

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

AGENDA

Monday, April 15, 2024

4:30 PM

Room 22, Recreation Center

Commission Members

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair Councilor Andrew Madison, Vice Chair Art Walker Councilor Robert Williams, Ex-Officio Steven Bill Kenneth Bergman Barbara Richter Deborah LeBlanc, Alternate Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate John Therriault, Alternate Lee Stanish, Alternate Eloise Clark, Alternate

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes March 18, 2024
- 3. Report-outs:
 - 1) Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee
 - 2) Invasive Species
 - 3) Land Conservation
 - 4) Neighborhood Pollinator Garden
 - 5) Gunn Rd.
- 4. Discussion Items:
 - a) Land purchase on Old Gilsum Rd.
 - b) Update on the Downtown Infrastructure trees
 - c) Keene Meadow Solar Station project update
 - d) Potential Land Purchase update (Rt 9/Washington St. Ext. properties)
 - e) Airport proposed wildlife control fence update
 - f) NHDOT Route 101 Project
 - g) Outreach:
 - a. Chronolog update \$200 per chronology per year/per location
- 5. New or Other Business

Letter from Swanzey Conservation Commission - Natural Resource Assessment

6. Adjourn - Next meeting date: Monday, May 20, 2024

1 2 3	<u>City of Keene</u> New Hampshire				
4 5	CONSERVA	TION COMMISSI	ION		
6		ING MINUTES			
7					
	Monday, March 18, 2024	4:30 PM	Room 22, Recreation Center		
8	Members Present: Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Chair Councilor Robert Williams Art Walker Ken Bergman (remote) Steven Bill Barbara Richter Eloise Clark, Alternate Thomas Haynes, Alternate John Therriault, Alternate (voting) Deborah LeBlanc, Alternate <u>Members Not Present:</u> Councilor Andrew Madison, Vice Chair Brian Reilly, Alternate Lee Stanish, Alternate		ou, Administrative Assistant on, Director of Parks,		
9 10 11	1) <u>Call to Order</u>				
12 13	Chair Von Plinsky called the meeting to orde	er at 4:30 PM.			
14 15		<u>ruary 20, 2024</u>			
16					
17		nd."			
18					
19	 Line 198, delete "which do not produce much pollen." 				
20 21	 Line 217, change "luster" to "cluster 	-			
22		20 2024 minutes as	s amended was duly seconded by		
23	Mr. Therriault. The motion carried unanimo	,	5 5		
24 25					
25		Stowandahin Salt			
26	A) Greater Goose Pond Forest	Stewardship Subo	committee		

CONS Meeting Minutes March 18, 2024

Mr. Haynes reported that the Subcommittee met on March 5 and continued discussing signs and 27 maps. On the Subcommittee's normal meeting date, April 12, there will be a walkabout at Goose 28 29 Pond to assess trails for work needed this spring and summer. Then, on April 19, the 30 Subcommittee will be meeting at the Recreation Center at 8:30 AM. On Saturday, April 20, the Subcommittee planned to participate in Green Up Keene; all Commissioners were welcome to 31 32 participate. On April 27, the Subcommittee will be trying its first spring trails day. Volunteers are invited to help with spring maintenance along the hiking trails. The Subcommittee also 33 tentatively scheduled a week-long volunteer event at the end of June, to be led by Lew Shelley of 34 SnowHawk LLC. This work will primarily focus on the lower Drummer Hill Trail, but there will 35 be a spectrum of different projects. This is a great way for volunteers to learn about trail 36 maintenance. The Subcommittee also still hopes to do trail maintenance on the Mattson Trail this 37 summer. They also hope to make progress on the bridge just below the spillway, though this was 38 39 unconfirmed. Regarding outreach, Mr. Haynes said Steve Lamonde would be leading another 40 bird walk on May 18, likely beginning at the South Trail. In the past, Mr. Lamonde requested an honorarium, and the Commission approved \$150. Mr. Lamonde now works with Jeff Littleton 41 42 and Moosewood Ecological, and he asked for the honorarium to be processed through that 43 business. 44 A motion by Mr. Haynes to pay Moosewood Ecological \$150 for Steve Lamonde's May 18, 45 46 2024 bird walk at Goose Pond was duly seconded by Ms. Richter. Discussion continued on the Subcommittee's work before a vote on the motion. 47 48 Mr. Haynes reported that the Subcommittee was starting to review the Stewardship Plan beyond 49 the trails work, which had been the primary focus to date. 50 51 Ms. Richter asked if the Subcommittee had used Nature Groupie to recruit volunteers and 52 promote events. Mr. Haynes said the Subcommittee had not used Nature Groupie for 53 volunteering at Goose Pond, as registration is usually through Parks and Recreation, which 54 oversees Goose Pond. With this registration in the past, Mr. Haynes said there had been enough 55 volunteers to make the events worthwhile. He was unsure whether many people from all over the 56 region coming to help could be too much to handle. Councilor Williams recalled that he had 57 some success with Nature Groupie for invasive species events, with two or three people 58 59 volunteering as a result. The Commission agreed that Nature Groupie could be a good resource for advertising volunteer events. Ms. Richter added that Nature Groupie also has helpful 60 resources, like guidebooks, for example. If Commissioners send Ms. Richter information about 61 62 specific events, she can help to get those advertised on Nature Groupie; Councilor Williams 63 could introduce Ms. Richter to another local volunteer who uses Nature Groupie a lot.

64

On a roll call vote, the Conservation Commission unanimously approved the motion to pay

66 Moosewood Ecological a \$150 honorarium for Steven Lamonde's bird walk on May 18, 2024 at

67 Goose Pond.

- 68
- 69 **B**) Invasive Species

- Councilor Williams recalled that the schedule for 2024 invasive species pulls was yet to beconfirmed and he hoped to present a schedule at the April meeting.
- 72 73

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C) Land Conservation

- Chair Von Plinsky reported that he and Mr. Bergman had a good meeting with Anne McBride of the Monadnock Conservancy. He said that the Conservancy did not express a lot of interest in the properties owned by Hull Forest Products, but they did provide the "scorecard" they use for assessing and comparing properties, which could help the Commission to make a case if there is a property they want to recommended purchasing for conservation.
- 80

81 Councilor Williams asked about the property above Beaver Brook Canyon, noting that several

82 people had seen a well drilling rig on the property as recently as two days before this meeting.

No Commissioners knew what the drilling was for, but they questioned if this indicated that the property would be developed. Ms. Marcou mentioned that it is impossible to develop that parcel

because it does not have frontage on a City-maintained road. Mr. Bohannon said the property's

logging access road nearly meets the highway. He thought it could have been work for a cell

tower. Chair Von Plinsky said he would look into it.

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D)

Neighborhood Pollinator Garden

Mr. Therriault reported that the Edgewood neighborhood applied for a grant from the Cheshire
County Conservation District and there was a meeting scheduled on March 22 at 11:00 AM to
continue this forward momentum.

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4) <u>Discussion Items:</u>

A) Letter to City Council re: Recommendation to Purchase Land on Old Gilsum Rd.

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99 Chair Von Plinsky welcomed feedback on the letter he drafted to submit to the City Council100 recommending purchase of a property on Old Gilsum Road.

101

Mr. Bohannon said that he received an email from Mr. Haynes and Mike Davern of the Greater 102 Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee while he was on vacation. The email outlined that 103 the 31-acre property off Old Gilsum Road was for sale. Upon returning from vacation, Mr. 104 Bohannon contacted the realtor to express interest, but they already had an offer. The prospective 105 106 owner contacted Mr. Bohannon requesting access to the property, but Mr. Bohannon was unable to grant that access, which he thought might have discouraged the interested party, and they 107 108 withdrew their offer. Mr. Bohannon remained in constant communication with the realtor, and he knew that one other bid had been submitted. So, the City Manager sent a letter of intent, stating 109

that if the Conservation Commission gives a first round of approval at this meeting, the Council

