



DRAFT
TOWN OF HARPSWELL
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

JULY 1, 2020 3:00 PM

Chair Mary Ann Nahf opened the meeting via Zoom at 3:02 pm.

Members Present: T. Bachman, W. Batson, M. Nahf, D. Strachan, B. Taylor, S. Vachon, J. Zagariello.

Town Staff: Planner: M. Eyerman

1. The minutes for the June 3, 2020 were approved.
2. **Picture Posts:** Sue indicated that the platforms on the picture posts at Basin Point need to be replaced. We agreed that we need to do an inventory of the condition of all the picture posts and determine if the tide markers are correct. Lowell Cove and Long Point do not have tide markers. We also need to add brochures to some. Burr will send out an email to the monitors asking them to take a picture of posts and identify any problems. He will also ask them if they need more brochures.

We need to identify an alternative to plywood for the base, perhaps redwood or cedar treated with pine tar. Wendy suggested we ask Bob Eaton for advice regarding the best wood and treatment. Markers not at Long Point

Jenny will take over website management this week.

3. **LPA (Limited Purpose Aquaculture) in Long Reach:** Tom shared a letter from Jim and Emily Coffin, a Harpswell lobster family. They are concerned about the fact that Running Tide has received approval for their aquaculture operation that includes a metal building on a float with granite 2500 pound anchors and a 2.5 acre lease with 21 metal floats that will block the Doughty Point conservation land and Ewing Narrows. The generator on the float is noisy. They are concerned that the Running Tide operation may conflict with existing fisheries, especially lobstering.

Mary Ann gave background on process for obtaining an LPA and suggested we have a need to provide education to the general public. LPAs for aquaculture are handled by state with public hearing. The Town's role is for the Harbor Master to review the application and post a public hearing notice. He has no say on licensing. The Town only follows the state rules. Deep waters are regulated by the state. The only grounds on which the Town can object is if the operation has a negative impact on the intertidal zone.

Intertidal area town has jurisdiction. Deep water is with State. Noisy generator on float. Will try to put in electricity to reduce noise. Harbor and Waterfront Comm has not seen.

Problem is land valueand concerns of landowners. Upland and intertidal area the Town has jurisdiction over. Deep water regulates by State. State is reviewing their standards as a result of Mere Point controversy.

Mary Ann noted that there is a disconnect between the needs of aquaculture, lobster fishing, clamming, and worming. This will continue to be a problem for future. Paul Plummer can give advice on the impact of aquaculture on lobstering and possible displacement by aquaculture lease holdings. Perhaps, we could create an ordinance that aquaculture operations would need to demonstrate as part of license that no impact on lobster fisheries. In addition, homeowners are unhappy about appearance of oyster floats We agreed that we should Invite Paul to a meeting to discuss what can be done to reduce the conflicts. We need to determine the role of Town government and how to have input into state standard.

Deirdre suggested we need to determine why HCC should be involved and we agreed we should be concerned about the conservation of resources. Wendy noted that we should look at the impact of SLR and climate change on lobstering, clamming, and aquaculture. We need to discuss the impact on eel grass beds.

4. **Modern Pest Control Re Cattail Trail and Hannah's Cove Road:** Modern Pest puts signs on lawns after treatment but does not indicate the type of pesticide used. Mary Ann talked to Modern Pest a staff person and he will check re putting info on sign. The Board of Pesticide Control has a registry for neighbors who want to be notified when their neighbors within 250 of their home use pesticides so they can close windows and put their pets inside. They have to sign up annually by Dec 31. Mary Ann suggested that HCC could recommend an ordinance that pesticide companies identify on a sign what they have put on lawns, so their neighbors know. Mary Ann will ask someone at Pesticide Control Bureau about regs and why do not require.
5. **Adopt a Road Letter:** HCC drafted a letter. Next steps is to show to the solid waste committee (Chuck and Phil Conner) and then send to Selectmen. The major concern is about lobster traps and big items. Wendy will update the letter.
6. **Outdoor Meeting with Matt Craig re Wallace Shore Road mitigation report:** Matt has completed his report of changes in the tidal marsh over a 5-year period. He has suggested that we meet him at Wallace Shore Road so he can show us the changes, including the increase of salt water into tidal marsh. The upland area above the new bridge has made a transition from fresh water to saltwater wetland. Better fish passage has also been achieved.

Wendy and Mary Ann will set up a date with Matt and let neighbors know within next 1-2 months. We will invite the Selectmen. An issue for the future is whether culverts are a barrier to salt water into freshwater wetlands. Matt's results will be helpful. Mark suggested that we tape the visit. The information will be useful as it applies to other culvert replacements.

At Basin Point, the salinity of water went from fresh water (26 days) and then salt water at high tides for several days. Issue with placing a culvert is divide between salt and fresh water. Important to look 5-year results at WSR.

7. **Impact of SLR and Storm Surge:** Mark mentioned the development of new modeling for flood insurance and storm surge. The old FEMA model is out of date and focuses only on current conditions. FEMA has not had funds for state of art technology mapping. The FEMA information in Harpswell is from 1987 or about 30 years old. It does not look, for example, on the impact of SLR on this model.

A group developed a model to assess the impact of SLR and storms in the lower 48 states. The model has an interactive component that allows the viewer to look at specific places. HCC should review its accuracy and determine how to use it on Town wide basis. Mark will forward the model to Mary Ann to test. HCC will ground truth map in Harpswell

Next meeting: Aug 5 at 3 pm.

Second meeting: TBD re Wall Shore Road visit with Matt Craig

The meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Note taker: Deirdre Strachan

For your information: Our Basin Point Road Project became part of NFWF's Targeted Watershed Assessments for the East Coast. Check it out at <https://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience/Pages/targeted-watershed-assessments.aspx>