

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
July 7, 2015**

Chairman Steve Roy calls the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Present: Chairman Steve Roy, Vice Chairman Steven Hampl, James Ryan, Wini Young, Thomas Chase, and Board Administrator Linda Smith.

Absent: Alternate Loren O'Neil, and Alternate Michael Matson.

MINUTES

June 2, 2015

Mr. Chase makes a motion, second by Mr. Ryan, to approve the June 2, 2015 minutes, with edits that do not alter the content of the wording. Motion passes; 5/0.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Roy makes a motion, second by Ms. Young, to invite Shelley Frost to the table. Motion passes unanimously; 5/0.

Ms. Frost states that she is interested in being a member of the commission.

APPOINTMENTS

Mark West, Bear Paw Maps

Mark West is present representing Bear Paw Regional Greenways. He states that he is on the board for Bear Paw and is also the chair of the Land Protection committee.

Mr. West explains that in 2014 Bear Paw received a grant to prepare new maps of the region. He states that because Northwood is a member town of Bear Paw and pays annual dues of \$100 he is presenting these maps to the commission and will leave for the town. He explains that the new mapping is a co-current analysis, which looks at resilient landscapes including diversity, wildlife habitat, and water courses. He further explains that these maps bring various components such as: large forest blocks; complexity and connectivity of landscapes; wild life action plans; existing conservation lands; along with important habitats. He adds that the neighboring towns of Allenstown, Hooksett, Barnstead, Pittsfield, and Strafford have recently been added. He states that the work area has been expanded. He notes that some colors will overlap on the maps. He states that Bear Paw stands for Bear Brook and Pawtuckaway originally. Mr. West continues to review and explains the ranking areas of the maps. He adds that digital maps can be provided as well.

Mr. Roy recalls that some resilient landscape evaluation work is based on a minimum dimension. Mr. West replies that all maps have limits, which is why the original maps were very pixelated. He notes that this is beyond his expertise.

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
July 7, 2015**

Mr. Roy states that he had looked into the Open Space Institute (OSI) for a grant for NALMC. He explains that OSI feeds resources to these types of projects. He adds that remote sensing data evaluations are done and are created on a nine hectare system. He further explains that OSI can focus in more.

Mr. Roy asks about the landscape complexity. Mr. West replies that in this case they are looking into different slopes, different elevations, and diversity of habitats all within the landscape that give it the complexity.

The commission reviews the maps. Additional discussion is held on the details of how the layers interact and are ranked. Questions are asked about the different items that create the complexity, ranking, and what the colors indicate.

Mr. West states his support for ground truthing and why it is necessary, and provides examples. Mr. Roy asks if there is any written support. Mr. West states that he will forward information via email. Mr. Roy suggests that the maps be added to the town's website.

Mr. West states his credentials and what he typically does for work; discusses habitat, rare and invasive species work.

Mr. Ryan asks for larger versions of the smaller information maps. Mr. West will check into larger maps.

OLD BUSINESS

Membership ~ Continued from June 2, 2015

Mr. Roy states that a discussion was held at the last meeting regarding the commission's membership and that discussion was continued to tonight. He states that members were trying to reach out to people within the community for any interest. Mr. Roy states that Mr. Chase indicated that Ms. Frost may have an interest in becoming a member and she is present.

Mr. Roy states that the commission currently has five members out of seven.

Ms. Frost states that both Mr. Ryan and Mr. Chase approached her. She states that sometimes her work may get in the way of attendance. She requests that she be able to bring her dog. Ms. Smith will check into this.

Mr. Roy explains that the bulk of what the conservation commission does is to review and comment, and/or sign wetlands applications submitted to NHDES. He provides a brief overview of the applications and explains the review/comment process. He also notes the various conservation projects that

Official as of September 1, 2015

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
July 7, 2015**

the commission has been involved with. Mr. Roy continues to explain the role of the commission relative to the town's four town forests. He mentions the town forester and the forest management plan, which provides recommendations on forest maintenance and objectives.

Mr. Hampl mentions land acquisitions and speaking with landowners to conserve their property, create easements, and actual land purchases. Mr. Ryan adds that within the past 10 years the commission has spent at least \$300,000 on land purchases.

In addition, Mr. Hampl provides an overview of the Trout Unlimited project on the stream near the Boy Scout camp along Northwood Lake. General discussion ensues relative to the specifics of the project.

