

Town of Scarborough Conservation Commission

October 23, 2024 | 6:00 pm | Hybrid: Town Council Chambers B and via Zoom

To participate in the Conservation Commission meeting remotely, please follow this link:
https://scarboroughmaine.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wxm30r6KSB277MouA3qDIA

To view the Conservation Commission, please follow this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCD5Y8CFy5HpXMftV3xX73aw>

Agenda

- 6:00 pm** **Call to order and attendance**
(1) Welcome and introductions
(2) Land acknowledgement
(3) Vote on minutes from 9/25/24 meeting
(4) Review 10/23/24 agenda
(5) Public comment
- 6:15 pm** **Old Business**
(1) Environmental Standards
 – Report out from Ordinance Committee meeting
 – Next steps (tentative):
 ▪ 11/6: Town Council first reading
 ▪ 11/18: Planning Board public hearing
 ▪ 12/4: Town Council public hearing
 ▪ 12/18: Town Council second reading (vote)
(2) Review & approve FY24 annual report submission
(3) Planning Board submittals (nothing this month)
- 6:30 pm** **New Business**
(1) Pest management discussion on grubs
(2) Tree Protection: discuss goals for ordinance
- 7:15 pm** **Updates**
(1) Education subcommittee
(2) Town Council
(3) Parks and Conservation Land Board & Land Bond
(4) Sustainability Committee
(5) Planning Projects: Open Space Plan & Vulnerability Assessment
- 7:30 pm** **Adjourn**
Next meeting: TBD due to Thanksgiving

Engineering & Technical Services

259 US Route One | PO Box 360 | Scarborough, ME 04070 | P: 207.730.4400 | scarboroughmaine.org

Town of Scarborough Conservation Commission

September 25, 2024 | 6:00 pm | Town Council Chambers B and Virtual via Zoom

Minutes - DRAFT

Present in-person

Staff: Jami Fitch, Emerson Goodrich
Town Council: Karin Shupe

Present via Zoom

Commission: Bennett Flanders, Randi Hogan, Cathleen Miller, Abel Plaud, Maggie Vishneau, Jessica Sargent, Marla Zando
Staff: Angela Blanchette, Autumn Speer

Call to order

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm.
2. Randi offered a land acknowledgement to recognize the Wabanaki People as traditional stewards of Scarborough.
3. Abel motions to accept the minutes from the July meeting, Jessica seconds. Motion passes.
4. Jami adds Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC) update to the agenda under new business.

Public Comment

1. Anne Blanchard, a resident, expresses concerns around illness in the neighborhood and marsh health immediately after other neighbors spray for mosquitos. Discussion has been attempted with the neighbor who is spraying, but the individual is not open to addressing or compromising on such health concerns.
2. Andrew Mackie of Scarborough Land Trust mentions that there is an effort to support the land bond, which is on the ballot. Volunteers will canvas prior to the vote, and anyone interested in information or in volunteering or expressing their support can reach out to Andrew.
3. Heather Robinson, a resident and neighbor of Anne Blanchard, has been affected by the regular spraying of insecticide. The conventional sprays and insecticides have broad effects on neighbors, including Heather who cannot grow a garden as a result. She also had severe physical symptoms as a result that forced her to vacate her residence. The neighbors doing the spraying are not open to discussion.

Old Business

1. Environmental Standards
 - A roundtable discussion on the proposed environmental standards was held with Commissioners and engineers on 8/28 in lieu of the Commission's regular meeting. Councilors Shupe, Anderson, and Caterina also attended.
 - After much discussion, the group agreed to an initial compromise for wetland buffers and setbacks: and 25' setback, with the first 15' closest to the resource being maintained as a vegetated buffer.

Engineering & Technical Services

- The Ordinance Committee will review the compromise setback/buffer at their September meeting.
- The group was open to continuing the conversation and agreed to meet again in January to discuss additional protections and the upcoming low impact development (LID) standards the Town will need to adopt.
- Karin notes that there is at least something on the agenda for the Ordinance Committee, and shares that there is a need for education around setbacks and buffers. New Town Councilors will need to be educated.
- Maggie asks about communication strategies and learning experiences for future proposed changes. Autumn and Angela underscore the importance of taking small steps especially regarding more oppositional topics and issues.
- Developers are aware the State will mandate Scarborough and other surrounding communities adopt LID standards, but they don't know specifics. Once the Town adopts the LID standards, they will go into effect immediately.
- Randi and Maggie discuss educational components the Commission can undertake surrounding the LID standards.

2. Planning Board Submittals

- There are no submittals that need Conservation Commission review this month.

New Business

1. Commission's next focus

- Jami mentions that the Commission has had ongoing discussions around adopting a pesticide ordinance, similar to South Portland's, but Council support was lacking so the issue didn't move forward. There has been an uptick in resident communications regarding pesticide usage, as well as residents frequently asking the Town to restrict pesticide use at public events.
- The other potential topic the Commission is considering adopting is a tree protection ordinance, also similar to South Portland's.
- Karin summarizes resident comments to Council regarding these two issues. She expresses that she has received many comments and complaints about clear cutting and none about pesticides. Karin also notes that a tree cutting ordinance is more in line with 30x30 goals, conservation goals, and current Council goals, as well as the ease of getting an ordinance on tree cutting through Council as opposed to a pesticide ban. She notes that a pesticide ordinance would likely require work and collaboration from other committees.
- Marla, who helped develop the Town's pest management policy for municipal properties, notes the change in landscape and precedent concerning pesticides over the course of the past few years. She also touches on significant properties being clear cut in Scarborough and the difficulty of replacing these resources.
- Cathleen expresses support for working on both issues and inquires about initial educational components that could build momentum. She cautions against picking up a similarly controversial issue while still undertaking the issue of environmental standards.
- Jami notes that the Commission is being asked to select one topic to begin addressing now. The other topic will be taken up at another time.
- Bennett inquires if the tree cutting ordinance needs as much support from the Commission as opposed to the pesticide ordinance, which might not get addressed otherwise, and adds that tackling both issues at once as an entire commission poses difficulties.
- Maggie adds that the visibility of tree cutting might make it an easier issue to address in the community.
- Autumn echoes that the tree cutting ordinance is top of mind for residents, and will likely be easier and quicker to put together. She also underlines Jami's point that prioritizing one issue only means

that the next issue will come shortly after. Autumn notes that the pesticide ordinance will be more difficult and slow moving.

- Jami adds that it would be very helpful to have community members speak to the necessity of the pesticide ordinance in front of Ordinance Committee and Town Council, rather than just hearing from impacted business owners.
- The Commission would like to move forward with a tree protection ordinance at this time.

2. PMAC update

- Jami shared that Community Services is beginning to see signs of grub damage on the Town's playing fields. Per the Town's Pest Management Policy, a waiver will be needed to treat the fields. Jami and Todd Souza are looking into dealing with grub issues through spot treatment of Acelepryn in the spring to address to current grub issue and putting together a plan to start implementing regular biological controls to address grubs in the future. The goal is to avoid using conventional methods in the future. More information will be provided at the October meeting.

Updates

1. Education sub-committee

- Cathleen notes the success of the talk by Beverly Johnson organized by Marla at the Library regarding the marsh. The talk was recorded and on YouTube, on the Library's YouTube channel. Cathleen notes they are able and willing to take on educational components and actions around the land bond.
- Jessica adds that PCLB will collaborate with Cathleen and Marla around land bond outreach efforts.
- Randi adds that Dr. Johnson received many questions about pesticides.

2. Town Council

- Karin notes there are openings on the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board.
- Karin wants to begin goal setting for the January meeting and asks the Commission if there's anything pressing they would like to contribute to the new Council goals.
- The Gorham Connector workshop gave the impression that MTA is disorganized and potentially rethinking the project. MTA provided the following responses to the Commission's questions regarding the connector project:
 - Testing in 2023 indicates that greenhouse gas emissions will increase
 - MTA took no responsibility for environmental impact studies
- The Town Council will undertake a resolution to remove support of the project at their 10/2 meeting.
- Three new Councilors will be elected in November.

3. Sustainability Committee

- Jami notes that the Sustainability Committee is working on Sustainable Scarborough Day preparation and modifications to the EV charging ordinance.
- Jami will apply for a Community Action Grant to develop a Climate Action Plan.

4. Open Space Plan

- Conserved land totals have been refined, and it appears around 20% of Scarborough is currently protected.
- Jami requests that Commissioners answer the Open Space survey questions sent out, and additionally send it to other Scarborough community members and other interested parties.
- The project should be done in early 2025. A draft is expected in November of this year. Another survey be available in late fall to allow the community to provide feedback on the draft plan.

5. Vulnerability Assessment

- There was a neighborhood meeting with Pine Point last night, and one with Higgins Beach earlier in September. The meetings focus on what sea level rise will mean for their communities over the next 80 years and begin to talk about adaptation strategies.
- The project should wrap up by summer 2025 and will consist of a Story Map as a final product. A public workshop to present initial findings will be held in the late spring.

Next meeting: October 23, 2024

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Scarborough Conservation Commission
Annual Report
July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

The Conservation Commission is tasked with increasing awareness of the value of and reducing damages to our natural resources and working with Town Staff, other committees, and local organizations to encourage sustainable stewardship of Scarborough's natural resources.

The Commission continues to focus on issues related to its 2022 a goals-setting process, which aligned priorities with the Scarborough Comprehensive Plan. The following efforts initiated over the past year aligned with three focus areas:

Conserving Land

- Nominated a Commissioner to serve on the Ad Hoc Open Space Committee to help guide the development of Scarborough's Open Space Plan.
- Supported the Parks and Conservation Land Board's efforts to renew the Town's land acquisition fund.

Building Resiliency

- Developed and proposed environmental standards to require vegetated buffers and setbacks around wetlands, marshes, streams, rivers, vernal pools, and coastal bluffs to protect natural resources.
- Selected a Commissioner to serve on the working group that is guiding Scarborough's Vulnerability Assessment.
- Reviewed and provided input on several projects submitted to the Scarborough Planning Board.

Promoting Engaged Citizen Stewardship

- Worked in collaboration with the Scarborough Land Trust, Friends of Scarborough Marsh, and the Scarborough Public Library to coordinate the 2023 Conservation Speaker Series on a variety of topics related to conservation and climate change.
- Assisted with the coordination of Scarborough's inaugural Sustainable Scarborough Day.
- Published articles in *The Leader* and the Town's e-newsletter about the Commission's work.

Conservation Commission administration

The Commission would like to extend gratitude to Chair, Randi Hogan, and Vice-Chair, Jessica Sargent for their leadership.

The Commission also recognizes former members Rita Breton and Richard Harvey for their service and welcomes new members Abel Plaud and Bennett Flanders.

Thanks also to Council liaison Karin Shupe, staff liaison, Jami Fitch, Sustainability Manager, and additional staff support from Autumn Speer, Planning Director, and Angela Blanchette, Town Engineer.

Respectfully submitted,

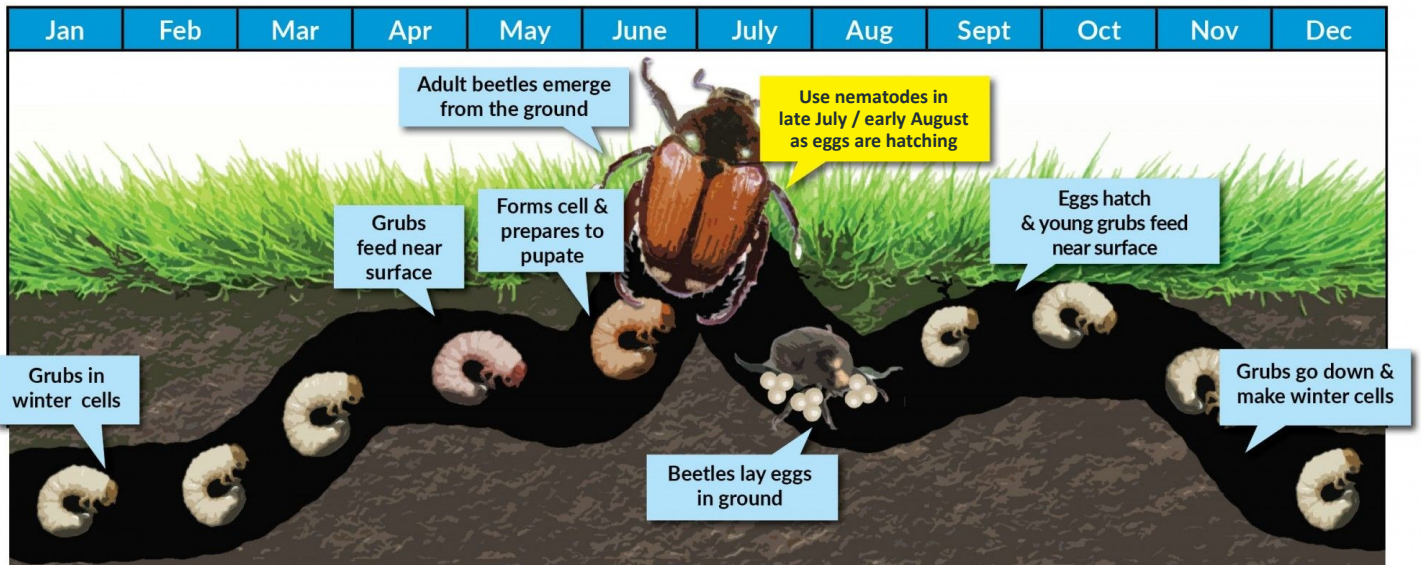
Randi Hogan, Chair

Jessica Sargent, Vice-Chair

Bennett Flanders, Cathleen Miller, Abel Plaud, Peter Slovinsky, Maggie Vishneau, and Marla Zando, Commission Members

GRUBS

Some grubs are a natural part of all lawns, but too many can create a problem. Improving soil health and building your lawn's root system will help ward off grub infestations.



What constitutes a problem?

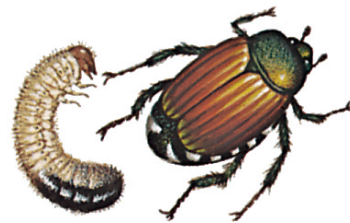
Use a shovel to cut a 1-foot by 1-foot square of turf and pull it back. If you count more than 10 grubs in that area then you may have a grub population that is large enough to damage your lawn.



Fight back

In northern New England, the best way to naturally combat grubs is by using beneficial nematodes. Nematodes are living organisms that are naturally found in most soil. Unfortunately, Maine's winters get too cold for them to survive year-round, so they need to be purchased and added to lawns. Because they're alive, nematodes should only be purchased from reputable retailers that properly store, handle, and transport them. Nematode products that are sitting on a store shelf are not recommended.

Carefully follow package instructions when applying nematodes to ensure maximum effectiveness.



White Grub Japanese Beetle

Treat your lawn in late July or early August when the grubs are in the larval, root feeding stage.

SUSTAINABLE SCARBOROUGH | Healthy Lawns



Town of Scarborough, Maine | 259 US Route 1, Scarborough, ME 04074 | scarboroughmaine.org | 207.730.4000

Adapted from Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District.

Funding for the Project was provided, in part, by the U.S. EPA under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. The funding is administered by Maine DEP in partnership with EPA.