

**Bar Harbor Conservation Commission**  
**Workshop Notes**  
**Monday, April 17, 2023**  
**Center for Human Ecology (CHE) Building, Room 202**  
**College of the Atlantic**  
**6:15 - 7:30pm**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The workshop was called to order at 6:20 pm by Acting Chair Jacquie Colburn.

Members present:

Acting Chair & Secretary Jacquie Colburn, Christian Barter, member and Ted Koffman, member.

Guests present:

Town of Bar Harbor: Cali Martinez, Staff Planner

COA staff: Chris Petersen, Professor, Biology and Ecology

Gordon Longsworth, Director, Geographic Information Systems Laboratory

David Gibson, Director of Energy

COA students: Linnea Goh, Darcy Kerr, Lucian Vasquez, Ellie Gabrielson

Note: Since the Commission consists of 3 members, a quorum does not exist.

**II. EXCUSED ABSENCES**

There were no excused absences.

**III. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA**

The members and guests reviewed the Workshop Agenda; no revisions were made.

**IV. REVIEW OF WORKSHOP NOTES**

The January and February workshop notes were prepared, however, to allow time for the other items on the agenda, the review and discussion of the notes was postponed to the May workshop.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Other than the town staff, COA staff and students, no other members of the public were present.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

Chris Peterson and COA hosted the Commission's workshop providing the opportunity to learn about the numerous ongoing programs, projects, and initiatives at the college that relate directly to the work of the Commission. Together, the group reviewed the various recommendations contained in the Bar Harbor Open Space Plan where COA was cited as a possible project partner. A productive discussion ensued; below are some highlights.

○ Protecting/promoting pollinator species

Suzanne Morse, Professor of Botany and Agroecology, is the botanist at COA. She is engaged in work regarding pesticide and herbicide use. There is a ban on the use of herbicides and pesticides on the campus. Regarding pollinator species, work is ongoing at the college including reverting lawns into naturalized habitats. Efforts are also ongoing to document the plants, including invasive species, that presently exist on the campus.

○ Vernal pool and water quality monitoring

Sarah Hall, Professor of Earth Science, has maps of vernal pools. Linnea Goh assisted with this project last year. Duck Brook Road located in Acadia National Park supports a variety of amphibians and performing ongoing monitoring is of interest. Gordon Longsworth stated that he has a report in the GIS Lab regarding 70 vernal pools. The group discussed and agreed that the value of vernal pools could be better publicized by working with local paper and social media outlets. Professor Hall is working on the restoration of riparian buffers with an ongoing project on Eddie Brook located near the Connors Emerson School.

- Rare, threatened, and endangered species  
Presently, there is some monitoring of these species on campus. The GIS lab has the data layers, Mr. Longworth will check for updates.
- GIS data collection and availability  
Mr. Longworth stated that COA has a significant collection of GIS data which is available to the Commission. He invited the Commission to the GIS Lab to learn more about it and the data that has been compiled to date.
- Energy and water conservation  
David Gibson, Director of Energy talked about the work that is ongoing to install low flow shower heads on campus. He said that a \$1000 investment has produced a \$5000 return in savings regarding water usage. Students are interested in applying this template to the hotels and motels in town and may try to work with the Chamber of Commerce to address the issue of water consumption.
- Dark night skies  
Mr. Gibson said that if the Commission is interested, COA has meters to determine the lumens (visible light) emitted by a lighting source.
- Bicycling and Pedestrian Access  
Some of the COA students in attendance are also members of the town's Climate Emergency Task Force. They stated that the Task Force has done some work on paths and would like to see bike racks installed at businesses throughout the community.
- Workforce Housing -Town Hill property  
Mr. Petersen asked about the status of this property. Mr. Barter explained that the parcel is 60 acres in size ANP will have 15 acres and the town will have 45 acres to develop. It is very early in the process and the primary issue now is to secure access to the parcel since it is surrounded by private property. Following that environmental assessments will need to be conducted and permits approved prior to any site construction. Several students and Mr. Petersen expressed interest in contributing to the environmental reviews when they take place. Mr. Longworth stated that he conducted a land use analysis of the Town Hill area using the GIS and would be happy to share that with the Park and the Town.

As the discussion wrapped up, everyone agreed that partnering with COA would be extremely helpful to the Commission to implement some of the strategies outlined in the Open Space Plan. Additional meetings should be held to continue these valuable and informative conversations and initiatives.

## **VII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

## **VIII. ADJOURN**

The workshop adjourned at 7:50pm.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jacquie Colburn, Secretary*