Mr. Roy notes that there are a few times when he will ask the commission members to attend a selectmen's meeting relative to a project.

Ms. Frost requests to be a member of the commission. **Mr. Roy makes a motion, second by Mr. Hampl, to forward a memo to the selectmen recommending Ms. Frost to be appointed as a full member of the conservation commission, with a term through March 2017. Motion passes unanimously; 5/0.**

Johnson Property Update

Ms. Smith states that the property has been conveyed to the town. Ms. Smith will draft a letter for Mr. Roy to sign thanking Mr. Johnson for his donation of the 2 Acre Johnson lot in the Narrows. **Mr. Roy makes a motion, second by Mr. Hampl, to send a thank you letter to Peter Johnson. Motion passes unanimously; 5/0.**

Scenic Road Public Hearing Update

Ms. Smith states that the public hearing has been postponed to July 23 at 6:30 p.m.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Hemlock Big Tree ~ Site Walk Notes

Mr. Roy states that he has not finalized the site walk notes.

GPS Trails Mapping

Mr. Roy states that he met with Ann Deely from Deerfield regarding the trails mapping. He states that he needs to get back in contact with her for additional information. He adds that the idea is to connect the Northwood Meadows trails with Pawtuckaway Park and create a map. He adds that there would be some conservation projects that would be required to complete this project.

Official as of September 1, 2015

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
July 7, 2015**

CORRESPONDENCE

Town of Mason Letter ~ Gas Pipeline

Ms. Smith notes that there has been a letter received from the Town of Mason Conservation Commission. Mr. Roy summarizes the letter which is requesting that conservation commissions formerly oppose the Northeast Energy gas pipeline project across areas of the state. Mr. Roy recuses himself from any additional discussions regarding this project as he is professionally involved with NHDES. The commission members review the information.

Lamprey Water Management Planning Area Committee

Ms. Smith notes that there has been an email received from Wayne Ives for the Lamprey WMPAAC meeting. She states that she has forwarded the email along to members. She explains that this meeting is to review the development of the report on the Instream Flow Pilot Program. Mr. Roy states that he will plan to attend the meeting.

Sierra Club ~ Kinder Morgan Project

Mr. Chase states that he attended a meeting regarding the Kinder Morgan Project. He states that the commission could request additional information on this project.

Geological Society of NH

Mr. Chase states that the Geological Society of NH is sponsoring two upcoming site visits. He explains that one visit is to the Merrimack Village Dam site, a dam removal site where a *dam on the Souhegan River* was removed. At this site they are studying the effects and consequences of taking out a dam. The other visit is to the Suncook River evulsion *in Epsom*.

FEMA Letter ~ Discovery Meetings

Mr. Roy notes that there is a letter from FEMA regarding upcoming discovery meetings of the Merrimack Watershed. He explains that this is relative to the updates to the flood risk maps; the new risk map program. He adds that there will be many meetings across the state.

Mr. Roy leaves the meeting.

Town of Mason Letter ~ Gas Pipeline ~ Continued

A discussion is held regarding the letter received. Mr. Hampl asks if there is any additional information relative to the proposed project. Mr. Chase explains that the proposal is to expand a pipeline to bring natural gas across the southern portion of the state. Mr. Hampl states that it is clean energy and there are people that are trying to shut the project down. Mr. Hampl states that he feels that the commission does not know enough about the project. Mr.

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
July 7, 2015**

Chase agrees and asks if the commission would like to obtain more information or pass on it.

Discussion ensues regarding the energy needs in the Northeast and the rising costs of electricity and propane. Mr. Hampl mentions the Northern Pass project and that Northwood was an alternate route. He states that this project is not in the area. Additional discussion is held regarding solar cells and the need to have the cells last 20+ years. Mr. Hampl notes that new energy sources and technologies need to be developed. He states that he does not know how the people in that area feel about the project and he does not feel that the commission should get involved.

Mr. Chase states that he would pass on signing the letter and also does not know enough about the project. He adds that he would prefer to allow the people in the area that are impacted be the spokespeople for this proposal.

Mr. Chase makes a motion, second by Mr. Ryan, to pass on this letter request from the Town of Mason Conservation Commission. Motion passes; 4/0.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chase makes a motion, second by Mr. Ryan, to adjourn at 8:19 p.m. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Board Secretary