



CONSERVATION COMMISSION

AGENDA

Monday, August 21, 2023

4:30 PM

Room 22, Recreation Center

Commission Members

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair
Councilor Andrew Madison, Vice Chair
Art Walker
Councilor Robert Williams, Ex-Officio
Eloise Clark
Steven Bill
Kenneth Bergman

Deborah LeBlanc, Alternate
Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate
John Therriault, Alternate
Brian Reilly, Alternate
Lee Stanish, Alternate

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2023
3. Report-outs
 - 1) Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee
 - 2) Outreach
 - 3) Invasive Species
 - 4) Land Conservation
4. Street Tree Discussion – Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director will discuss the City of Keene's policies and practices as they relate to street tree replacements. In addition, he will discuss the expected impact of the [Downtown Infrastructure project](#) on street trees along Main Street and Central Square.
5. Discussion Items:
 - a) Society for the Protection of NH Forests – request for comments on reaccreditation application.
 - b) Keene Meadow Solar Station project update.
 - c) Potential Land Purchase Update (Rt 9/Washington St. Ext. properties).
 - d) Airport proposed wildlife control fence update.
 - e) Conservation Commission speaking events.
 - f) Wantastiquet-Monadnock Coalition – Request for Commission assistance with construction of a bathroom along the Wantastiquet-Monadnock trail.
6. New or Other Business
 - a) Neighborhood Pollinator Garden
 - b) Antioch University New England – Collaborative Service Initiative Request for Proposals
7. Adjourn – Next meeting date: **Monday, September 18, 2023**

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
4
5 CONSERVATION COMMISSION
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Monday, July 17, 2023

4:30 PM

**Room 22,
Recreation Center**

Members Present:

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair
Councilor Andrew Madison, Vice Chair (5:25 PM)
Eloise Clark
Councilor Robert Williams
Art Walker
Ken Bergman
Lee Stanish, Alternate (Voting)
Brian Reilly, Alternate (Voting)
Thomas Haynes, Alternate
John Therriault, Alternate

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Members Not Present:

Steven Bill
Deborah LeBlanc, Alternate

8
9
10 **SITE VISIT: At 3:30 PM, before the meeting, Commissioners conducted a site visit to the**
11 **property located at 0 Old Walpole Road (TMP #211-010-000).**
12

13 **1) Call to Order**

14
15 Chair Von Plinsky called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

16
17 **2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 19, 2023**

18
19 A motion by Mr. Walker to approve the June 19, 2023 minutes was duly seconded by Mr. Reilly
20 and the motion carried unanimously.

21
22 **3) Planning Board Referral: Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit**
23 **Application, SWP-CUP-03-23 – 2 Lot Subdivision – Old Walpole Rd. (TMP# 211-**
24 **010-000)**
25

26 Chair Von Plinsky welcomed Jim Phippard of Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC. Mr.
27 Phippard presented on behalf of Keene Executive Homes, which owns one of the largest

28 properties (211 acres) in Keene on the north side of Old Walpole Road. Keene Executive Homes
29 proposed to subdivide 5 acres along their frontage for a single-family house lot. In developing
30 the proposal, it was determined that the only way to get a driveway up to the proposed building
31 site would be to cross some of the wetland buffers that exist on the property. Impacting those
32 buffers would require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from the Planning Board. This site visit
33 and discussion were so the Conservation Commission could make any necessary
34 recommendations to the Planning Board. Mr. Phippard used site plans to demonstrate the
35 proposal. He recalled that the site visit began on an existing woods road, which would become a
36 part of the shared driveway leading to the proposed 5-acre building lot and the remaining 206-
37 acre tract. He recalled that during the site visit, they walked up the proposed driveway path and
38 stopped where Commissioners could see remains of the test pit, which indicated that the property
39 could support a septic system; there is no City water or sewer at this location.

