

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
November 7, 2023
DRAFT**

Chair Levergood called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Grace Levergood, Vice-Chair Wini Young, Grace Mattern, Steve Hampl, Tom Chase, and Michael Romano.

Town Staff: Land Use Administrative Assistant Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

MINUTES

October 3, 2023

Mr. Chase made a motion, seconded by Mr. Romano, to approve the minutes of October 3, 2023, as written.

Chair Levergood amended the motion, to approve the minutes of October 3, 2023, as amended:

- *Vice-Chair Young explained the easement restriction prohibits recreational vehicles.*
- *Mr. Demeritt stated that would restrict access to his property and he was not agreeable.*
- *Other edits did not alter the content.*

Ms. Mattern seconded the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

October 18, 2023

On a motion made by Chair Levergood, and seconded by Vice-Chair Young, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of October 18, 2023, as written.

Public Input – none

Appointments

1. Bryan Comeau – Forest Management Projects

Mr. Comeau of Dalton Mountain Forestry, LLC, met with the Commission to provide an update of this coming winter's forest management project.

Mr. Comeau explained that the survey along Upper Camp Road has been completed and paid in full. This is for work along Upper Camp Road. The project went out to bid for the timber harvesting and a contract has been reached with Jake Bronnenberg. They will be harvesting both of the School lots. Layout, marking, and the sale of timber should be completed in October/November. The logging is projected to begin in December/January and will continue throughout the winter months. He noted that the logger has been contracted to harvest for both of the School lots.

Mr. Comeau stated that they received a basal area variance from the State of NH for the planned cutting along Lucas Pond Road. An intent to cut timber will be filed by the logger. He explained the revenue process, which is based on actual harvest volume. He stated that the Town has the choice to waive or impose a Timber Tax for timber that has been harvested on Town owned lands. He referenced RSA 79:3-b. He explained that should the Town assess the tax, it is the logger's responsibility to pay it. In this case, the logger will reduce the amount bid on the timber to account for the added expense. If the Town chooses to waive the tax, the logger will pay a higher rate for the

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
November 7, 2023
DRAFT**

timber; the net gain to the Town is typically the same or is comparable. He stated that he would need to know the Town's decision prior to advertising and contracting with a logging company. He recommended waiving the tax, which is the most common approach; however, this should be discussed between the Conservation Commission and the Selectboard.

Members would like to determine what has been the Town's past practice with timber sales and waivers. Chair Levergood stated that she would meet with the Selectboard to discuss the timber tax. Staff will schedule this meeting.

A discussion was held regarding the survey and the fact that there are structures and gardens within the town forest property lines; if there is an easement there cannot be encroachments on the land.

A site walk was scheduled for November 15 at 9 a.m.

Also discussed was adding signage on the Town trees. All members agreed. Signs have been previously purchased.

It was suggested that notification be added to the Town's website relative to the upcoming timber harvest.

New Business

1. Conserving Town Forests & Surveys – Bear-Paw Regional Greenways

A discussion was held regarding a survey for the Northwood Town Forests to be conducted by Bear-Paw Regional Greenways. Members agreed that putting an easement on the Town Forest would be something to discuss.

Ms. Mattern will reach out to Ms. Deyo of Bear-Paw Regional Greenways, and request she attend the Commissions next meeting, December 5.

The Commission would like to talk about placing easements on all the lots at the same time or if it is best to address each separately, as well as the financial options for each option. The Commission requested examples of verbiage from other town's forest easements. An estimated budget was also suggested to be provided.

2. Operation Land Share Program – Wini Young

Ms. Young gave an overview of Operation Land Share, a NH Fish & Game program, where the Town can obtain free signage for Town properties. She stated that the Town previously participated in this program back in 2011, specifically for the Town's athletic fields. NHF&G has requested that the form be updated. She explained that there is no change to the use of the conservation lands as they are already open to hunting. She suggested the Commission request signage from this program for the Town's Conservation Lands, specifically signs stating, "Safety Zone" and "No Motorized Vehicles".

Ms. Weaver will provide the agreement to the Town Administrator for the Selectmen to address.

Old Business

Trails Day – Guptill Property

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
November 7, 2023
DRAFT**

The Commission reviewed the proposed flyer for the upcoming fall hike for Sunday, November 19, 2023, at 1 p.m. The hike will be posted on the sign, Post Office and Town's website.

Town Staff Items

The following items were reviewed and addressed, as follows:

- ***Intent to Cut Requests - none***
- ***Communication from Town Administrator – Signage***

A response was received from the Town Administrator regarding the Commission's discussion at the October meeting regarding signs on unimproved sections of Upper Deerfield Road; it appears that vehicles are using the unimproved section to access private land that the town holds a conservation easement, which prohibits motorized vehicles.

