

Hallowell Conservation Commission – November 2022 Minutes

November 21, 2022 6:30pm – Meeting in person at Fire Station with a Zoom option available

Attendees : Rosemary Presnar, Chair; Ben Godsoe, Jean McWilliams, Karen Simpson, Secretary

Attendees via Zoom: Maureen Drouin, Malena Gatti (guest)

Minutes

1. **October** minutes approved: Jean/Ben; Ben suggested that we rotate monthly minute recording among Commission members. There was unanimous agreement, will take effect in 2023.

Member Roundtable Updates:

2. **2023 HCC membership:** Malena Gatti and Hilary Neckles will join the Commission in 2023. Karen Simpson has served out her 5-year term but will serve one more year. New members will be officially appointed by the mayor at the city inauguration in January.
3. **Hall-Dale Day of Caring** – successful morning, Oct 28, at Vaughan Field with Mr. Morris' class. Public Works supplied 2 loads of mulch and removed debris. Kids spread mulch, cut knotweed, swept basketball court, cut and removed large weeds in dog area, and did litter patrol. Thanks to Karen, Jim Simpson, Jean, and Rosemary for oversight.
4. **Open Space List (Jean)** has been updated with additional properties and zoning information; plan on January review by HCC. National Guard property has been identified at RES via Sen Hickman's bill LD 1852 and now HCC will work with State Rep. Dan Shagoury to move acquisition forward.
5. **Outer Central St. Right of Way(ROW) access update.** HCC members and Councilor Wynne met with Scott Cowger on November 6 to walk the questioned ROW & property at the end of the paved road. It is now posted with No Trespassing signs installed by an abutting neighbor, although there is a question if these are binding. There was general agreement that we should work to protect any Hallowell interest in "this lovely land" along the logging access road. Some options include purchase by the State or KLT to extend Jamie Pond WMA. If Scott develops his property, he intends to allow the public to continue use; there is an active snowmobile trail now. HCC will work with the City CEO and/or Property Committee for any further information on the boundaries of the Central St. ROW. *(Nov 7 email response from CEO in regards of where ROW ends - Hi, Rosemary and all (Dan Kelly, Patrick Wynne). In June and July of 2020 Dan and I (mostly Dan) did a bunch of looking into this and we really weren't able to come to a firm conclusion about the status of this section of the road. Deeds, plans, and other records were reviewed pretty thoroughly. A professional survey would be required to determine any rights the City may have since any analysis done by staff here at City Hall would not be determinative. Doug Ide)*
6. **PFAS and Hallowell Public Water Information.** Although significant amounts of PFAS are present in the city's water, there has not yet been a determination of long-term actions by City or Hallowell Water District. There are questions of how to fund remediation, the possibility of aligning with EPA for resources or consolidating with the Gardiner water district. Returning to Jaime Pond as a drinking water source has been deemed too expensive. HWD is planning to make 1 to 5 gallon filtered water available to the public by March '23.
7. **Grow Green Healthy Hallowell.** Karen reported that the Land Management Ordinance, limiting the use of synthetic pesticides and herbicides, was presented to the City Council on October 11 after careful work by the Ordinance Rewrite Committee. Lacking a quorum, the Council did not count this as a first reading. The ORC, chaired by Councilor Diana Scully, has continued to revise and simplify the Ordinance after input from the City Solicitors and GG&HH. The revised Ordinance will be brought before the Council for a first reading in December.
8. **Community Resiliency Partnership & Climate Action** (Maureen/Kat). The Climate Resiliency Partnership held a very successful November 15 meeting at City Hall to begin the process of eliciting ideas from Hallowell

ell citizens. Speakers from A Climate To Thrive (ACTT), an initiative of and for the communities of Mount Desert Island, discussed their climate action progress and lessons learned. We are now part of the state climate resiliency partnership, and have received grant funding towards a police EV and for 2 public electric vehicle charging stations. More grants are expected.

9. **Granite City Park Working Group (Rosemary)** The GCP group has completed their planned work. Knotweed has been cut back, adding another half-acre to the park. 29 Native trees and shrubs have been planted and cared for over the summer and fall. Open spaces have been seeded with clover and grass. Red osier dogwood has been interplanted with knotweed to out compete it. Placement for the granite sculptures has been determined. Sculptures will be moved from Stevens Common and installed with help from Public Works. Rosemary submitted a final report to the City Council. The report outlines completed and open action items for the park. A volunteer appreciation event, sponsored by HCC, will be held at Maine Local Market on December 4, 3-5 pm.
10. **Berry Conservation Area.** Volunteers, after several workdays, have cleared large numbers of invasive multi-flora roses from the lower third of Berry Field. Recent rainfall has made the field too wet to mow this season. KLT will mow in the spring. Restricting mowing to 1/3 of the field each year preserves the native plants in the remaining 2/3 of the field for essential pollinators.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Simpson