111 will consider it at their meeting on March 21. Until then, the City could not take any further

- action on the property. Now, it was the Conservation Commission's decision whether to
- recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager to make the offer.
- 114
- 115 The Commission reviewed the location of the property on a map. Mr. Bohannon mentioned the
- benefit for the City—it owns several parcels around this property, and this would be an important
- 117 31-acre addition to the 111-acre Greater Goose Pond Forest. There are some mountain biking
- trails on the property that are closed during hunting season. He also knew that a solar developer
- 119 contacted the owner about interest in buying it. Overall, the property was attractive to the City.
- 120
- 121 Chair Von Plinsky recalled that this purchase would come from the Land Use Change Tax Fund,
- which had approximately \$150,000 available. This property would be a nice buffer to nearby
- neighborhoods and purchase would allow the City to be good stewards of that area and continue
- 124 protecting the Goose Pond Forest, while also getting closer to connecting Drummer Hill and the
- 125Goose Pond Forest. If the Commission agreed, Chair Von Plinsky would write a letter to City
- 126 Council recommending the purchase and attend the March 21 City Council meeting to make the
- 127 recommendation. The Commission briefly discussed how the Council meeting cycle could slow
- this process down. Because this is a land matter, Councilor Williams thought this would be
- 129 discussed during a non-public session of the City Council, which would not be delayed by the
- 130 Standing Committee cycle.
- 131

132 Mr. Bill thought that—in the context of the 30x30 challenge—this parcel would be a good

- addition with minimal commercial applications. Mr. Haynes agreed, noting that the Greater
- 134 Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee fully supported this effort. Ms. Richter was also
- in support because of the enhanced forest connectivity and the wetlands on the property; she
- 136 mentioned the quality wildlife corridors and wildlife value.
- 137

A motion by Mr. Bill for the Conservation Commission to recommend that the City Council
approve purchasing the Old Gilsum Road property using the Land Use Change Tax Fund was
duly seconded by Mr. Therriault.

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When the property is transferred, Ms. Richter recommended having the deed restriction specify
that the property is for conservation. Mr. Bohannon agreed, noting that the 31-acre parcel would
be incorporated into the larger 111-acre conservation of the Greater Goose Pond Forest. There
could be a deed restriction at the time of transfer. The Society for the Protection of NH Forests

- owns the easement and if the purchase is approved, Mr. Bohannon would contact the Society
- about a deed restriction. Ms. Richer said it might take time. Mr. Bohannon agreed but added that
- 148 the property owner found it attractive that the City could close quickly.
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- 150 On a unanimous roll call vote, the Conservation Commission approved recommending the
- 151 purchase of the Old Gilsum Road property.
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- 153 If Chair Von Plinsky is unable to attend the March 21 Council meeting, Councilor Williams
- agreed to speak on behalf of the Commission.

155	B)	Update on the Downtown Infrastructure Trees
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157	Ms. Marcou s	aid she reached out to the City Engineer but had not received an update yet. She
158	submitted the	list of trees to the City Engineer. Chair Von Plinsky agreed to review the few on
159	the list that th	ere were questions about to confirm. Ms. Marcou would send the final list to the
160	Commission.	
161		
162	C)	Keene Meadow Solar Station Project Update
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164	While unrelat	ed to the Keene Meadow Solar Station, Ms. Marcou reported that there were two
165	Zoning Board	of Adjustment (ZBA) applications for 521 Park Avenue, the Mountain View
166	Cemetery, wh	ich is owned by the City. The applicants will appear before the ZBA on April 1.
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168	D)	Potential Land Purchase Update (Rt 9/Washington St. Ext. Properties)
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170	There were no	o updates on the properties owned by Hull Forest Products. The owner still sought a
171	higher purcha	se price than the City was willing to pay. This might be removed from the
172	Commission's	s agenda in the future.
173		
174	E)	Airport Proposed Wildlife Control Fence Update
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176	No updates.	
177		
178	F)	NH DOT Route 101 Project
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180	Chair Von Pli	nsky recalled attending a good presentation on this project. He said it seemed like
181	most in attend	lance supported one idea over others. Still, it will be a long time until further next
182	steps. The pro	ject now appears on the NH Department of Transportation's website. This will
183	remain on the	agenda.
184		
185	G)	Outreach
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187		nsky reported on work of the City's Master Plan Steering Committee, of which he
188		The Committee had its second meeting on March 12. The City is required by NH
189	-	its Master Plan every 10 years (last in 2010), but the latest update was delayed due
190		ic. He said the Committee is comprised of a great group of stakeholders. The first
191	part of this 18	-month process is focused on community engagement.
192		
193		ed his fellow Commissioners to sign-up to serve on the project "think tanks" at
194	www.Keene	<u>fasterPlan.com</u> . Community members can also sign-up for emails to receive survey
195		d project updates. The think tanks will be gatherings of community leaders to
196		hey envision for Keene's next 10 years. He said it would be essential to have
197	Commissione	rs representing conservation interests at these think tanks. At the first two Steering