Mr. Irvine stated that placing signage on Upper Deerfield Road is not permissible as Class VI roads are still a public highway for all "viatic" purposes, meaning all purposes relating to travel, including the use by automobiles. In the short-term placing signs where access is made onto Mr. DeMeritt's property is permissible with the landowner's permission.

Ms. Young stated that the signs have been installed, with Mr. DeMeritt's permission.

No further action was taken.

- ***Communication from Ms. Smith – Policy Change***

A response was received from the Land Use Specialist regarding the Commission's request for a policy change for events/activities occurring on Town Conservation Land. It was recommended that the Commission could review requests for the activities and send a request to the Selectboard ahead of the event for approval. This is due to several reasons as well as to include liability and insurance.

A brief discussion was held, and no action was taken at this time.

- ***Invasive Control – Bow Street***

Ms. Weaver referenced an email received relative to invasive species along Bow Street. Direction was given to contact DPW Foreman Chris Brown as he has addressed other areas in Town with a private contractor.

- ***NCC & BOS – Reschedule Hannaford Monitoring Easement Site Walk***

The site walk was rescheduled to November 17, 2023, at 9 a.m.

- ***CC Annual Review***

Ms. Weaver noted that she located an "annual report" from 2021 and thought that it would be a great item to add to the December agenda, if time allowed, or in January, to assure that the Commission's ongoing projects and responsibilities are being attended to.

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
November 7, 2023
DRAFT**

• **LSF, 273 Jenness Pond Road – Update ZBA & PB**

Ms. Weaver provided an update as to the status of the ZBA and PB applications for LSF, 273 Jenness Pond Road. She noted that revised plans were submitted. The application is still before the Planning Board. She will keep the Commission updated.

• **NHDES Correspondence (as noted):**

- *Standard Dredge & Fill Application: JC Builders, 721 First NH Tpke. Map 222; Lot 41. NHDES has requested additional information.*
- *Shoreland Permit Application: Pickering, 10 Pleasant View Ave. Map 109; Lot 39. Reviewed. No comments, no action required.*
- *Expedited Minimum Impact Application: Cowan, Kramas Lane. Map 102; Lot 9. (40-day hold - 9/5/23).*

Additional information was received from NHDES requesting additional information from the Applicant.

On a motion made by Ms. Mattern, and seconded by Mr. Romano, the Commission voted unanimously to send a letter to NHDES notifying them of the NCC’s site walk and to acknowledge receipt of their letter requesting additional information from the Applicant relative to the proposed dock.

- *Standard Dredge & Fill Application: Hughes, 7 North Lane. Map 108; Lot 90. (40-day hold - 9/5/23).*

NHDES has deemed the Application incomplete.

On a motion made by Mr. Romano, and seconded by Mr. Hampl, the Commission voted unanimously to send a letter to NHDES notifying them that the Commission is aware that NHDES has deemed the application incomplete and will wait for further communications from NHDES.

The following NHDES items are Pending/No Action Required:

- *Report of Alleged Violation: 248 Bow Lake Road. Map 210; Lot 11.*
- *Incomplete PBN – Cove Way. Map 202; Lot 27.*
- *Denied PBN – 416 Bow Lake Road. Map 105; lot 43.*
- *Denied PBN – 61 Bennett Bridge Road. Map 210; Lot 28.*

Chair Report/Comments

Nothing to update.

Correspondence/Other

- NHACC - Wetlands Rules Update – reviewed
- NHACC - Conference Update

Members provided positive comments and synopses of sessions they attended at the NH Association of Conservation Commission’s annual meeting.

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
November 7, 2023
DRAFT**

Ms. Young provided receipts for flagging and supplies for reimbursement.

Chair Levergood made a motion, second by Mr. Hampl, to reimburse Wini Young up to \$100 for paint and flagging supplies. Motion passed 5/0/1. Ms. Young abstained.

Wetland Violation – Olde Canterbury Road, Map 216; Lot 23.

Ms. Young informed the Commission of a potential wetland violation on Olde Canterbury Rd. that may impact Kelsey Brook.

The information was provided to the Code Enforcement Office for follow-up.

Wetland Violation – Main Street, Map 110; Lot 35.

Mr. Chase stated that there may be a potential wetland violation on the corner of First NH Turnpike and Main Street. Staff will follow-up and report back next month.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Chair Levergood, and seconded by Ms. Mattern, and unanimously accepted, at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Fellows-Weaver,
Land Use Administrative Assistant