Town of Scarborough Conservation Commission

April 30, 2025 | 6:00 pm | Hybrid: Town Manager's Conference Room and via Zoom

Minutes

Present in person:

Commission: Kate Borduas, Bennett Flanders, Randi Hogan, Cathleen Miller, Abel Plaud, Jessica Sargent, Pete Slovinsky

Staff: Jami Fitch, Autumn Speer

Call to order

1. Meeting is called to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Randi offers a land acknowledgement to recognize the Wabanaki People as traditional stewards of Scarborough.
3. Abel motions to accept minutes from the 3/23/25 meeting, Pete seconds. Vote is unanimous. Motion passes.

Public Comment

1. Andrew Mackie of Scarborough Land Trust (SLT) shares the Land Trust's upcoming events. Please see the SLT website for details.

Old Business

1. Select Chair and Vice-Chair
   - Jessica announces that she is stepping down from the Conservation Commission due to her obligations to the Parks and Conservation Land Board. This is her last meeting.
   - Randi opens the meeting for discussion about the Chair and Vice-Chair positions.
   - Many Commissioners share that they have other responsibilities that limit their ability to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair.
   - Abel shares that he is willing to serve as Vice-Chair.
   - Randi agrees to serve as Chair for one more meeting but will not be chair after the 5/28 meeting.
   - Pete nominates Abel as Vice-Chair. Bennett seconds. Vote is unanimous. Motion passes.
2. Tree City USA
   - Autumn explains the Tree City USA requires municipalities to pass a tree ordinance that applies just to Town properties and right-of-way and walks through the draft ordinance.
   - Autumn asks the Commission to assist with developing the ordinance purpose statement. The Commission provides the following suggestions:
     - Revise language in applicability section to make it clear the ordinance applies only to Town-owned property.
     - Add reference to Tree City USA designation to Purpose.
     - Reference the Town's commitment to preserving trees on municipal property to maintain Town character, improve aesthetics, provide stormwater treatment, etc.
     - Add reference to "right plant, right place."

- The Town needs to identify which staff member will be responsible for overseeing the ordinance.
- The Commission does not want to expand requirements of the ordinance to private property because it will likely slow down the process. The Commission would like to explore a Heritage Tree ordinance that would apply to private property.
- The Commission suggests the Town hold a "big tree" or heritage tree contest for an Arbor Day event. The Town Arborist could use the information to maintain a list of heritage trees in Scarborough.
- The Commission believes the Tree Advisory Board should be a separate body from the Conservation Commission.
- Once the Commission has finished weighing in on the ordinance language, it will go to the Ordinance Committee.
- **ACTION: KATE will provide some language to include in the purpose statement.**

3. Planning Board Submittals
   - The Commission reviews the site inventory for property on Two Rod Road, adjacent to the FedEx property.
   - There may be opportunities to add deed restrictions to some wetlands, especially those around the significant vernal pool.
   - The Commission recommends minimizing the number of wetland crossings. They recommend maintaining the wetlands on the external areas of the parcel (along the property lines) and filling (if necessary) only the wetlands on the interior of the parcel.
   - The Town's wetland protection ordinance requires wetland crossings use open bottom culverts.

Updates

1. Education sub-committee
   - No update
2. Town Council
   - No update
3. Parks and Conservation Land Board (PCLB)
   - The Town Council unanimously approved funding for a conservation easement at 49 Grant Road.
4. Transportation Committee
   - The Transportation Committee is working on a Vision Zero Resolution.
   - The Town Council recently held a workshop with Metro to learn more about a micro transit pilot project that is proposed for Scarborough.
5. Sustainability Committee
   - The Sustainability Committee is exploring a municipal solar array.
   - A grant to complete a climate action plan for Scarborough was funded.
6. Open Space Plan
   - The Town Council adopted the Open Space Plan at their 4/16/25 meeting. An art display to track progress toward 30x30 was also unveiled at the meeting.
   - The Town's Open Space consultant is working on developing an online dashboard to track progress toward 30x30 as well as a GIS app to evaluate parcels for conservation. The app will incorporate the PCLB's evaluation scoring tool.
7. Vulnerability Assessment
   - The Vulnerability Assessment StoryMap is now available. It currently shows Scarborough's current and future flood exposure. It will be updated before the project ends to include adaptation strategies.
   - Randi askes about the Sawyer Street project. The contract was finally signed by USFWS and work will begin this spring. The project is roughly six months behind schedule.

- Randi also asks for an update on Route 1. The grant MaineDOT was planning to apply for to raise Route 1 was paused by the USDOT. MaineDOT is still working on the design so they will be in good shape if/when the grant reopens.
- Pete asks about the status of the LID ordinance. Maine DEP just released the draft for one final public comment period. Comments are due to DEP by 5/14. The ordinance is still due to be passed in 11/25.
- Pete also askes about the status of the Close the Gap project. Jami shares that construction went out to bid, and bids were received. More information will be shared publicly when it's available.

Next meeting: May 28, 2025

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm.