

Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission
Minutes
March 1, 2022, meeting

DRAFT

I **In attendance** – at Town Office: Jim Geary, Chair; Eleanor Park, Tree Warden; Jane Ayres, Treasurer; Francine Mayhew. On Zoom: Kathleen Slack; Ann Judd; Valerie Bodner. Excused: Ann Ratcliff; Ellen Scull; Kristen Hutchins. Absent: Susan Allen, Jeff Dutra, Terry Powers. Guests: in person: Aimee Williams; on zoom: Alan Rosenquist.

II **Minutes** were reviewed and moved to accept. Vote unanimous. – no changes.

III **Tree Business.** It was reported that Tree Warden Jeff Dutra had a telephone conversation with Nathan Carroll, owner of the hazardous tree on Maple Lane. Mr. Carroll gave permission to remove the tree or parts thereof but did not offer to pay for any of it. Ann Ratcliff is checking with the Pemetic school principal to inquire whether there might be any funds available for removing the tree or alternatively removing the overhanging limbs that could threaten students or teachers at the school. Jim, Eleanor, and Jane are working with the Town Manager to find out what, if any, funds are available from the Tree Fund appropriation. Everyone agrees that the tree needs to be removed.

IV **Chris' Pond.** Jim reiterated the primary goal of the Conservation Commission for Chris' Pond which is to work to provide safe access and parking to the pond and further acquire and protect the land adjacent to the Pond, particularly land on the rights of way held by abutters. The Commission has partnered with Maine Coast Heritage Trust which has held a conservation easement on the pond since the mid 1990's. Plans have been suggested for potential workforce housing on the lot adjacent to the pond, which could be very beneficial to the Town, but is not the emphasis of the Commission. Jim and Misha will go to the Select Board meeting on March 8 to explain the grant application process for funds for the Pond from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

V **Winter beautification.** Ann Judd spoke with Cynthia Crowe at the Chamber of Commerce to ask what happened to the summer decorative banners that were on the telephone poles on Main Street and if the Chamber had any plans to add holiday decorations on the poles. Cynthia said that in the past winter decorations deteriorated quickly so there is no plan to acquire any, plus there is no budget to pay people to put them up and take them down anyway. The Conservation Commission left it at that, and all agreed winter decorations were not our responsibility. Our Beautification Fund is for Town improvements using tree, shrub, and flower plantings during the growing season.

VI **View overlook on Route 102 by Norwood Cove.** A brief discussion questioning what party was responsible for maintenance on the bank by the overlook resulted in suggestions by the Commission to offer advice to the SWH Public Works Department on when and how to prune back the brush and trees that block the view shed. Any work would have to adhere to regulations of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection as applicable to shoreland within 90 feet of the cove. Ann Ratcliff and Eleanor will look into the regulations and will offer advice to the PWD this spring.

VII **Conservation Commission Ordinance.** Jim shared his idea to create a Conservation Commission Ordinance to clarify areas of responsibility and environmental resource management for topics such as (but not limited to) Trees, Town Parks and Recreation Areas, Public Rights of Way, Public Plantings, and Duties of Officers. Some of these areas have already been defined and written down but need to be combined into one document. We will start by looking at the State Statute at a future meeting.

VIII **Treasurer's Report.** There was no formal Treasurer's report this month.

Next Meeting: Tuesday April 5, at 4pm