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Committee meetings, the Chair heard several loud voices focused on business and housing, so he 198

199 wanted Conservation to also have a voice. Attendees do not have to be Keene residents. Chair

200 Von Plinsky thought this would be an impactful opportunity for outreach. The 2010 Master Plan is available here. 201

202

203 Ms. Clark advised bearing in mind that the Joint Planning Board-Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee or the City Council could choose to ignore the Master Plan. The Chair 204 agreed, but those committees would have to explicitly acknowledge that they see the Master Plan 205 and choose to ignore it. Chair Von Plinsky agreed that the Master Plan is not a binding 206 document. Ms. Clark said she had consistently seen the Master Plan ignored, like during the 207 Land Development Code update. While it was worth a try, and she encouraged the enthusiasm, 208 Ms. Clark was not optimistic. The Chair agreed that not everything discussed by the Master Plan 209 210 Steering Committee was optimistic, but he still encouraged the effort to advocate for conservation. 211 213

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Chair Von Plinsky also mentioned receiving an email about Libraries Love Lakes, an event in July from the Global Lake Ecological Observatory Network. Ms. Stanish will likely take the lead 214 and report more in April. 215

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5)

218 219 **New or Other Business** Chronolog https://www.chronolog.io/ **A**)

Mr. Bohannon was contacted by this program, and he thought it related well to the 220 Commission's public engagement and education efforts. The program allows for the public to 221 take and submit photos of the same location over time to visualize changes, creating a "time 222 log." This is a different way the Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee, for 223 example, could engage the public differently. It could be a way to track forestry work at Goose 224 225 Pond over time. It could also be a great way to visualize the invasive species control efforts over time. 226

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This will remain on the agenda for the April meeting after more effort is made to research costs. 228 This was also on the Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee's upcoming agenda. 229 230

231

Bee City USA B)

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Mr. Therriault noted that it was time for the Commission's annual membership to Bee City USA. 233 234 The annual dues are \$200. In response to Ms. Clark, Mr. Therriault stated that for the annual 235 membership, Keene is listed as a Bee City on the Bee City USA website and has access to their 236 information and online seminars on invertebrate conservation.

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238 A motion by Mr. Therriault to renew the City of Keene's Bee City USA membership for \$200

239 was duly seconded by Mr. Walker and the motion carried unanimously.

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241 242

C) Street Trees

Councilor Wi

Councilor Williams provided an update on the effort toward a street tree replacement program.
He recently had a meeting with Chair Von Plinsky, Councilor Bryan Lake, the City Manager,
and representatives from the Public Works Department. To date, the response from City Staff has
seemed optimistic. The proposed program would be similar to those in Nashua and Manchester.
As proposed, the City would share the cost of a street tree with the property owner. Councilor
Williams read some other details from the proposal:

249

250 *"The City will share 50% of the costs of tree planting up to \$800.00 per property per year."*

251 Applicants can apply for up to two trees per property free per year. The city will share costs on

252 up to 30 tree plantings per year. Application period will run from February 1st to February 28th

each year for plantings to occur in the spring. The city will prioritize residential applications

ahead of commercial applications. Trees must be planted within 20 feet of the edge of the street

and must be visible from the street. The location on the property that the trees will be planted

256 *must be approved by the city prior to planting. The planting of the tree must not interfere with*

257 any existing above or below ground utilities. The applicant will choose from a list of city

approved tree species. Property owners will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and

259 *care of the trees. The lifespan of the tree cannot be guaranteed by the city and refunds or*

260 replacements of trees will not be provided by the city. The properties that qualify for this261 program must be in Keene."

262

Next, City Staff would prepare cost estimates for the Operating Budget. He hoped that other CityCouncilors would see this as a good program.

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If there are many applications, Mr. Bill asked how they would be prioritized. Councilor Williams
said that was yet to be determined; it could be first come/first served, or high-density streets
could be prioritized over rural areas. Mr. Bill also suggested excluding trees that grow near the
ground, which could cause visibility issues in some locations. Chair Von Plinsky agreed, noting
that the initial conversations with City Staff were about planting the right trees in the right
places, like not planting under utility lines.

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Ms. Richter asked how this program would be funded. Councilor Williams said it would comefrom general funds in the Operating Budget. Councilor Williams said he encouraged seeking

complementary sources of funding; for example, when the City cuts all the red pines and sells

the lumber, that income could be used for street trees. There is also the potential for grants.

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A guest, Peter Hartz, suggested that this effort should be coupled with fulfilling the qualifications

of Tree City USA, of which Keene is a member. He thought there were questions of whether the

280 City was meeting those qualifications, in part because the City no longer employs an arborist. He

also suggested that—instead of spreading the trees across the whole City—that they could be

grouped in one much needed part of the City, like Roxbury Street. Still, he was excited about this

proposal and hoped to help.

284 Mr. Bergman asked if the trees could be planted behind a fence if still within 20 feet of the

roadway. Councilor Williams said yes, as long as it meets the requirement for the canopy to be

visual from the street; a lower fence that does not block the tree entirely might be a stipulation.

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Another guest, Felicia Roberts, asked if the property owner would be responsible for pruning and other maintenance once the tree is planted on their property. Councilor Williams said yes, it will be the property owner's tree, which is good because the City already pays a lot to take care of its trees.

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D) Gunn Road Planning Board Application

Ms. Marcou reported that the property owners presented before the Planning Board in February 295 296 and there were some concerns, so the hearing was continued with no decision yet. Councilor Williams said he watched the meeting, and it seemed the Planning Board wanted a clearer 297 recommendation from the Conservation Commission. The letter written by Vice Chair Madison 298 299 listed recommendations in the case that the Planning Board approved the application, but it made it seem like the Commission was okay with subdivision, which was not the case. So, Vice Chair 300 Madison revised his letter to the Planning Board to be clearer that "extraordinary" efforts should 301 be required to manage the wetlands, like the proposed spruce trees. Further, Chair Von Plinsky 302 303 spoke with the Planning Board Chair to clarify the Commission's stance. Councilor Williams encouraged his fellow Commissioners to attend the next Planning Board hearing on March 25 to 304 share their thoughts. 305

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- 307 308

E) Letter from Society for the Protection of NH Forests

This annual communication regarding the City's conservation properties, including any Shifting
 Executory Interest Properties, was included in the meeting packet but the Commission did not
 discuss it.

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- 313 314

6) <u>Adjournment – Next Meeting Date: Monday, April 15, 2024</u>

- There being no further business, Chair Von Plinsky adjourned the meeting at 5:32 PM.
- 316
- 317 Respectfully submitted by,
- 318 Katie Kibler, Minute Taker
- 319 March 25, 2024
- 320
- 321 Reviewed and edited by,
- 322 Corinne Marcou, Administrative Assistant

Corinne Marcou

From:Corinne MarcouSent:Thursday, February 22, 2024 9:38 AMTo:Harry McKelvey; Donald LussierCc:Katryna KiblerSubject:Conservation Commission Recommendation

Hi Harry & Don,

The Conservation Commission meet earlier this week and discussed the list of trees for the downtown project.

Of the list shared, the Commission suggests to strike:

Pin Oak Cleveland Pear Sugar Maple Crimson Maple

They suggest to keep the others:

Red Maple Linden Birch Cluster Crap Apple Blue Spruce White Oak Zelkova

and add these:

Red Oak Ginko Yellow Wood Dogwood

Please let me know if you have any questions for the Commission.

Corinne

Megan Fortson
Jesse Rounds; Evan Clements; Corinne Marcou
FW: Main Street Street Renovation Urban Street Tree Contract Provisions Request
Monday, March 25, 2024 9:06:30 AM

Just an FYI – We received this in the department inbox regarding the downtown project. Just wanted to keep you in the loop in case anybody brings it up.

Thanks, Megan

From: Michele Chalice <michele@healthyhomehabitats.com>

Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2024 10:56 AM

To: Patty Little <plittle@keenenh.gov>; Terri Hood <thood@keenenh.gov>; Councilor Robert Williams <rwilliams@keenenh.gov>; Community Development

<communitydevelopment@keenenh.gov>; citreq-dpw <citreq-dpw@ci.keene.nh.us>; Duncan Watson <DWatson@keenenh.gov>; Donald Lussier <dlussier@keenenh.gov>

Cc: Mari Brunner <mbrunner@keenenh.gov>

Subject: Main Street Street Renovation Urban Street Tree Contract Provisions Request

Dear City Council Members, Conservation Commission Members, and Public Works Staff,

I write as a Keene resident, taxpayer, former Keene Community Planner, and 40-year environmental landscape professional with the following request for contractual landscape provisions in the upcoming Downtown Keene Renovation Project.

As you know, the City of Keene has greatly benefited from the wise investments of previous downtown renovations projects that protected and allowed for adequate, healthy street tree soil and infiltration areas at our Central Square. Which in turn, facilitated the astounding, healthy, long-lived shade trees which grace this northernmost area of our downtown. Scores of stunning pictures circulate in our COK business solicitation and marketing materials of these Central Square shade trees as well as on personal cameras throughout our nation. Sadly, these majestic, Central Square shade trees will be removed for important public infrastructure upgrades.

While future projects can/will not allow for this amount of green space down Main Street for future such shade trees, there are contractual provisions that can provide the best case circumstances for our new street trees. These provisions, called out in the minutia of contract details, will assure the wise use of our taxpayer funding of shade trees within this project In the interest of our residents' comfort and improved <u>public safety</u> through the next 100 years as climate change's weather impacts continue to rise The provisions would also protect our taxpayers' investment, provide additional shade and high temperature relief from urban heat impacts as well as additional urban, stormwater management benefits.

Lastly, these provisions would extend the average, tortured, five-year life span of conventional urban street tree installations and instead allow these shade trees to thrive and reach their full potential for another 60-100 years with as treepeople.org

illustrates, over twenty-two, environmental, social, physical and psychological benefits. Be sure to flip each panel at this website to see a detailed explanation of each benefit. As well, refer to each hotlink of the provisions below for additional information. The requested contractual provisions:

- A mix of sapling, native street trees as recommended by UMASS:
 - red oak (Quercus rubra)
 - sugar maple (Acer saccharum)
 - hackberry (Celtis occidentalis)
 - white ash (Fraxinus americana)
 - scarlet oak (Quercus coccinea)
 - hophornbeam (Ostrya virginiana)
- A minimum 1,000 CF healthy soil below grade,
- Galvanized, steel, square tree grates w/ removable expansion pieces,
- Galvanized, steel, strap tree guards
- A minimum of 3' depth of street tree soil
- <u>Silva Cells below trees for optimal stormwater management</u>, (funded by a NHDES or US EPA grant?)
- <u>Sunflex Grow Tubes</u> (first three years of sapling growth)