40

41 Mr. Phippard continued describing the wetlands on site. There is a wetland in the center of the
42 property and two others along the frontage on both sides of the existing woods road; the
43 impacted wetland buffers are for the latter two wetlands along Old Walpole Road. When leaving
44 the woods road to go into the site, the proposed driveway would impact approximately 2,000
45 square feet of the wetland buffer. Mr. Phippard said Ms. Brunner advised him that the existing
46 woods road would need to be included as a part of the impacted area because it would be
47 resurfaced with a hardpack; there would be no excavation or widening. Thus, the woods road
48 would be another 1,500 square feet of impacted road surface that is entirely in the wetland
49 buffers. He showed where the buffers overlap and encompass the existing woods road. No direct
50 impacts to wetlands were proposed.

51

52 Mr. Phippard said the proposed gravel driveway would be 10 feet wide with a hardpack surface.
53 A turnaround would be constructed to accommodate fire trucks, per the City Code. He recalled
54 the site visit, where he said Commissioners saw shrubs and trees; a few trees would have to be
55 removed to construct the driveway. Mr. Phippard said he reviewed the site and considered
56 various options to place the driveway with minimum wetland buffer impacts. He considered an
57 option to have the driveway entirely within the lot; he noted that in his experience, there could be
58 conflicts with shared driveways. He considered a driveway on the higher part of the lot to
59 mitigate slopes. He used a map to demonstrate the 3 driveway locations he considered: (a) 8%
60 grade all the way to the building site, which is a reasonable grade for a gravel driveway; (b)
61 entirely within the wetland buffers but at a flatter grade; (c) off the existing woods road at 10%
62 grade. The buyer of this lot decided they wanted a steeper but shorter driveway, which they were
63 familiar with from their previous driveway and knew how to maintain. Approximately 130 feet
64 of the chosen driveway option would be within the wetland buffer. The center of the proposed
65 driveway would be at 15% grade, which is the maximum allowed in the City's driveway
66 standards. The remainder of the driveway would be at 6% grade.

67

68 Mr. Phippard described how drainage would work for a steep slope driveway. He had experience
69 with similar driveways in the City, such as ones on Hurricane Road and Darling Road, some of
70 which were gravel driveways that he said held up very well. When building a gravel driveway on

71 a steep slope, it is best to raise the road above the existing grade and “crown” it in the middle.
72 This would not collect runoff going down the road itself, but the runoff would sheet drain off the
73 sides of the driveway to areas where the runoff and potential erosion would be controlled. In this
74 instance, there would be a swale on the uphill side of the driveway that would collect runoff
75 coming down the hill and half of the runoff from the driveway itself. Where the slope exceeds
76 5% there would be a stone-lined swale (5 feet wide) and that water would be directed to a level
77 spreader, where the runoff volume would be slowed, sediment would settle out, and then the
78 runoff would be filtered through vegetation. The runoff would dissipate through this area, and
79 flow through the remaining buffer area before reaching the wetland. This would be treated
80 stormwater. This is the approach Mr. Phippard uses when applying to the NH Department of
81 Environmental Services (DES) for runoff permits. This is a well-established process that works
82 well when built correctly. He showed where some of the flow would be concentrated into a
83 partially stone-lined swale and directed to a culvert in the area between the wetland buffers.
84

85 Mr. Phippard referred the Commission to the Planning Board staff report. The Public Works
86 Department reviewed the proposed subdivision and recommended that the Planning Board
87 require a stormwater management plan. Mr. Phippard said that was a reasonable request, which
88 Mr. Phippard usually does for homeowners whether or the City requires it. However, in this
89 instance, the property owner did not have a house plan yet, and Mr. Phippard did not know what
90 the ultimate footprint would be. Thus, he could not yet create a formal drainage plan for anything
91 but the driveway. He said there was plenty of room to expand the level spreader up to 100 feet
92 long without additional impacts to the wetland buffers. So, Mr. Phippard said the driveway could
93 accommodate development at the top of the hill, where the owner said they intend to build. Mr.
94 Phippard noted that test pits at the building site showed no ledge. Mr. Phippard reiterated that the
95 proposed building site could accommodate a septic system and added that there would be an on-
96 site well.
97

