wildlife away from the Airport runways for safety—and placing the fence along Airport Road would enclose wildlife within the Airport property. Mr. Hickling agreed that was his concern, because if the fence is along Airport Road, 136 acres of habitat would be enclosed on the Airport property, making it almost impossible to eliminate the primary concern for aircraft safety: white tailed deer. He cited a similar problem at the Syracuse, NY, airport. Mr. Haynes said that should be one argument against having the fence along Airport Road and Mr. Hickling said that is his biggest argument.

Mr. Hickling stated that if DES forces placing the fence along Airport Road, he would likely cancel the project entirely, because he thinks it could create a more dangerous situation. While Mr. Hickling said it would be terrible to cancel the project, he was concerned about the safety of flights because of the number of deer. Then, he would have to write a letter to the FAA,

indicating that the City was trying to make the Airport safer, but was denied that opportunity, so if something bad happens in the future, the City is not liable.

Mr. Hickling shared a funding update. If this hurdle is overcome with DES, there would be a smaller grant for the rest of the design and permitting for FY-2025, with construction in FY-2026.

Mr. Bergman asked to what degree the public could be mustered for this cause without somehow undermining Mr. Hickling's credibility. Mr. Bill suggested incorporating NH Audubon. Mr. Bergman said he reached out to NH Audubon 4–5 years ago about this, and Mr. Bergman indicated that NH Audubon said that birds could fly over the fence, so they were not concerned about birding. Mr. Bergman felt that was atypical of NH Audubon's general promotion of environmental education, birding, and natural history. He said the Commission could try again.

Mr. Hickling said that if DES is adamant that the fence cannot be along the runway, then he would try to leverage the FAA to pressure them about the fact that this is for the safety of aviation. Mr. Bergman recalled that when George Hansel was on the Commission, he suggested a last resort of installing viewing stations in a fence along Airport Road if it has to be there. Mr. Hickling noted that would be costly. The Commission thanked Mr. Hickling for his work.

**5) Discussion About a Citywide Approach/Strategy for Invasive Species Management**

Chair Von Plinsky welcomed Bob Milliken of Allen Court, an invasive species expert, who sits on the Board of the Hogback Mountain Conservation Association, and is the Invasive Species person for this year. The Association has been fighting invasives inside the Conservation Area along Rt-9 (e.g., the hedgerows along Rt-9 traveling to Wilmington, VT) for more than 7 years. They are fighting substantial Japanese knotweed manually—no herbicides. However, they fight wild chervil and wild parsnip the hardest. Mr. Milliken said he had never seen those species in Keene, until one day walking by the pond near Elm Street and Court Street, near the daycare for Cheshire Medical Center when he saw wild parsnip and he was devastated. In most cases, he said both of those plants arise because they are spread when snow is plowed over them after the seeds pop, or if dirt is transported from other places. This year, over the 2-mile stretch of the Hogback Mountain Conservation Area along Rt-9, he said they only pulled 20 plants.

Mr. Milliken was concerned that these invasives were spreading to NH and Keene, so he reported it to the City, and learned about Chair Von Plinsky and the Commission; he was concerned that there were rules prohibiting him from pulling the invasives on public property. Unfortunately, after he reported the plants, the City mowed over some of the invasives that were seeding, so those probably spread. Another invasive of concern is bittersweet. Mr. Milliken described working with a scientist who used an herbicide called Buckthorn Blaster, which is not a spray—he compared it to a bingo dauber—that is applied to woody plants after they are cut at the root; it kills one plant and does not spread. Mr. Bergman asked if a license is needed to apply the Buckthorn Blaster and Mr. Milliken said yes.

Chair Von Plinsky thanked Mr. Milliken for coming and sharing his expertise as a master gardener, as the challenges he described are ones this Commission had been grappling with for some time; people want to help with this problem but they do not know who to call, what to do, if they are allowed to help, or where. Chair Von Plinsky thought that Mr. Milliken's expertise and comments bolstered the Commission's decision to write a letter to the Council calling for a broader Citywide approach to invasive species management. Chair Von Plinsky sought the Commission's feedback on the letter he drafted that Ms. Brunner shared via email. Once the letter is approved by the Commission and submitted to the City Council, it could be forwarded to any of the three Council Standing Committees but should get through that process by the New Year. This would involve Chair Von Plinsky presenting to the Standing Committee, and it would be great for other Commissioners to come and speak as well. He asked for other feedback on the letter.

