

Exeter Conservation Commission  
December 11, 2024  
Nowak Room  
10 Front Street  
7:00 PM  
Draft Minutes

**Call to Order**

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight’s meeting were: Conor Madison, Andrew Koff, Trevor Mattera, Keith Whitehouse, Nick Campion, and Alternate Kyle Welch

Staff Present: Kristen Murphy, Conservation and Sustainability Planner

Mr. Madison called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced the members. Alternate Kyle Welch was activated.

2. Public Comment

Mr. Madison asked if there were any public comment outside of agenda items and there was none.

**Action Items**

1. Pairpoint Park Committee Inquiry (Devon Skerritt)

Mr. Whitehouse indicated that the Committee was getting input from the public for ideas for the park on Water Street.

2. River of the draft Conservation Easement for the Rider Property. The easement to be held by Southeast Land Trust with Executory Interest to each involved town Tax Map 113-03 and 113-05 (Kaitlin Deyo, Southeast Land Trust)

Ms. Murphy noted that the easement, off Powdermill Road, to be held by Southeast Land Trust, is in three towns (Exeter, Kensington and East Kingston) who will have an executory interest. There is a \$100,000 Drinking Water and Groundwater grant. Once the language of the easement is ready it will be sent to counsel for review and then to the Select Board for execution.

Mr. Koff noted there is a horse farm in the exclusion area and reclaimed mining from a brick manufacturer.

43 Ms. Deyo explained the survey has not been recorded yet. There has been a Phase 1 environmental  
44 assessment and draft easement. Other towns' legal counsel will also review the language. Ms. Murphy  
45 asked about the commercial uses allowed by variance. Ms. Deyo gave examples of commercial uses  
46 such as trail rides where money is changing hands and concerts, if people are paying to go. She noted  
47 there would be agrotourism rights that cannot be detrimental to the easement purposes. Forestry  
48 requires a management plan by a licensed forester or with SELT approval. Ms. Murphy expressed  
49 concerns with review process and Ms. Deyo indicated there would be yearly monitoring. Mr.  
50 Whitehouse noted that agrotourism is a little vague in the statutes. Ms. Deyo indicated SELT works with  
51 other towns who have those.

52

53 Mr. Koff asked about access and Ms. Deyo indicated there was none, the property is for drinking water,  
54 surface water and soil protection.

55

56 Ms. Deyo explained the temporary reserved rights to the specific people that live there which would not  
57 transfer to future owners, which is in the purchase and sales agreement. She noted the owner is not the  
58 persons living there now. She indicated they had the right to park vehicles in the driveway area.

59

60 Ms. Murphy asked about solar and impervious surface limits. Ms. Deyo indicated impervious surface is  
61 limited to 2%.

62

63 Mr. Murphy noted she was supportive of the project.

64

65 Mr. Koff reviewed page 12 and indicated he liked the public use, not commercial for water. He indicated  
66 that the administrative rules change and may be different in future years and hard to track over time.  
67 He recommended keeping the language general. Mr. Mattera agreed. Ms. Deyo will pass those  
68 concerns along.

69

70 MOTION: Mr. Madison motioned that after reviewing the conservation easement, subject to legal  
71 counsel review, the Commission authorizes the Chair to send a memo to the Select Board in support of  
72 accepting the acquisition of real property interest in the executory interest of Tax Map 113-3 and 113-5  
73 in the name of the town by and through the Conservation Commission pursuant to RSA 36A:4 as  
74 presented. Mr. Mattera seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-  
75 0-0.

76

77 3. Letter of Support for Grants associated with Pickpocket Dam removal

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79 Mr. Mattera indicated there was a presentation which was not recorded to discuss the next steps, there  
80 are several grant opportunities, one specific to the interim period of design and permitting and also the  
81 Great Bay 20/30 grant, there are two NOAA grants and a coastal zone grant in late spring. Mr. Mattera  
82 noted they would hear on the Great Bay 20/30 in mid-January. Mr. Koff noted there is a deadline next  
83 week in January 2025 and one NOAA grant that was not received last year they did not get because they  
84 were behind in multiple steps but close even with those steps missing.

85

86 Mr. Koff noted abutters expressed their concerns at the presentation with changes in flood zones and  
87 other potential impacts to adjacent properties.

88

89 Ms. Murphy noted if the town warrant were voted down for funding they Paul Vlasich the Town  
90 Engineer indicated they could receive a grant that would pay the cost without going back to Town  
91 Meeting. Then it would be the Select Board’s decision. Ms. Murphy noted there could be fines if they  
92 don’t take action by 2027. Mr. Koff noted design is in 25/26 and construction in 2027. He noted there  
93 will be another public session, probably before the warrant article or in the summer.

94

95 MOTION: Mr. Madison motioned to authorize the chair (or designee – see amendment) to sign a letter  
96 in support of the town applications for upcoming grant programs for the purposes of securing funding  
97 for the removal of Pickpocket Dam and restoration of Exeter River. Mr. Mattera seconded the motion.  
98 A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

99

100 AMENDMENT. Ms. Murphy recommended adding “or designee.” Mr. Madison accepted the  
101 amendment.

102

103 Ms. Murphy noted the letter will go to Paul Vlasich the Town Engineer to be included in the grant  
104 application packet.

105

#### 106 4. Committee Reports

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108 a. Property Management

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110 b. Outreach Events

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112 i. Proposed Winter Solstice Celebration at Raynes – Saturday 12/21 4:30 PM

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114 Mr. Whitehouse indicated he had about nine people at the Raynes sunrise bonfire and the next  
115 event will be s solstice on December 21<sup>st</sup>, from 4:30 to 6:30. Ms. Murphy noted there would be  
116 two fire pits one by the parking lot and one on the hill near the barn. They will light lanterns and  
117 walk. There will be hot chocolate in the basement of the barn which Mr. Whitehouse has just  
118 cleaned up. Mr. Campion thanked Mr. Whitehouse for his efforts with the sunrise event. Mr.  
119 Whitehouse noted use will be the savior of the barn.

120

121 Ms. Murphy indicated she has talked to the library, who does crafts on Fridays, about making  
122 lanterns and they are willing to hold the event. Ms. Murphy noted she will offer kits to pick up  
123 with instructions.

124

125 MOTION: Mr. Mattera motioned to approve up to \$40 from the Conservation land  
126 Administration fund for the use of this event. Mr. Whitehouse seconded the motion. A vote ws  
127 taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

128

129

130 ii. Hike Exeter Challenge – Kyle Welch – Review Webpage Announcement

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132 Mr. Welch discussed updating the Henderson-Swasey trail map and including it on Alltrails. He  
133 added landmarks and a written description but it will take a month for them to review and post  
134 it. The access link can be provided. Mr. Koff asked about gpx files. Mr. Welch indicated he  
135 could put that up too. He noted Oaklands is challenging.

136

137 Ms. Murphy recommended re-ordering and starting with Henderson Swasey and release the  
138 next one after and build up to more complicated trails.

139

140 Mr. Welch noted he created a Facebook page for pictures and trip reports.

141

142 c. Other Committee Reports (River Study, Sustainability, Energy/CPAC, Tree, CC Roundtable)

143 Ms. Murphy noted the Sustainability Advisory Committee will be having a Styrofoam collection  
144 event on January 4<sup>th</sup> from 9-11 for Exeter residents, at the town hall parking lot or at a location to be  
145 determined. The Styrofoam will be collected and driven to Guilford who has a densifier like the one  
146 the town has put forth a warrant article to purchase.

147 Ms. Murphy noted the Energy Committee will be holding a window dressers workshop for the  
148 community build of window inserts at town hall on January 18<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>. Those interested can sign  
149 up on the website for a shift. There are two shifts per day and lunch will be provided. They are also  
150 looking for donations for lunch.

151 Ms. Murphy indicated the Tree Committee is looking to have its recertification for Exeter as a Tree  
152 City.

153 4. Approval of Minutes

154

155 September 10, 2024 Minutes

156

157 Mr. Madison recommended edits.

158

159 MOTION: Mr. Madison motioned to approve the September 10, 2024 minutes, as amended.

160 Mr. Whitehouse seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

161

162 October 8, 2024 Site Walk

163

164 Mr. Whitehouse motioned to approve the October 8, 2024 Site Walk minutes. Mr. Madison seconded  
165 the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

166

167 November 12, 2024 Site Walk

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169 Mr. Madison motioned to approve the November 12, 2024 Site Walk minutes. Mr. Koff  
170 seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

171

172 November 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes

173

174 Mr. Madison motioned to approve the November 12, 2024 meeting minutes. Mr. Whitehouse  
175 seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

176

177 5. Correspondence

178

179 Ms. Murphy reviewed an email from Brian Grisette with five items. One was a report of a beaver dam  
180 on Little River. He noted some dams are being razed, and she indicated that was not being done by the  
181 Town. Some no hunting signs are missing, and Ms. Murphy will walk the boundary and replace them.

182

183 Ms. Murphy noted concerns with railroad ties dumped in the right of way to Little River and trees were  
184 cut adjacent to or in the wetlands. Ms. Murphy noted someone should go out and document the  
185 locations and take photos. A letter should be sent to the railroad and DES wetlands bureau. The same  
186 has been noticed at Raynes on the outside of the cattle crossing, probably to block people from crossing  
187 the tracks.

188

189 Mr. Koff noted there seems to be a practice in multiple areas and disturbed areas should be requested  
190 to be remedied. He noted Mr. Grisette came to another meeting and DES was notified before. Mr.  
191 Whitehouse noted the methodology should be addressed going forward.

192

193 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to approve communication with CSX and DES regarding the trees and  
194 railroad ties adjacent to the railroad corridor and our conservation areas. Mr. Welch seconded the  
195 motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

196

197 **Other Business**

198

199 Ms. Murphy noted the annual report is due and she will include photos of the barn and the northern  
200 lights.

201

202 Ms. Murphy noted there is a list of training webinars for the Housing Champion designation and virtual  
203 training for Taking Action for Wildlife.

204

205 Next Meeting: 1/14/25, Submission Deadline 1/3/25

206

207 **6. Adjournment**

208

209 Mr. Madison adjourned the meeting at 8:36 PM.

210

211 Respectfully submitted,

212 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary

213 Via Exeter TV