98 Mr. Phippard thought it was clear that none of the wetland areas would be directly disturbed.
99 Those wetland areas would remain wooded, vegetated, and functioning. The wetland in the
100 center of the property is isolated and not directly connected to any of the other wetland areas; he
101 said it is a sag in the slope that had collected runoff and developed naturally into a wetland, and
102 it would remain undisturbed. The wetlands along Old Walpole Road had been disturbed over
103 time by activities along the road and driveway, but no additional disturbance (e.g., no tree cutting
104 or widening of the driveway) was proposed for this project. Mr. Phippard added that the slopes
105 and soils within the surface water buffer would not be changed other than where proposed to
106 construct the driveway. Mr. Phippard noted that the project narrative stated that there is no
107 wildlife corridor and no wildlife habitat on site, which one of the Commissioners pointed out
108 during the site visit. Mr. Phippard agreed that it is a forested site and does provide habitat. Still,
109 he said the impact to the buffer would be minimal, with 10 feet for the driveway and 5 feet for
110 the swale.
111

112 Mr. Reilly asked if there were any culvert-like connections between the wetlands along Old
113 Walpole Road and the wetland in the center of the property. Mr. Phippard used the map to point

114 out a culvert under the existing woods road; water comes downhill and passes through that
115 culvert, and at some point crosses into the swampy area on the other side of Old Walpole Road
116 further down in an area not shown on the map. Chair Von Plinsky asked if the applicant checked
117 the condition of the existing culvert under the woods road. Mr. Phippard said some debris at the
118 bottom of that culvert should be cleaned out. He added that there are varying perspectives, with
119 some favoring gravel at the bottom of culverts to support species like salamanders. For example,
120 in some instances, NH DES requires oversized culverts with gravel bottoms.

121
122 Mr. Haynes thought that snow plowing in the winter would take the top layer off of a crowned
123 driveway, and he wondered how to adjust for that. Mr. Phippard said that maintenance
124 approximately every 3 years is important as the surface gets flatter. He said the danger with that
125 flattening is that tires can start causing erosion.

126
127 Ms. Clark asked Mr. Phippard to point out on the map where the swales with riprap would be.
128 Mr. Phippard showed where they would be along the 15% steep slope portion on the uphill side
129 of the road. He said he waited to put certain things on the plans, knowing that the City would
130 require a stormwater management plan in the future. Ms. Clark asked if there would be any
131 excavation of the woods road. Mr. Phippard said no, the woods road had been there for 100 years
132 and part of this work would include reshaping, resurfacing, and new crown. He said there were
133 tire ruts all the way up the woods road that he forgot to point out during the site visit; it was just
134 starting to erode with all the rain so far this year. Ms. Clark noted that the water was all the way
135 up to the left side of the woods road when coming in, and asked if this driveway work would
136 encroach into that area. Mr. Phippard said no.

137
138 Mr. Bergman asked if any impacts were expected for the wetland buffers during the construction
139 process (e.g., cement trucks or stacks of lumber). Mr. Phippard said that the bigger trucks would
140 need the finished surface to drive on, so one of the first efforts would be to place erosion control
141 measures all the way up. They would grub and clear where undisturbed and resurface the woods
142 road all the way up. The large machinery would remain inside that footprint.

143
144 Ms. Clark noted how much rain there had been already this year (9.33 inches to date at her
145 home) and said these events would keep happening. She asked if a gravel driveway like this
146 would hold up to these weather events. Mr. Phippard said the property owner currently has a
147 gravel driveway that requires regular maintenance, so they are prepared for that; they have a
148 contract for that work with the same person that does their plowing. While the owner likes the
149 gravel driveway, Mr. Phippard said it was possible that they would pave the driveway in the
150 future to eliminate that maintenance. When building a house on an undeveloped lot with high up-
151 front costs, Mr. Phippard said it was common for the owners to defer that pavement expense
152 (approximately \$50,000 for a lot like this).

