

## Minutes for the 29 December, 2021 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting

Call meeting to order at 18:35 by Chair Jennifer Tuthill

Members Present: Jennifer Tuthill, Merry Ruggirello, Tom Guilmette, Rosie Homer, Ron Maclean, and Steve Whitman

Excused: George Whittaker, Ernie Lamos

Absent: None

BOS Representative: Bob Piehler

Alternate Rosie Homer was designated to represent George Whittaker.

Guests: None

- ❖ Approve minutes from the 27 October 2021 mtg. Motion to accept minutes was made by Merry and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rosie. ***Minutes were accepted as presented.***
- ❖ Financials: 2021 Operating Budget. **As of 12/2/2021 our operating budget had a balance of \$1,178.89.**
- ❖ Permits: **None**

### Old Business:

1. Recap of the 2021 photo contest “Exploring Alexandria through Photography”, which ran from 15 April – 31 October. Tom and Jenny coordinated the judging, reception, and calendar printing. **There were a total of 66 pictures submitted which are on display in the Selectboard Conference room at the Municipal Building. The reception was well attended. Jenny thanked Tom for judging the contest and all his help; Rosie remarked how nice the pictures were presented in the conference room.**
2. Status of Preservation plan for Barrett Park. The ACC was tasked with developing a plan for the area known as Barrett Park and presenting it to the Select Board for their consideration and endorsement. It was agreed that the preservation plan for Barrett Park will be incorporated into the larger overall plan for the entire bog area. The kiosk has been relocated to the Town Forest as its location at Barrett Park was encroaching on the turtle nesting area, which is a restricted area. A planning session with Dan Moore was held on 11/13 at which time Dan spoke with ACC members regarding formulating an overall plan for both the Park area and the Bog in general. Dan’s comments were very helpful, and he agreed to return for additional meetings. **There was considerable discussion regarding future use and development of the property. Recent discovery in October and November regarding the extent of turtle nesting activity has caused the ACC to re-think our plans for the area. New plans are currently in the early stages of development. The ACC is fortunate to have hands-on assistance and guidance from Dan Moore a NHCC facilitator and long-time member of the New Hampton ACC and additional assistance from Joshua Megyesy, a reptile specialist and Dave Carroll, a naturalist, both from the NH Fish & Game Department. A follow-up work/training session for ACC members with Dan is tentatively scheduled for 10:00am, Tuesday 1/11 at the Municipal Building. A general informational session and update for our residents is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, 1/19 at 6:30pm – more on that meeting to follow. Our initial discussions will deal with Barrett Park which is a 20-acre parcel of town owned property on Bog Rd. The turtle nesting area does not encompass the entire 20 acres, and the ACC is taking that into consideration as we consider our options.**

### New Business

1. Update on meetings with people interested in protecting the turtle nesting area in Barrett Park and a preservation plan for the Bog in general. **(See #2, Old Business above). Plans are underway to schedule ACC members for additional awareness training and the development of a new plan(s) for the area based on recent findings on the site. It was agreed that public awareness is essential, and public update activities will be part of the plan.**
2. In preparation for our upcoming January work session with Dan Moore, ACC members were asked to begin thinking about major project we wish to accomplish in 2022 and how best to accomplish these tasks by subdividing them into smaller segments. **Discussions will include Barrett Park/Turtle Sanctuary, the Bog in general, and the Town Forest. It was agreed that Barrett Park should be our first concern as there is an immediate need to protect endangered species, and therefore, our initial efforts will be directed toward a resolution for that issue; however, taking care not to create issues detrimental to long-term objectives.**
3. April is the month in which we vote in officers to serve 1-year terms for 2022. The current officers have served in various positions for several years now, and it's time for others to take up the baton and run with it. If interested, please let one of the officers know. We can't be an effective organization without the infusion of new ideas. **The fact that people need to get involved in ACC activities was re-emphasized. It was pointed out that the current leadership has basically not changed in 5 years, and that new blood needs to flow into the positions, either by existing members accepting the responsibilities or working closely with those in those positions. Involvement by current members has improved in 2021.**
4. Annual Report on ACC activities in 2021. **The report has been completed and Jenny circulated it to our members for suggestions and comments.**
5. All other new business to be considered by the Commission at this meeting.
  - 1) **Jenny thanked Rosie for the work she has done on the mapping of the Town Forest to date. The map is not yet complete as details need to be added; however, the location of the trails is accurate and should keep folks from getting lost should they wish to hike the trails.**
  - 2) **DES has said that they will make in-person visits to the 3 sites where the ACC has suggested intervention regarding possible violations of various wetlands restrictions.**
  - 3) **Casella Waste Removal is still pursuing a permit to open a landfill in Dalton in close proximity to Forest Lake. The speculation is that the landfill will replace one which is schedule to reach capacity in 3 years. And that the new landfill will accept the majority of its incoming trash from out-of-state locations. It was pointed out that the ACC should keep their eyes/ears open for any attempts by Casella to purchase/lease land in our area.**
6. **There was no other ACC business brought to the attention of the Commission, the meeting was adjourned by Jennifer Tuthill at 19:53.**