Feel free to contact me with any questions or for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Michele Chalice (she, hers), Environmental Landscape Educator/Coach/Designer www.HealthyHomeHabitats.com michele@healthyhomehabitats.com 603-313-9153

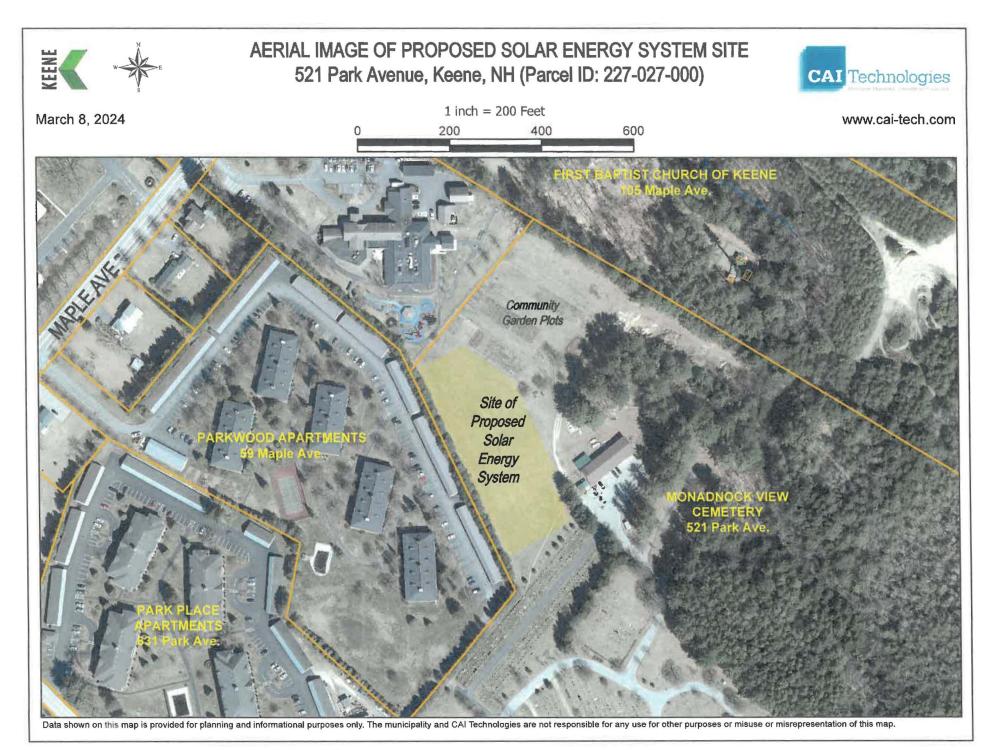
Healthy Home Habitats educates & engages clients in creating & stewarding home landscapes with more native & edible plants in ecologically-friendly 'yardens'.

Check out our reviews at: <u>https://nicejob.com/healthy-home-habitats</u> Discover our Services & Book Now at:<u>https://healthyhomehabitats.com/shop/</u> LIKE & FOLLOW us on Facebook & Instagram @healthyhomehabitats



Inspiring Stewardship Choices in Our Home Landscapes for Ecological Diversity, Vibrant, Seasonal Color and Healthier Families.

GO GREEN - Please don't print this email unless you really need to.



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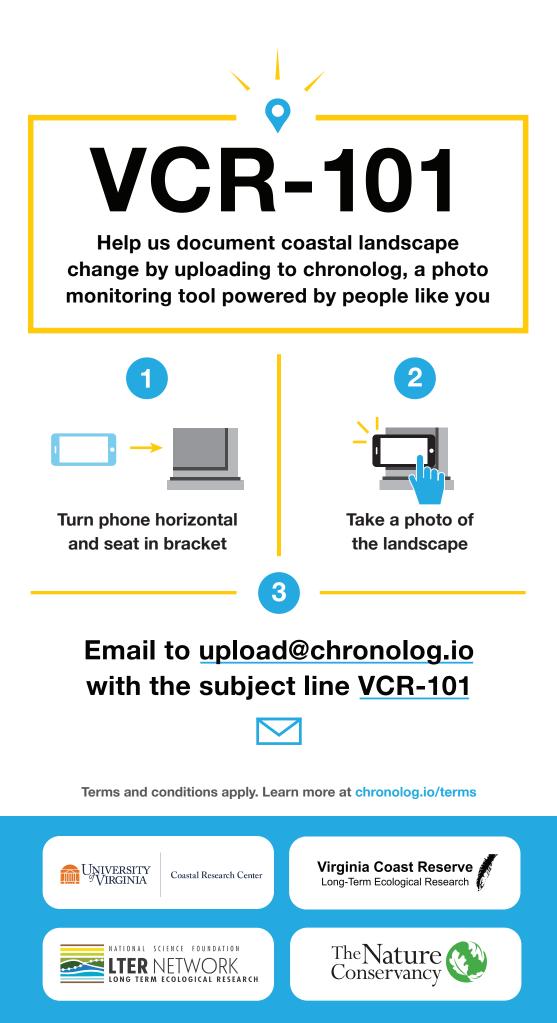


	SYSTEM :	SUMMARY	
DC SYSTEM SIZE		453.120 KW DC	
AC SYSTEM SIZE		360.000 KW AC	
PROJECT TYPE		GROUND MOUNT	
TILT / AZIMUTH		35° / 157°	
	EQUIPMENT	F SUMMARY	
	DESCRIPTION		0.71
ITEM	DES	SCRIPTION	QTY
ITEM MODULE		UO XL-GIIS.3/BFG (S90W)	
(Marcalana)	Q CELLS Q.PEAK D		0TY 768 6

*System size subject to change







March 19, 2024

Dear CITY OF KEENE,

The Swanzey Conservation Commission is currently updating the 2004 Open Space Plan. This updated plan seeks to address several guiding principles outlined in the 2022 Master Plan. These include:

- Prioritize a responsible balance of development and open space protection;
- Support/celebrate Swanzey's small town atmosphere and rural character;
- Maintain/protect the high quality of natural resources and outdoor recreational; and
- Protect the Town's cultural and historical resources.

An important aspect of this project involves an assessment of the town's various natural resources in 2024. We are seeking to better understand Swanzey's significant ecological features such as wildlife habitats, natural communities, wildlife and plant diversity. This effort also includes a wetlands inventory and evaluation to understand their functional roles, such as water quality maintenance, wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge, and flood storage. The Commission has contracted with Moosewood Ecological LLC for this project.

Your land has the potential to have one or more significant ecological features, and we invite you to help us with the project. The Commission is seeking written permission for the researchers to enter your property in order to survey for significant ecological features including the wetland evaluation. The principal researchers for this project are Jeffry Littleton, Laura Deming, Steven Lamonde, and Jaime McGuigan.

One or more of these surveyors may need to make a brief visual inspection of the natural resources. Sensitive information (such as rare species or rare habitats) gathered on your property will not be shared with the public. No markers, signs, sampling equipment, or any other evidence of their passing will be left on your property. Permission is being sought for foot access only, since many of the natural resources are land-locked and difficult to reach by road or public trail.

The attached letter of consent releases you from any liability for injury, negligence, or otherwise that may arise from the principal investigators crossing your property. If you would sign the enclosed Landowner Permission Form and return it to us by mail, email a scanned version, or provide permission by email message, we would appreciate it. Should you wish to deny access to your property, please sign the appropriate category on the form. We realize that allowing the researchers on your property is a privilege, and we will respect your rights and wishes at all times. For your convenience, please use the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope to return the authorization form, *whether you are denying access <u>or</u> allowing access to your property*.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Cheri Domina at cheri.domina@gmail.com. We appreciate your time and consideration and are looking forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Cheri Domina, Chair Swanzey Conservation Commission

Enclosure: Landowner Permission Form

Join the Conversation!

Exploring Swanzey's Natural Resources and Open Space Planning We want to hear your thoughts about growth and natural resource protections