153
154 Ms. Clark noted that she did not see any unique vegetation in the buffer that should be addressed
155 by the Planning Board. Mr. Phippard and Ms. Clark agreed that a lot of this parcel used to be
156 open land. Mr. Bergman noted the presence of sweetgums and said that most sweetgum stands

157 are typically identified, mapped, and protected; many conservation organizations keep those
158 locations private. Mr. Phippard said he did not see those onsite but would look into them. Mr.
159 Bergman referred to sweetgums mentioned on page 19 of 25 in the meeting packet. He said they
160 are protected in Brattleboro and there are some protected areas of them in NH that are among the
161 oldest in the state. The name on the Soils Report in the meeting packet was Russ Huntley, who
162 Mr. Phippard said he would speak to. Ms. Brunner said it was either the Soils Report or the
163 Wetland Delineation Data Form. Mr. Phippard said that would have come into play if the owner
164 was applying for a Wetlands Permit.

165

166 The Commission expressed no concerns for the Planning Board's review.

167

168 **4) Report-Outs**

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

170

171 Mr. Haynes reported that the Subcommittee had a working meeting at Goose Pond on July 14,
172 and they finished hauling materials for bridges on the east side of the pond. They hoped to have
173 the bridges on the east side finished by mid-to-end of the week of July 17. He said the trail was
174 now in place and the old trail along the river had been covered. Mr. Haynes hoped to place new
175 signage about the trail restoration, encouraging use of the new route. The contractor would begin
176 work on other parts around the pond by the end of the week of July 17 or beginning of the week
177 of July 24. Mr. Walker agreed that things were looking good and coming together, noting how
178 much work had been accomplished since the first bridge was laid. Mr. Haynes agreed, noting
179 that he had encountered trail users and heard no negative comments yet; people seemed to like
180 the boardwalk, especially with the recent rain.

181

182 Chair Von Plinsky asked how they covered the existing trail. Mr. Haynes replied that they spread
183 out a lot of downed debris to discourage walking in certain areas. Mr. Haynes keeps putting up
184 signs around the loop trail, including along lower Drummer Road and most of the Old Gilsum
185 Road. Mr. Walker said they did a really excellent job masking some of those trails, though some
186 people had moved those things because they prefer the old trail. Mr. Haynes hoped the new
187 signage explaining why the old trail was closed would help. Mr. Bergman complimented the new
188 signs, but he noted that some were ripped down. Mr. Hayne agreed that is a challenge.

189

190 Mr. Haynes noted that there had been some volunteers. He hoped to create a schedule so people
191 know of work days in advance, but the recent weather had complicated scheduling.

192

193 **B) Outreach**

194

195 Mr. Haynes reported that the work group had not met. He wanted to dedicate his efforts to the
196 Goose Pond work, so he stepped down as leader of this work group. Chair Von Plinsky thanked
197 Mr. Haynes for his efforts. Anyone interested in taking over the role should contact the Chair or
198 Mr. Haynes.

199

200 **C) Invasive Species**

201
202 Councilor Williams said that after last month’s meeting, there was a successful Japanese
203 knotweed pull (400 square feet) along Beaver Brook at the Ellis-Harrison Park. He said that
204 location was half knotweed and half poison ivy. Now, families visiting the park can access
205 Beaver Brook. After this meeting, there would be another event pulling knotweed at the
206 Woodland Cemetery. Volunteers addressed knotweed at the Cemetery last year, but Councilor
207 Williams noted that the invasive requires treatment several years in a row to disable the root
208 systems. Still, he said the volunteers made an impressive difference at the Cemetery last year,
209 which is not always the case with knotweed. He is interested in planting new things that push the
210 Japanese knotweed away, such as staghorn sumac, which grows large but provides shade and
211 roots that would withstand knotweed. He thought it might be time to relocate some staghorn
212 sumac this fall; the Chair said he has a lot in his yard.

213
214 Mr. Therriault recalled that at the last meeting he offered to research any options to use cold
215 against the knotweed. He said there were several non-chemical ways to address the plant and he
216 passed that information to Councilor Williams. Mr. Therriault said that knotweed has a
217 biochemical method of suppressing any other growth in the areas it takes over. Thus, he thought
218 it might be challenging to establish staghorn sumac in an area currently or recently covered with
219 knotweed because of the biochemical impact of the rhizomes underground. Complete mechanical
220 elimination would require digging down 3 meters. Mr. Therriault commented on the origin story
221 of Japanese knotweed as an ornamental invasive. Councilor Williams noted that one solution Mr.
222 Therriault found was to place a ½-inch by ½-inch mesh down before the first shoots in the
223 spring, which he thought could be useful for roadside patches. Ms. Clark imagined that stakes or
224 something else to weigh down the mesh would be needed. Councilor Williams thought it might
225 be worth trying since there is no option to use cold treatment. Mr. Therriault was awaiting a call
226 from a University of NH knotweed expert, and he planned to ask about using cold therapy for the
227 plant. Everything Mr. Therriault read reiterated the need to treat the plant 4–5 years in a row to
228 deplete the energy in the rhizomes. Councilor Williams agreed and added that things like shade
229 help.

230
231 **D) Land Conservation**

232
233 Chair Von Plinsky said the work group members’ schedules were not aligning but they hoped to
234 meet in the next few weeks to get back on track.

235
236 **5) Discussion Items**

237 **A) Society for the Protection of NH Forests – Request for Comments on Re-**
238 **Accreditation Application**

239
240 Chair Von Plinsky recalled touching on this topic at the last meeting. The Society for the
241 Protection of NH Forests was going through reaccreditation as is required every 10–11 years.
242 The Society asked groups with an interest in the Society to comment on their work. In reading

243 the materials, Chair Von Plinsky saw that a lot of their requirements states that the Society
244 “must” do certain things. He did not feel that he was in a position to rate the Society’s
245 performance on those standards. Ms. Brunner said that [www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices)
246 [resources/indicator-practices](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices) is the website provided which lists the relevant standards. Ms.
247 Brunner would send the website to the whole Commission. Chair Von Plinsky said the
248 Commission would decide on their comments at the August meeting, since the Society did not
249 need feedback until November. Councilor Williams asked what properties in Keene are under the
250 Society’s purview and Ms. Clark said only Goose Pond. The Society also has a lot of easements
251 on private properties.

252
253 **B) Keene Meadow Solar Station Project Update**

254
255 Chair Von Plinsky reported that Glenvale Solar was considering hosting a public site walk later
256 this summer (possibly early August). They still have many regulatory steps to go through. Ms.
257 Brunner said that Glenvale Solar hoped to provide 2 weeks’ notice. Ms. Brunner would keep the
258 Commission apprised of anything scheduled between Commission meetings so Commissioners
259 could share it with their networks. Mr. Haynes asked who would provide the public notice. Ms.
260 Brunner thought the City would not be promoting the walk because the Community
261 Development Department has more of a regulatory role; it is possible that another City
262 department (e.g., City Manager’s office) might advertise it. There would be a limit on how many
263 Commissioners could attend to avoid forming a quorum. For those Commissioners who do
264 attend, their role would be to listen and learn, but not ask questions or engage in discussions.

265
266 Mr. Bergman asked if a walk like this would have any regulatory approval process. The Chair
267 said the Commission would still be involved in regulatory steps. Ms. Brunner said that Glenvale
268 Solar would need a Building Permit for a property with frontage on a Class VI Road—Old
269 Gilsum Road. If Glenvale Solar receives that Building Permit, they would go into the Planning
270 Board phase for a Solar Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Ms. Brunner thought they would also
271 need a Surface Water CUP. Those CUPs would be referred to the Conservation Commission for
272 comment; the Commission could choose to have a site visit the same day as the Commission
273 meeting, or a different date in advance. The Conservation Commission meets 1 week before the
274 Planning Board, so the Commission must make its recommendations at that meeting, so as to not
275 delay the public hearing process. This would remain on the Commission’s agenda for the
276 foreseeable future.

