

Manchester Conservation Commission  
April 2, 2020 Meeting  
Convened at 7:03 pm.

Members present (via teleconferencing in light of COVID-19): Fred Snow, Deb Plengey, Jeff Reardon, Shenna Bellows, Sara Kingdon, Garry Hinkley (guest). Additional guests included Julie Isbill (NPS), Elizabeth Brown (NPS), and E. Patrick Gilbert, Town Manager.

1. Minutes from March 5, 2020 MCC meeting reviewed, amended, and approved.

2. Update on Town Forest Trails: Letter to CMP was sent last week, outlining the proposed use of CMP's right-of-way for the Trails project. Map / aeriels were included. Currently awaiting response back from CMP. Discussion of next steps re: contacting abutting landowners— Garry will draft letter to nearby landowner(s), informing them of proposed use (including types of access and limited parking areas anticipated) of Town parcel for trails. Ideally a map of the Town land and adjacent properties could be included for landowner information. The letter could also seek permission from abutting landowners to walk edges of their property as part of planning Trails project. Julie described a tentative initial trail that could start on Kerns Hill Rd, continue to the Pipeline and from there to the CMP corridor, then return to Kerns Hill Rd. She suggested walking this tentative trail with GPS tracking, to add this information to future map. Discussion re: Papa's Way— Town Manager will forward to MCC some documentation about this but indicated this is most likely a private (not public) way.

3. Solid Waste update: Garry informed the group of the March 26, 2020 Executive Order (EO) 24 FY 19/20 which affects MSW and recycling in Maine (see link below). According to this EO, certain generally recyclable materials (such as paper, cardboard, and waste plastics) can be used as fuel for waste-to-energy facilities to generate electricity, and this use shall constitute recycling, with regard to regulations specified in the EO, until January 1, 2021.

[http://ldc.mainelegislature.org/Open/Exec/ExecutiveOrders/74\\_Mills/2019-20/eo\\_2019-20no24.pdf](http://ldc.mainelegislature.org/Open/Exec/ExecutiveOrders/74_Mills/2019-20/eo_2019-20no24.pdf)

Hatch Hill has changed its fee structure and hours and has suspended single stream recycling in the setting of COVID-19 (see link below for specific details).

[http://www.augustamaine.gov/departments/public\\_works/hatch\\_hill\\_landfill.php](http://www.augustamaine.gov/departments/public_works/hatch_hill_landfill.php)

Sara reported on her March 2020 conversation with Mr. TJ Troiano regarding the proposed Gardiner transfer station. Newly determined wetlands throughout the Libby Hill properties have resulted in a need for a re-working of the proposed transfer station site. Troiano Waste Services is working with DEP on this effort. Ultimately, Mr. Troiano hopes to offer a transfer station in Gardiner that could provide service to towns and to individuals, including possibly offering 'silver bullets' for recycling.

4. Legislative update: The legislature had to adjourn on March 17, 2020, due to COVID-19. Shenna shared that LD 2104 ('An Act to Support and Increase the Recycling of Packaging') was one of multiple bills that was not brought to the floor and had to be 'carried over,' in light of COVID-19, with further legislative action contingent upon the legislature returning to work this session. Like others, this bill may need to be re-introduced next year if the legislature is unable to act on it during the remainder of this year. Given the current context, the implementation of the state-wide plastic bag ban has been deferred until January 15, 2021. Per DEP, the statewide regulations and/or Governor's EOs override local ordinances in regard to plastic bag bans. Additionally, DEP is refraining from taking enforcement action against retailers/redemption centers for not accepting bottles, at least until April 30, 2020, in light of COVID-19 (link below to DEP site w/ details re: plastic bag ban and bottle redemption issues).

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/coronavirus.html#rem>

Although specific details regarding implementation of the CARES Act are not yet known, Shenna indicated the Act would include funds to stabilize agricultural production (including special crops and livestock), support local food systems, provide support to fishermen and aquaculture, and provide funding for broadband, child nutrition services, and school feeding programs, among other forms of assistance.

5. Planning Board update: Jeff R reported there will need to be public hearings regarding ordinance changes, but such hearings are deferred in light of COVID-19 and related EOs. He noted the Planning Board has been asked to consider increasing the acreage limit from 10 acres to 20 acres for grid scale solar farms. Deb P added there is a bill in the legislature to address mixed use of land for combination of agricultural and solar purposes.

6. Manchester Roadside Cleanup April 25, 2020: Given COVID-19 and related EOs and public concern, MCC agreed that the April 2020 Roadside Cleanup should be cancelled. A re-scheduled cleanup day could be considered for early October 2020. Garry will contact the Boy Scouts, the Snowmobile Club, and Hope Baptist Church about this cancellation. The Town Manager will assist with updating the Town website re: cancellation.

7. Other: Garry said that B. Moss has been voted in by the Select Board as an associate member of MCC.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Next meeting: May 7, 2020, at 7 pm.