Commissioners suggested adding the following points to the letter:

- Mr. Bill suggested that at the end of the second paragraph, it might be relevant to comment on how plants damage infrastructure, particularly from a financial perspective for the City.
- Mr. Milliken noted that wild chervil and wild parsnip are dangerous to skin, and the sap will blister in the sun like a second-degree burn, so one must be trained to pull them.
- Ms. Richter emailed suggestions to Chair Von Plinsky about the overall impacts of invasives. She added the overall negative impacts to native species and potential associated impacts to human health.
- Ms. Richter also suggested adding that City staff should have some level of education or training on how to remove/dispose/control invasives. She emailed Ms. Brunner language on mowing best practices that the Public Works Department should be familiar with. She was not suggesting an intensive or long training, but said there are great resources available, especially for species like knotweed to develop best long-term practices.
- Mr. Bill noted that it would be nice if there was one person associated with the City of Keene that members of the public can call for invasive species issues.

Discussion ensued about how important it will be to have someone on City staff that who is formally in charge of invasive species management, and the fact that it cannot be Councilor Williams or a single volunteer. Dedicated time and resources are needed, not necessarily full-time. When there is an invasive species issue a member of the public is concerned about, there needs to be a member of City staff they can call or email directly. Commissioners agreed that it would be ideal for the person in charge to regularly report to the Conservation Commission.

Discussion ensued on the action the Commission would be asking the Council to take in this letter, with Councilor Williams noting that the Commission would need to be convincing. The Councilor said this is an issue a lot of people care about—including a lot of Councilors—but he asked: Where do we go from here? What is the broader intent? Chair Von Plinsky thought it would be best to get the letter into the hands of the City Manager as early in the process as

possible to shorten the length of the process, but he was unsure how the process might fully work. Mr. Therriault thought that if the Commission was asking the City Manager to assign resources from within the Parks and Recreation or Public Works Departments, then the Commission might need to provide a measurable objective, like remediating 1/2-acre of invasive species per year; otherwise he thought it might fall by the wayside. Chair Von Plinsky was concerned that only remediating a specific area could keep focus from preventing invasives elsewhere or not getting credit for preventing them elsewhere; he said it was a fine line. Councilor Williams said that if the communication is forwarded to the City Manager, one option would be for her to appoint a committee (if not this Commission) including City staff members and the public for a short period to develop a plan, which the City has done for other issues like housing.

Mr. Bill asked about financial support; the City cannot hire anyone without money. Councilor Williams agreed, noting that the Council/City Manager would likely look to the Conservation Commission's budget, which he said gains \$25,000 annually from the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund for conservation purposes—in the past, used mostly for land purchases. The Councilor did not want to shift it all toward invasive species management. However, he thought the Commission could ask the Council to be a little more generous in their portion of that tax that is provided to the Commission, and that balance could be directed toward invasive management. Chair Von Plinsky thought that might help contribute toward the accountability needed, but he still thought that while the Commission could make recommendations, it would be Councilor Williams' and the other 14 Councilors' jobs to determine the details. Still, Chair Von Plinsky felt strongly that there should be a point of contact on City staff.

Mr. Milliken noted that the Hogback Mountain Conservation Association has a website, pamphlets, and flyers for public outreach. The public is asked not to pull plants because they are not trained. Instead, flags are available, and members of the public can mark things and email the Association to send trained volunteers out.

Ms. Richter asked about the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund cap. Ms. Brunner explained that \$25,000 goes into the Fund annually regardless of whether there was any funding from the Land Use Change Tax. Mr. Haynes noted that there is a complex formula for this, but explained that in the past, the City was getting less and less money in that tax from the exchange of land, so the Commission lobbied to get that \$25,000 as one fee each year so the Commission would have more stability in its budget. Ms. Richter was curious to know if the Commission's budget could be supplemented if there was more than \$25,000 in Land Use Change Tax in a given year. Chair Von Plinsky still hesitated to spend the Commission's whole budget on this effort, but said the Commission could contribute/partner with the City.