277
278 **C) Potential Land Purchase Update (RT-9/Washington St. Ext. Properties)**

279
280 Chair Von Plinsky reported that the City Manager and property owner had been going back-and-
281 forth by phone and there was nothing new to report.

286 **D) Airport Proposed Wildlife Control Fence Update**

287
288 Ms. Brunner spoke to the Airport Director, David Hickling, who said there were delays in the
289 funding application. The Airport Director seemed frustrated that the funding had not come
290 through yet, which was delaying things for at least another month. Mr. Bergman intended to call
291 Mr. Hickling to find out when the wildlife and wetlands assessments would occur so that those
292 who frequent Airport Road could share their sightings. Ms. Brunner did not think any of that had
293 begun yet. Mr. Bergman noted that the Swanzey Conservation Commission has the ultimate
294 jurisdiction because it is on Swanzey property.

295
296 **E) Conservation Commission Speaking Events**

297
298 Councilor Madison had nothing new to report.

299
300 **6) Correspondence**

301
302 Chair Von Plinsky noted that the Commission received a letter of thanks for the donation to the
303 Society for the Protection of NH Forests.

304
305 **7) New or Other Business**

306
307 Councilor Williams noted that a constituent raised concerns about so many trees being cut in
308 their neighborhood. He said they were older trees that might have been planted after the 1938
309 hurricane and had reached maturity. He wondered about the City's current street tree
310 replacement program and how homeowners could be encouraged to replant trees; he wondered if
311 there was any funding for that. He added how many residents were concerned about trees being
312 replaced with the downtown infrastructure and improvement project but said the issue was
313 relevant in neighborhoods as well. Ms. Brunner said she would invite the Director of Public
314 Works, Kürt Blomquist, to speak with the Commission about the issue. Ms. Brunner's
315 understanding was that the City did not have a tree replacement program and that replacement is
316 often constrained by budgets. She shared the example of work and a new sidewalk on the
317 northern side of Emerald Street that has no street trees because of budget constraints. When trees
318 are removed, they are not always replaced. Councilor Williams agreed that the budget was key,
319 with trees often being the first thing cut from budgets. He wondered if there were any grants
320 available for this purpose and/or he thought a line item might be needed in Keene's Capital
321 Improvement Program. He got the sense that trees were not being replaced and he wanted to
322 rectify that.

323
324 Chair Von Plinsky cited a number of trees recently removed on the Keene State College (KSC)
325 campus. Mr. Bergman noted that KSC once had a tree inventory through Bartlett Tree Experts
326 (including replacement costs) that led to the KSC arboretum. That led to the KSC administration
327 requiring that any new construction contractors protect trees wherever possible, which led to
328 preserving many mature trees. The Chair noted that trees are an important part of what makes

329 Keene, both for people and wildlife. He wanted to take a step toward advocating for trees.
330 Councilor Williams thought more information from Mr. Blomquist would be helpful. He
331 suggested having a City advocate for trees. Mr. Bergman thought there must be some
332 grants/funding available for tree replacement.
333

334 Ms. Clark recalled approximately 1 year ago, when the Commission worked diligently on a letter
335 to the Ad Hoc Downtown Infrastructure Project Steering Committee, advocating for keeping as
336 many trees as possible. Ms. Clark's understanding was that many trees would be removed in
337 favor of bike lanes. Ms. Brunner said that most trees planned for removal were from the center
338 median and elsewhere where they impede the needed utility work. She said there was a tree plan
339 that showed locations of the trees to be removed, ranked by condition. She said the goal was to
340 save as many trees in good condition as possible, but there are 3–4 high quality trees that must be
341 removed because of the utilities. She added that some trees were being removed because of the
342 emerald ash borer. Councilor Madison said his understanding that most trees removed through
343 the project would be replaced and Councilor Williams agreed, stating that he did not think the
344 City Council would allow them to be lost completely. Councilor Madison thought the removal of
345 all trees was a part of the misinformation spreading about the project. All Commissioners were
346 encouraged to think about questions for Mr. Blomquist.
347

348 Mr. Bergman cited a location along the RT-9 bypass by the T intersection, where the mitigation
349 work creating water storage was evident. He thought this storage was a result of widening work
350 further up RT-9 toward Chesterfield. There is a lot of equipment there, but the rain seemed to
351 have slowed some of their work. Mr. Bergman said he also sent the Chair and Ms. Brunner a link
352 to his photos of the alumni-funded dam on Arch Street with the most recent rains. He asked
353 about the Commission's Flickr site and the Chair said he would try to upload Mr. Bergman's
354 photos. Right now, only the Chair can log-into the Flickr account. Mr. Bergman also asked
355 whether the Commission needed to make a motion regarding the Planning Board referral earlier
356 in this meeting and Chair Von Plinsky said no because there were no recommendations.
357

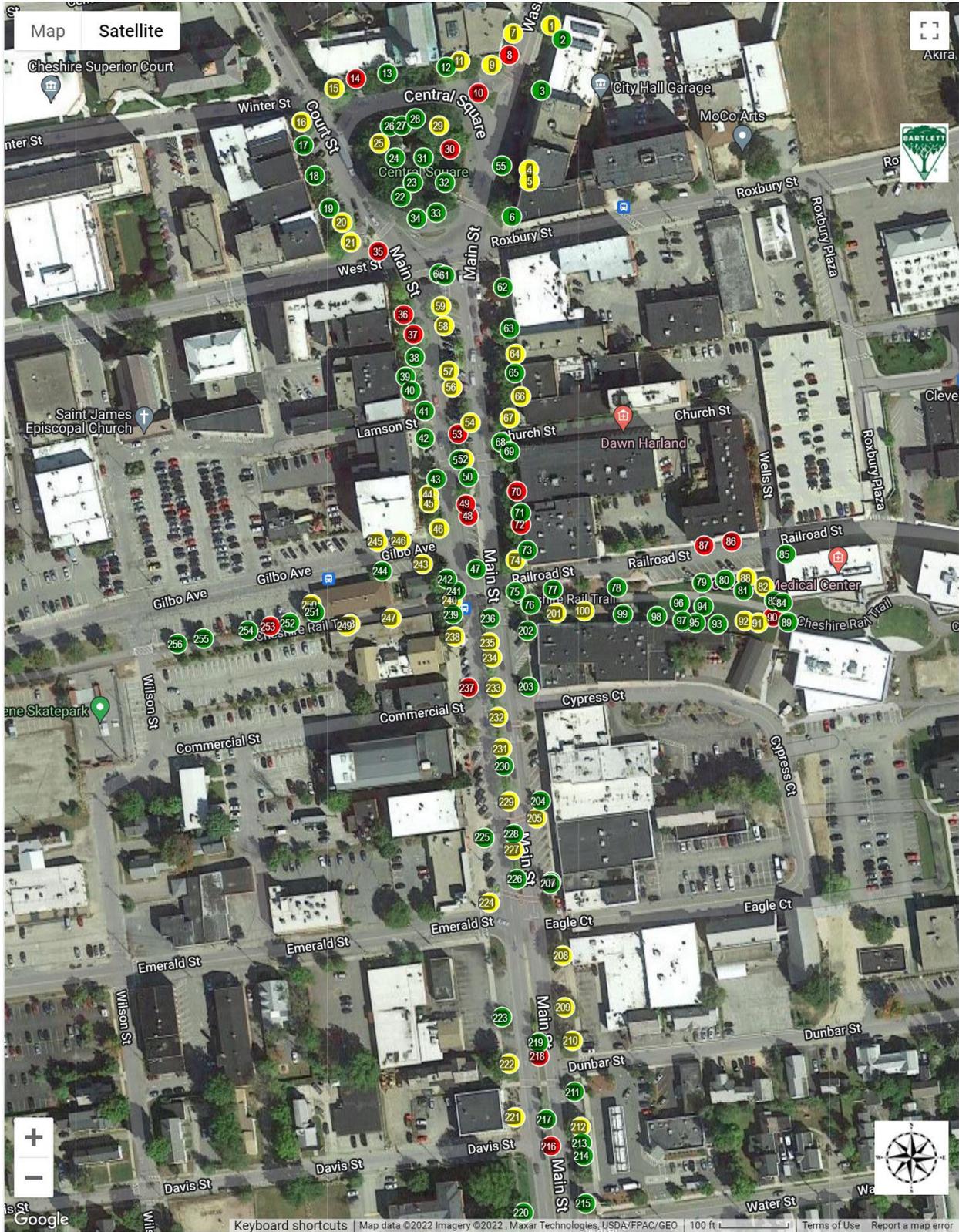
358 **8) Adjournment –Next Meeting Date: Monday, August 21, 2023**
359

360 There being no further business, Chair Von Plinsky adjourned the meeting at 5:31 PM.
361

Respectfully submitted by,
Katelyna Kibler, Minute Taker
July 24, 2023

Reviewed and edited by,
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

INVENTORIED TREES BY CONDITION CLASS



Mari Brunner

To: Councilor Robert Williams
Subject: RE: Neighborhood Pollinator Projects

From: Councilor Robert Williams <rwilliams@keeenenh.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2023 10:25 AM
To: Jamie Doherty
Cc: Mari Brunner <mbrunner@keeenenh.gov>; Sparky Von Plinsky
Subject: Re: Neighborhood Pollinator Projects

Hi Jamie,

That sounds great. I will be happy to bring it up to the Conservation Commission, although it would be helpful if one of you could be there at the next meeting to speak to it. The meeting is Monday, August 21 at 4:30 at the Rec Center.

The solar panel array by the water treatment plant was supposed to be planted with pollinator seeds already, but there has been some question as to whether that has happened or not, and how well it has worked. It sounds like you have seen it more recently than I have - I'm glad to hear that it seems to be working in some places. Pollinator planting is one of the things we now ask for when new solar arrays are proposed.

- Bobby

From: Jamie
Sent: Saturday, July 22, 2023 4:18 PM
To: Councilor Robert Williams <rwilliams@keeenenh.gov>
Subject: Neighborhood Pollinator Projects

Hey Bobby!

Ann & Mark Shedd, another neighbor Sarah and I just had a chat about doing more in our neighborhood to support pollinators. We had two ideas that I thought we could run by you for discussion with the conservation commission.

In the center of our neighborhood is a park that we refer to as the common. It's a wide open grass area with a few trees. It doesn't get a ton of use and requires the city to mow it on a weekly basis. We were thinking it would be nice to coordinate a neighborhood effort to put a pollinator garden in part of it. Less mowing, more beneficial for local wildlife and pollinators etc. I think we could do it in such a way that it would be a community garden and the city wouldn't have to incur any cost or upkeep from it.

The second idea would probably require a little bit more planning and discussion, but was regarding the solar panel array out by the water treatment plant. In some areas, pollinator plants have been added around solar panels with these goals in mind:

Pollinator plants can decrease the ground temperature under solar panels, helping panels work more efficiently and produce more power. They can also reduce maintenance costs for solar farms, because mature pollinators require far less mowing than other ground covers.

Not sure what the feasibility of something like this would be for an already existing solar installation, but we wanted to put the idea out there! I know there are other solar plans in the works, so maybe this is something that can be considered before the project gets off the ground.

Let me know your thoughts!

Best,
Jamie