

# TEMPLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes, April 14, 2021

Location: Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Attendees: Sean Radcliffe, Scott Hecker, Carol Mamczak, Cathy Joly, Mike Madden, Lincoln Geiger

Absent: Adie Krulis, Jeff Jenson

Guests: Constance Rinaldo, Gary Nielsen, Jason Aborn

Started at 7:03 pm

1. Roll call attendance: Scott Hecker, Mike Madden, Carol Mamczak, Sean Radcliffe, Cathy Joly. Lincoln Geiger joined later.
2. Approval of Minutes: Cathy corrected the spelling of Jeff's name and removed the extraneous comment. Carol moved to accept the March 10, 2021 minutes as amended, Scott seconded. Roll call vote: Scott yes, Mike yes, Carol yes, Sean yes, Cathy yes.
3. Membership: Jeff Jenson has indicated that he would like to be an alternate member of the Commission rather than a full member, so *Jeff needs to indicate this when he writes his letter of interest to the Select Board*. Jason Aborn and Gary Nielsen may be interested in joining the Commission; Jason and Gary's wife, Constance, shared their backgrounds and interests.
4. Town Forest: Ben Fisk's payment was deposited in the conservation fund. Mike looked at several examples of kiosks; he liked those at the Heald Tract. He estimated the cost per kiosk at \$75-\$100 for the rough-cut lumber. Carol asked about the Ledges and suggested placing the first kiosk there as it is the most visited property; Mike verified that the Con Com land starts at the iron gate; to place a kiosk close to the street, *Scott will determine the property owner and ask for permission. Mike will pull together the draft plans and equipment list, including a plexiglass cover, and send to members*. Carol asked what we will post there; ideas include the map, the geology, the history, and what activities are/are not allowed.
5. Town Forest Forest Plan: Eric forwarded his latest draft. Everyone agreed that it looks great. *Any edits should be sent to Scott by April 28, then Scott will have the final copy editing done.*

6. Conservation of Lot 7-35: Carol contacted Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and was encouraged by their response, attached below. Discussion ensued about the points of the email, including the contribution for perpetual stewardship (paid to the land trust to oversee the property in the future), LCHIP's contribution, the easement holder, and that this should qualify as a historically important property. Lincoln suggested that John Kieley could offer guidance; *Scott will reach out to John.*
7. Land Conservation Strategy: Based on information in GRANITView and the tax maps, Mike determined the number of conserved acres in town: we have 37 easements, 8 of those are shared across towns, and currently 22% of the land mass in Temple is conserved. Mike knows there are other conserved properties that are not in GRANITView. *Anyone interested in helping Mike search for more conservation easements should contact him directly.* Lincoln explained that there are 2 deeds for conserved properties - one deed for the property, then a second deed for the conservation easement - and both are on file at the registry of deeds. Lincoln suggested that John Barry's land would be great to put into conservation, maybe by getting multiple conservation groups involved. Lincoln has spoken with John for years about conserving his land but John is not interested. What is the best way to be proactive? Lincoln, MA cultivated dialogue with landowners proactively and they managed to conserve a lot of land. To learn more about conservation easements, Lincoln suggested that the Monadnock Conservancy might be willing to give a presentation for us and surrounding towns. When important properties come up for sale in Wilton and Hollis, the towns put up a bond to purchase the development rights; Lincoln thinks the John Barry land is worth doing that. Sean has a document from former Con Com member Dave Repak which explains the steps of conservation easements; *Sean will forward this to the members. Sean will ask Dave if he is available to join us for the June meeting to talk about easements.* Mike met Bart Hunter at the Heald Tract; Bart is also willing to help us with easements. Lincoln shared that when conserving farm land, there is funding available from USDA; Lincoln has always wanted to conserve the Mazza land, as it would be one more piece in a large corridor of conserved land. *Scott will seek advice from his next Regional Open Space Team meeting. Mike will send out the information he has gathered so far.*

The group adjourned at 8:38 pm. The next meeting will be a week later than usual, on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 7:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Cathy Joly.

*Italics above indicate tasks to be done.*

*Attachment:*

*Email from LCHIP regarding lot 7-35*

From: **Paula Bellemore** <[pbellemore@lchip.org](mailto:pbellemore@lchip.org)>

Date: Thu, Apr 1, 2021 at 3:41 PM

Subject: RE: possible conservation easement in Temple, NH

Good afternoon,

Thank you for reaching out to LCHIP about what looks to be a wonderful gateway property for your village center. I gather you are interested in exploring the possibility of receiving financial assistance to help offset the costs of conveying an easement on the property. At first glance I see no reason why such a project wouldn't qualify for LCHIP funding, as the property is owned by the Town and possesses natural, cultural and/or historical resources. I offer a few thoughts that come immediately to mind, but am happy to schedule a time to talk further, as well.

To get a sense of what you are hoping to protect I took a quick look at the property using [GRANITView](#). From what I saw, the scenic value those rolling hayfields offer as one approaches on Rt 45 provide an important gateway to the Village area. This may be one of the most important contributions the property makes to the town. Are there other, specific values the conservation commission is interested in protecting?

Presumably the vote you mention took place after the town office building was constructed in 1986. What type of legal protection or restrictions did the vote put in place? I wonder if the legal development rights have already been stripped by virtue of the

vote. You likely have a good understanding of what the potential risks are to the property, but if not, a conversation with your town attorney, after he or she has reviewed the record of the vote, would be informative and a critical next step.

Typically an easement limits development (buildings and improvements) first and foremost, but also places restrictions on uses that could be potentially damaging to specific resource values. For example, restrictions might be developed to help protect a properties important agricultural soils, aquatic resources, or sensitive species or habitats. Understanding first what specific values the Town hopes to preserve or protect, and second the potential risks to those values and the property that exists will be foundational in establishing your path forward.

Lastly, have you discussed the possibility of accepting an easement from the Town with a land trust or other appropriate entity? If you haven't, I recommend reaching out to the [Piscataquog Land Conservancy](#), or the [Monadnock Conservancy](#). Though land trusts are generally more likely to consider easements on larger tracts of land, there are any number of criteria that guide the decision making process. A conversation with their land protection staff will give you a good sense of what to expect. Engaging the easement holder early in the process will be a critical step.

LCHIP's funding is used to cover up to 50% of the direct costs associated with permanent conservation. These costs include the easement purchase price (if it is being sold, based on a fair market appraisal) and associated transactional expenses, such as a survey (if necessary), an appraisal, title work, and other due diligence. In addition, LCHIP will help to offset any contribution the town is asked to make to the easement holder for perpetual stewardship expenses, and a modest amount of other administrative expenses. Carol, I am happy to talk by phone about this at your convenience, or to schedule a zoom call with you and other commission

members. I wish you all the best as you pursue permanent protection of this lovely property. Please be in touch if I can be of further assistance.

Best,

**Paula Bellemore**

*Natural Resource Specialist*

603-325-2253