

Natural Resource Inventory
Work Session - February 5, 2020
Draft Minutes

Present: Pat Swank – HCC member
Debra Wrobel – HCC alternate
Rayann Dionne – Conservation Coordinator

Work Session: Town Manager’s Meeting Room – 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Ms. Dionne gave a brief overview of the general purpose of a Natural Resource Inventory (NRI). Currently, the NRI from 2009 exists as a chapter of the Hampton Master Plan and not as a stand-alone document. The Conservation Commission is looking to update this document.

Ms. Wrobel would like to see the NRI used as a guidance document to help the Town reach those NRI goals and recommendations. We should use it to set the Conservation Commission’s annual goals and then track our progress.

Ms. Swank shared which elements she liked the most in Sunapee’s and Epping’s NRI. She felt the Sunapee NRI had broad recommendations/goals while’s Epping’s were more specific.

Ms. Wrobel really liked the use of maps and GIS layers in the Sunapee because it allows the reader to visualize the whole area. She also liked the way Epping’s NRI looked into the future.

Ms. Wrobel asked about the level of support we will be receiving from the UNH Cooperative Extension. Ms. Dionne responded that they have funding until June which enables them to provide guidance on developing or updating an NRI. She envisions that they will help with the development of an outline that addresses where we would like to add, delete or expand the NRI. This detailed outline can then be used in a future Request for Proposal for an independent planner to complete the NRI update.

Ms. Wrobel shared as a fairly new resident of Hampton, she found the NRI very informative and she learned a lot of new facts about Hampton’s natural resources.

Ms. Dionne shared the two main objectives for this meeting. The first was to answer some basic questions about the goals and needs for developing and/or updating a NRI. Then to draft a concise project statement/goal that we can reflect on as we move through this process. Ms. Dionne would also share this information with Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative Extension, prior to their Feb. 19th meeting with her.

Why do you want to develop or update a natural resource inventory?

- It’s over 10 years old and the Planning Board is beginning the process of updating the Master Plan. Good timing.
- There may be some changes in our understanding of critical environmental issues, like climate change and sea-level rise that might influence how we look at things and the recommendations for protecting those critical resources.
- Making sure the level of protection is sufficient

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- Updating the science because many of the studies/info used in 2008-2009 was probably at least a few years old.
- Changes in impervious coverage impact water quality and species diversity
- Compare our vision or understanding of our natural resources today against what was known then.
- Evolve with the best management practices that are being developed
- Re-evaluate the prime wetlands for higher protection and conservation

What do you hope to accomplish and how it will be used?

- We want to utilize this document beyond just the Conservation Commission
 - Want a wider audience to be able to use and understand the document
 - Create a municipal staff/commission guide and a citizen guide so that this document can be used by all
 - A document that could also be used by schools or local groups like after school clubs or scouts.
- Provide enough detail in this document to help support and justify each recommendation, such that it can be easily incorporated into a warrant article or future grant application.
- End up with a document that will guide us effectively into the next decade (2030)
- Make sure it links to the upcoming Coastal Hazard chapter and not in conflict.
- Recommendations are split into planning, conservation, and citizen activities.

What are the community needs and concerns?

- The average person has less understanding of why the buffer and wetlands are important.
 - Need a document that explains the natural resources and their value and the things that need to happen to protect them on a very basic level.
 - Why should we be worried about impervious surface?
 - More public outreach and education
- How their property contributes to the bigger picture
 - Sunapee maps showed you how your property fits into the bigger picture.
- Community is very concerned about their property value – flooding is concern
- More property owners and residents need to be involved in the vision for Hampton, not just their property...what type of natural environment do they want around them?
- Different concerns between people who are year-round versus seasonal.
- Some of the issues we are facing are the results or repercussions of dense development.

What natural resource information would you like to see included?

- Vernal pools
- Add a discussion about Town Forest area (established 2015)
- How the natural resources match up with zoning – the creation of maps
- Epping – adopted a tree clearing regulation to minimize soil erosion, preserve wildlife habitat, and protect water resources.
- Lidar data to identify ways to increase urban forestry

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- More about plants in the intertidal zone – a habitat of concern (check Hampton Beach Master Plan)
- Highlight areas where there are opportunities to connect habitats (look at existing maps)
- Beach sand is a natural resource
- Connecting with and staying in the loop with those that are collecting info and studying our natural resources i.e Coastal Research volunteers, UNH

Purpose Statement

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the natural environment for municipal staff and landowners that will help inform land-use decisions, guide in the development of policies, identify areas for natural resource conservation and management, and educate residents.

Next meeting

Go over maps

Future effort – compile all of the recommendations and look at what we have accomplished.