Mr. Bill recalled mention at the previous meeting that someone was applying pesticides along a stretch of Beaver Brook. Ms. Brunner said that was not a City staff member, but someone hired by the City. Mr. Bill wondered—if that is a regular budget item for the City and something that is relevant to what the City is trying to do on a broader scale—if it would make sense to expand.



Ms. Brunner said the person to ask would be the Public Works Director, Don Lussier. Given the overall discussion, Mr. Haynes thought it might be ideal to invite the Public Works Director for a conversation with the Commission to discuss how to approach this with the City. Chair Von Plinsky agreed, and added that involving the Parks and Recreation Director, Carrah Fisk-Hennessey, could be wise too, to understand their concerns ahead of time. However, they might be involved through the Council communication process. Mr. Haynes suggested consulting them first so there is less for them to figure out once the Commission's letter reaches the Council. Chair Von Plinsky agreed, noting that the only downside was time. The Commission agreed to invite the Public Works Director and Parks and Recreation Director, or their representatives, to the Commission's November meeting.

The Commission thanked Mr. Milliken for his contributions. Chair Von Plinsky noted that they were looking for new Commissioners if Mr. Milliken is interested.

**6) Discussion Items:**

**A) NHACC Intern Opportunity**

Chair Von Plinsky informed the Commission that their NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) internship application was not selected. When writing the letter, Chair Von Plinsky and Councilor Williams identified how to start the actual, on the ground process, so they still could envision a way forward without a dedicated intern. Ms. Brunner asked Ms. Richter to share a copy of the application form and Ms. Richter agreed to send it.

Mr. Bill asked if there was an indication of why the application was not selected. Ms. Richter said it was very competitive with 16 applications and only three were chosen due to funding. She recalled that this was a pilot program to see the interest level and how the NHACC could work with towns. While Keene was high on the list, she said towns were chosen because of specific projects that had compelling support for the interns as a part of the applications, so Ms. Richter said it was a challenge for the selection committee; she was not on the committee.

Mr. Haynes thought that in terms of the broader discussion, having developed this well-organized application and plan could provide the Commission with more leeway/leverage to apply for future internships or projects through the local colleges, etc.

**B) Keene Meadow Solar Station Project Update**

There was no update on the Keene Meadow Solar Station project.

Mr. Bergman mentioned recent conversations about other solar projects, such as at the Monadnock View Cemetery and another a new one being explored at the Airport. Ms. Brunner said the Monadnock View Cemetery solar project was moving forward and she thought they had received the Zoning Variance needed for that use in a Conservation Zoning District. Revision Energy would be building that solar array, the City would be leasing the land, and Cedarcrest

would be purchasing the energy. Mr. Bergman had heard about the new solar possibility at the Airport during a recent event at the Airport, which Ms. Clark said was hosted by the Monadnock Sustainability Hub. Ms. Brunner noted that the City’s Energy and Climate Committee (ECC) has work groups and one tracks the various local solar locations being considered, including both of these sites. Chair Von Plinsky added that he spoke with City Councilor Bryan Lake—a member of the ECC—about finding a way to work together because there is a lot of overlap between what the ECC and Conservation Commission do.

**C) NHDOT Route 101 Project**

Chair Von Plinsky checked the project website and said the next public engagement should be in early 2025 with a design presentation. This should remain on the agenda so the Commission can have a presence then, because he was proud the Commission had input in how the project made it through the early stages of the process.

**D) Master Plan Update**

Ms. Brunner shared handouts of the outputs from the Master Plan Future Summit in October. She showed the six pillars that the Master Plan Steering Committee had identified based on all of the public input received so far: Livable Housing, Thriving Economy, Connected Mobility, Vibrant Neighborhoods, Adaptable Workforce, & Flourishing Environment. The handout provided an overview of the community vision. By mid-November, the consultants would have a discussion board online for each of the six pillars, and task forces would be formed for each pillar that would meet virtually with consultants and City staff during January–April 2025; anyone interested should contact Ms. Brunner or Chair Von Plinsky. Chair Von Plinsky encouraged participation, noting that environmental decision making takes place at every pillar—infrastructure, housing, business, etc. Ms. Brunner agreed, adding that things like collaboration and sustainability are the underpinnings and foundations of every pillar. She also agreed that representation was needed for each task force and encouraged those interested to contact her.

**E) Outreach**

Chair Von Plinsky said that the Master Plan is one form of the Commission’s outreach, as will be the invasive species letter when it moves forward. If there are passionate members of the community, he urged Commissioners to invite them to participate.

**F) NHACC Annual Meeting & Conference – November 2, Pembroke Academy**

The keynote presenters this year are Dave Anderson and Chris Martin from NHPR “Something Wild.” Ms. Richter said there would be eight separate tracks focused on everything from fundamentals of wildlife to land conservation. Mr. Bill asked if there would be same day registration. Ms. Richter said not typically, but they would be unlikely to turn anyone away who

wants to pay the registration fee cash that day or online via credit card in advance. Mr. Bergman said last year, he was unable to enter some of the sessions he was interested in because they were already booked. Ms. Richter said the workshops are not policed, so it is best to let those who signed-up for a workshop go in first, and if there is extra space, you can sneak in the back.

Chair Von Plinsky recalled that in 2023, the Commission voted to approve paying for four Commissioners to attend the Conference.

A motion by Mr. Therriault for the Conservation Commission to pay from its budget for up to four (4) Conservation Commissioners' registration to attend the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions Annual Conference was duly seconded by Mr. Bill. The motion carried unanimously.

**G) CCCD Annual Conservation Commission Potluck – November 19, 6:00 PM–8:00 PM, Stonewall Farm**

Discussion ensued about this informal event. The keynote speaker is Josh Megyesy of NH Fish & Game, a turtle specialist, who would talk about turtle crossings. Chair Von Plinsky encouraged participation. Sign-up on the Cheshire County Conservation District website. Ms. Richter agreed, noting that the NHACC partners with the Cheshire County Conservation District on this event. She said the goal is to eventually have more of a program or project that would look at areas within Cheshire County to protect turtle habitat and crossings. Chair Von Plinsky said this would be a great opportunity to meet others working on conservation in the region.

**7) New or Other Business**

Mr. Bergman advised driving up Arch Street by the High School where the dam was being constructed, noting that it was in an interesting stage of semi-completion and was worth looking at to get a sense of what the dam is made of.

Councilor Williams reported that he saw an announcement on the extensive Japanese knotweed problem at Ladies' Wildwood Park, which was treated with what he thought was glyphosate. He anticipated that some would survive but he thought it would have killed a lot. However, he saw a lot of native species damaged by the herbicide too, so there were advantages and disadvantages. He encouraged everyone to keep an eye on it and the effect of that treatment over the next few years.

Councilor Williams also spoke about trees, recalling that in 2023, the Commission wrote a letter to the City Council asking for action on trees, which had been slow. However, he said that the week following this meeting, the City Council's Finance, Organization, & Personnel Standing Committee would be discussing ways to fund street trees. He explained that the City had been fined for air pollution at the Transfer Station, and as a part of that fine, the City negotiated that some of the money could be spent on street trees. If all is approved, it would be \$44,000 to plant

30 trees hopefully in 2025. This would be a one-time source of funding, so the Commission/City would need to be on the lookout for other sources, but he said this would get the program started. Chair Von Plinsky thanked Councilor Williams for being the Conservation Commission's voice on the City Council.

Ms. Brunner mentioned the NHACC dues and Chair Von Plinsky tabled them until the November meeting.

Chair Von Plinsky recalled that his and Mr. Bergman's membership would end in December. Chair Von Plinsky would be writing a letter to Mayor Kahn with recommendations for new members and to recommend that Mr. Therriault and Ms. LeBlanc be moved up as regular members. Mr. Bergman was interested in continuing to serve as an alternate. Commissioners were advised to send any other recommendations for new members to Chair Von Plinsky. The Commission can have seven regular members and five alternates. Chair Von Plinsky liked the idea of recruiting some new members who had never served before.

**8) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Von Plinsky adjourned the meeting at 5:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker  
October 28, 2024

Reviewed and edited by,  
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner