

Town of Scarborough Conservation Commission

December 11, 2023 | 6:00 p.m. | Scarborough Town Hall and via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Present in person:

Commission: Dick Harvey, Randi Hogan, Pete Slovinsky, Maggie Vishneau

Staff: Jami Fitch, Autumn Speer

Guest: Andrew Mackie, Scarborough Land Trust (SLT); Carrick Gambell, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Present via Zoom:

Commission: Rita Bretton, Cathleen Miller, Abel Plaud, Jessica Sargent, Marla Zando

Town Council: Karin Shupe

Guest: David Kunhardt

A recording of this meeting is available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqPd1xaH_qc

Call to order

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Marla motioned to accept the minutes. Pete seconded. Vote was 7 in favor and one abstained. Motion passed.
3. Randi reminded Commissioners whose terms expire in 2023 to submit their volunteer applications to the Town Clerk's office. She also welcomed Abel Plaud as the Commission's newest member.
4. Public Comment
 - Andrew Mackie announced that the Scarborough Land Trust and Friends of Scarborough Marsh have merged. A Scarborough Marsh Committee and Scarborough Marsh Advisory Panel will be formed. An annual Scarborough Marsh Conference is in the works.
 - David Kunhardt, resident and member of Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL), requested that the Commission support CCL's proposed Town Council resolution in support of federal [Carbon Cash Back legislation](#). CCL would like to present to the Commission at an upcoming meeting. **ACTION: JAMI will send CCL's draft resolution to the Commission.**
 - Carrick Gambell, resident and employee of NRCS, would like to see Scarborough adopt a program similar to [South Portland's 100 Resilient Yards](#).

Old Business

1. Conserving Land & Building Resiliency:
 - a. Review GIS web app for coastal setbacks and buffers
 - The Town's GIS Administrator pulled together a mapping application to look at potential impacts of the proposed setbacks and buffers in coastal areas. Pete requested some revisions that have started to be incorporated.
 - There are approximately 968 undeveloped parcels that fall within the Highest Astronomical Tide (HAT) + 4' of sea level rise (SLR).

Engineering & Technical Services

- Pete suggested that getting areas that fall within HAT + 4' SLR in conservation will help the Town achieve 30x30 goals.
- Autumn noted that additional analysis is needed to confirm parcels and acreage impacted.
- b. Review recommendations for Environmental Standards for Natural Resource Protection
 - A little more work is needed to finetune the recommended setback and buffer requirements in the marsh migration zone.
 - More thought needs to be given to both marsh migration areas and coastal bluff systems. Also need to look at coastal bluff requirements to confirm they don't conflict with Shoreland Zoning.
 - Autumn, Jami, and Pete will meet prior to the January meeting to iron out the final recommendations so they can be presented to the Commission in January.
 - Dick would like to address ephemeral/intermittent streams in the future. He started looking at hill shade maps to help identify where intermittent streams may be located in Scarborough.
 - **ACTION: JAMI will set up a meeting with Autumn and Pete to finalize recommendations.**

New Business

1. Conserving Land:
 - a. Update on Ad-Hoc Open Space Committee
 - Committees and groups are nominating members to serve on the Ad-Hoc Open Space Committee. Autumn and Jami are tracking nominees and will submit the names to the Town Council for appointment at the 1/17/24 meeting.
 - The Request for Qualifications for consulting services for the Open Space Plan will be released just after Christmas, and qualifications packages will be due in late January.
 - Karin Shupe will continue to be the Commission's liaison as well as the liaison to the Ad-Hoc Open Space Committee.
 - b. Discuss approach for supporting renewal of Scarborough Land Bond
 - The Parks and Conservation Land Board (PCLB) drafted a memo to the Town Council to recommend renewal of the Land Bond. An amount for the bond is to be determined.
 - Support from the Trust for Public Land has been requested. The organization would help determine what level of funding the community would likely support and help with the campaign to build support for the bond.
 - SLT has offered to help with financial support for polling and leading the campaign.
 - The Commission supports a memo to Council in support of a bond measure on the 2024 ballot.
 - Jessica noted that getting the land bond on the ballot is the first step and work to support the campaign will be needed. Pete noted that the Commission hasn't had a large role in past land bond campaigns. Jami will get some guidance on that the Commission's role can be. Individuals can participate in the capacity in any capacity.
 - **ACTION:**
 - **JAMI will share PCLB's draft memo with the Commission.**
 - **JAMI will get some guidance on what role the Commission can play in the land bond campaign.**

Updates

1. Promoting Citizen Stewardship: Report out from sub-committee

- A report was provided with the meeting materials. Marla and Rita are pulling together a communication plan for 2024.
- Randi suggested focusing outreach and messaging around the land bond and 30x30.
- Marla requested some information on the [Route 1 and Route 9 resiliency project](#). Jami provided a brief overview: a public meeting was held on 11/9/23. MaineDOT is collecting more information about tidal flow and water levels to determine sizing of openings/culverts to handle anticipated tidal flow over the next 50 years. The design details presented at the public meeting are very preliminary and will likely change as a result of additional data collection and analysis.

2. Town Council

- Karin supports the land bond on the ballot. Clarification is needed related to the amount of the bond. Any memo written to the Council should point out that land is more expensive today than it was when the previous land bonds were approved. The memo note that land conservation is one way to manage growth.
- Pete suggested looking at what a \$2.5M parcel was in 2019 compared with 2024.
- The bond amount will likely need to be determined by June 2024.
- The Town Council will have a goal setting workshop in January. Karin is working on coming up with goals and would like to see conservation continue to be a Council goal. She encouraged the Commission to reach out to her with ideas.

3. Sustainability Committee

- The Sustainability Committee is wrapping up with funding request to the Finance Committee to establish a sustainability reserve account.
- The Committee will hear from CCL at their December meeting.

4. Parks and Conservation Land Board

- The Town Council approved the first reading for \$210,000 from the Land Bond Reserve Fund 50 Hanson Road project. SLT received additional funding for the project from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund and Cabela's.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Next Meeting:

January 24, 2024 @ 6:00 pm

DRAFT “CARBON CASH-BACK” RESOLUTION FOR THE TOWN of SCARBOROUGH

We, the Town Council of the Town of Scarborough, hereby call upon our State and Federal elected representatives to enact national carbon-pricing legislation like the [Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, H.R. 5744](#) to protect Maine from environmental risks and costs.

To protect households, we support a [Carbon Tax and Cash-Back](#) approach that charges fossil fuel producers for their carbon pollution and rebates the money collected to all residents on an equal basis. Enacting such a Carbon Cash-Back program decreases long-term fossil-fuel dependence, aids in the economic transition for energy consumers, and keeps local energy dollars [in Maine's economy](#). Carbon taxes are in place in over 40 countries. In the UK, their Carbon tax went into effect in 2013, and the next six years saw a reduction in all fossil fuel extraction, especially coal. A similar policy to ours is returning checks to Canadian citizens this year. It is also projected to have two-thirds or more of Mainers gain more in rebated cash than they might pay in added costs of taxing polluters. Maine citizens would come out ahead, since there is so little coal, oil or gas mining here, yet everyone would get checks.

Carbon Cash-Back has been championed by US economists ([Jan 16, 2019 WSJ](#)) as the most effective and fair way to deliver rapid reductions in harmful carbon emissions at the scale required for our safety.

We expect our representatives to lead in this critical moment for the health and well-being of our citizens and for the protection of Maine's natural resources upon which we all rely.

The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice to Scarborough’s Congressional Representative and Maine’s two U.S. Senators, and to the President of the United States, informing them of the instructions from their constituents, by the Scarborough Town Council within 30 days of this vote.

Date _____, 2024

Town Clerk _____



Parks and Conservation Land Board

December 4, 2023

To the Town Council,

The Parks and Conservation Land Board recommends you consider placing a referendum question on the ballot for residents to vote on authorizing the Town of Scarborough to issue new bonds for the purchase of land and interests in lands throughout the town for purposes of conservation of natural areas, providing public access and recreation, and protection of wildlife habitat and scenic or environmentally sensitive areas.

The Land Acquisition Reserve Fund has traditionally been funded with such bonds, with voters approving bond measures in 2000, 2003, 2009, and 2019. There is approximately \$1.1 million of bonding capacity remaining from the 2019 Parks and Conservation Land Bond, excluding funds currently approved by Town Council or recommended by the Parks and Conservation Land Board. Since December 2022, \$750,000 has been spent from the Land Bond. Given the rate and cost per acre of recent projects and likely future projects, this remaining funding will be exhausted in approximately one (1) year.

In addition to maintaining Scarborough's historic rate of parks and land conservation, new bonding capacity is necessary to fulfill the resolution recently unanimously approved by the Town Council supporting the concept of the 30X30 campaign to protect and conserve at least 30 percent of land and water by 2030.

If the Town Council agrees with the Parks and Conservation Land Board that new parks and land conservation bonding authority is an important next step to achieving our community's conservation goals, we recommend exploring the appropriate referendum amount for a fall 2024 bond, with the understanding that additional research is needed, including a survey on priorities, community sentiment, and amount.

Sincerely,

Suzanne A. Foley-Ferguson
Chair, Parks and Conservation Land Board

Scarborough Parks and Conservation Land Board

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