

TEMPLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes, January 17, 2024

Location: Town Hall Big Room

Attendees: Scott Hecker, Chair via Zoom; Mike Madden, Treasurer; Cathy Joly, Secretary; Sean Radcliffe, Clay Lennartz, Marie Lennartz

Absent: Adie Krulis, Lincoln Geiger, Russell Wilson

Guests: Jeff Littleton of Moosewood Ecological, Sherry Fiske, Tim Fiske, Gail Cromwell

Sean Radcliffe called the meeting to order at 5:41 PM. Sean chaired the meeting.

1. **Natural Resource Inventory (NRI):** Jeff Littleton provided an update of their field survey findings; they are still incorporating this data into the final NRI. They surveyed many of the large public properties in town such as the White Ledges, Temple Mountain, and the Town Forest. They found 18+ species of conservation concern including many birds, a snake, and a turtle. They discovered many diverse habitats and were thrilled to discover healthy American Chestnuts that are cross pollinating (they found a nut that was sprouting!) Jeff will return to check on these next year. The iNaturalist site now has over 2800 observations and more than 750 different species; check out the [Temple Biodiversity Project](#) on iNaturalist.org to see them. Jeff also noted that some forest habitats that typically occur further south are now appearing here in town because the climate is getting warmer. They also found 12+ invasive plants and insects that are known to be in this area.
 - a. Sean asked if their findings will be in a list, or be shown on a map. Jeff will map what they found on public lands, however findings on private lands will not be mapped, nor will any species that are state or federally listed.
 - b. Scott asked if Jeff connected with the resident who has documented many dragonfly species found in Temple. We do not have her contact information so ***Sean will post a question on the Temple Facebook page.***
 - c. One goal of the NRI is to spark residents' interest in exploring these unique species and habitats, and Jeff is planning an entertaining presentation. Kids are welcome! **Cathy will verify availability of the Town Hall big room on April 17th at 6 PM.**
 - Jeff will provide us with a flyer to be printed for display in the store, library, and post office, and also posted to Temple Facebook.

- **Mike will check prices for mailing a full color post card;** Jeff can provide a post card with pictures from Temple if we want to do a mailing. Cards should be mailed 7-10 days prior to the event.
 - A blurb can also be included in the town newsletter and the Monadnock Ledger. The latter needs a gripping title. “Chestnut trees in Temple”?
- d. Jeff will resend the estimate for their BioBlitz training.
- e. On a related note, Jeff’s team is working with Carol Ogilvie to update the Land Use Map as part of the Planning Board’s update of the Master Plan. They are also auditing Temple’s Master Plan and regulations with regards to natural resources; the resulting document will contain suggestions for zoning changes that support the Master Plan’s natural resource goals. Jeff is working with several other communities now who are considering how their zoning can protect natural resources.

2. Land Conservation Update

- a. **Fisk Hill:** Tim and Sherry Fiske provided an update. Sherry spoke with Chris Wells of Piscataquog Land Conservancy (PLC) and the next step is to survey the property. Gail Cromwell will also be connecting with Chris soon. The hope is that both properties can be surveyed at once to save time and money; the abutting properties include conservation land, state land, and the town boundary, so any existing surveys will be utilized. Even though Fisk Hill is completely surrounded by stone walls and easy to identify, PLC has had issues in the past with abutters challenging boundaries, so they insist on a survey signed by a licensed professional. Tim reached out to Sanford Surveying and they have a long waitlist.
- Sean wondered if talking with Russ Huntley would be helpful to determine other surveying options. **Mike will call Chris and discuss the surveying.** Scott noted that having both projects proceed at the same time will make them more attractive for obtaining funding.
 - Tim and Sherry have the property’s assessment.
 - In the meantime, Chris will begin drafting the easement wording and the purchase and sales agreement for the development rights; he is optimistic that this project can be completed this year.
- b. **Piscataquog Land Conservancy (PLC) property on Peterborough Road:** Mike shared the PLC’s Executory Interest document with the Select Board (SB); the subsequent legal review agreed with the language. Essentially this document states that if PLC folds, then the town will own the land. **Mike will attend the January 25th SB meeting** to present the budget for this project and for the Triangle Lot 7-35, and request the SB’s approval to use Conservation Funds for both projects. See also d below.

- c. **Conservation of Lot 7-35:** Mike has the final survey in PDF form which he sent to the SB and Monadnock Conservancy (MC). The survey contains all the changes that Anne McBride of the MC requested. Mike also shared the proposed budget with the SB.
- d. **Public Hearing:** Mike read the draft notice for the public hearing on the PLC and Lot 7-35 projects (attached). Sean motioned that we have a public hearing at our March 13th meeting to present the PLC and Lot 7-35 projects. Marie seconded. All in favor. **Cathy will ask Carole to move our March meeting** to the big room and set up a Zoom meeting, and verify that the room will be available after voting the day before. The hearing must be posted 10 days in advance. **Mike will verify that Chris Wells can present on the 13th.**

3. **Approval of Minutes**

- December 13, 2023 Minutes: Sean motioned to accept the minutes as written. Clay seconded. All in favor.

4. **Town Forest Plan:** Tabled until next meeting.

5. **Volunteer Agreement Form:** Sean shared the information with Scott, and Scott needs to contact NHMA.

6. **Highway Department Location Committee:** Clay shared that they narrowed down their list to 4 options: one option is doing nothing, and the others include remodeling and/or adding buildings. The committee's charter is to present a report at the 2024 Town Meeting detailing the possible options and costs, which they are prepared to do. The committee officially dissolves at that meeting.

7. **Kiosk Update:** No update.

8. **Marsh Property:** No update.

9. **White Ledges Gate Lock:** No update. **Russell will try to determine the combination for the lock on the green gate on the White Ledges trail.** Being able to open the gate is helpful when Eric Foley brings his tools to the top to routinely clear around the blueberry bushes and maintain the view.

New Business

1. 2023 Review: Cathy will write the 2023 Year in Review for the Town Report.

The group adjourned at 7:35 pm. The next meeting will be one week later on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 6:00 PM in the Town Hall Annex.

Minutes submitted by Cathy Joly.

Bold text above indicates tasks to be done.

Attachments:

1. Draft Notice of Public Hearing