

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
May 3, 2022**

Chair Levergood called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Present: Chair Grace Levergood, Tom Chase, Wini Young, Priscilla Merrill, Grace Mattern, Susan Romano

Town Staff: Linda Smith, Land Use Specialist, Susan Austin, Land Use Assistant

Town Forester: Bryan Comeau

Bryan Comeau was present to discuss his progress with the Forest Plan. He stated that he has completed Phase One: he visited all four town forests and performed a general assessment of current conditions. He stated that he completed the current condition report in November.

He stated that he recommends that he start Phase Two, which would run concurrently with a timber harvest, which would help pay for phase two. He recommends fast tracking the plan to get a better idea of the resources available. He will also flag the town lines when he does this. He stated that he estimates \$15,000 from the timber harvest, which is a net positive for the town. He recommends that the plan should be done first so that they have a better idea of what is available.

Chair Levergood stated that they will wait for a contract and the plan will be to review it vote on it at the next meeting.

Kaitlyn Deyo-Bear Paw Regional Greenways

Ms. Deyo was present to discuss concerns about the Town Forests with the members.

Chair Levergood stated that the town forests do not have easements on them, how much would it cost for Bear Paw to help them with this?

Ms. Young stated that the town forests, two of which have been in existence since the town was formed, under state statute, can be sold if the selectmen decide to. Even with an easement, it could be sold, but not developed.

Mr. Chase stated that to keep them from being developed, we would want to put easements on them.

Ms. Deyo stated that she could get a budget number for the members. They must put a certain amount of money into the stewardship and legal budget. She stated that since the lots have not been surveyed, it might be costly. For these projects, they can go through granting or ask for help from the town through warrant articles. She stated that although they are full for grants for this year, they are granting out through next year. They usually look at 18-24 months for a project timeline.

Ms. Young stated that they would prefer easements on all of them, but they would like to start with the most at risk.

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
May 3, 2022**

Ms. Young asked if funds could come from Conservation Funds? Ms. Deyo stated that they can. The Commission would approve the funds, hold a public hearing then after formal approval, the Select Board will approve the funds. Ms. Deyo stated that it shortens the timeline because they aren't depending on as many grants.

Ms. Merrill stated that the Town Forester just told them that he would be marking the town lots, can that take the place of a survey? Ms. Deyo stated that no, they are required to get a survey.

Open Space:

Ms. Young discussed her packet that she handed out last meeting. She asked the members if they felt that they should get more involved in Open Space. She doesn't feel that they should change the ordinance. The ordinance as it is written has a lot in it. Ms. Romano stated that the Commission could offer services and assistance, and refer to best management practices. She stated that it might simplify the approach.

Chair Levergood stated that the Commission should be available to review these.

Ms. Smith stated that there are incentives to having open space within the regulations such as reduced lots sizes and frontage. The Planning Board cannot design or direct the applications, they must respond to the applications that they receive. Ms. Smith stated that it would be great if the Conservation Commission could give thoughts and input to any improvements to the regulations. Ms. Smith stated that it is important to remember that making an open space overly restrictive might have the opposite effect. The town also does not have oversight on the Open Space, it ends up being private property.

Ms. Young stated that she would like the members to think about a possible memo for next time.

INTERNAL BUSINESS

Non-Public Session

Chair Levergood made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chase, to go into nonpublic under RSA 91-A:3, II(d) at 8:40 PM.

Motion carried by roll call vote 6/0

Chair Levergood made a motion, seconded by Ms. Merrill, to come out of nonpublic at 8:47 PM.

Motion carried by roll call vote 6/0

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
May 3, 2022**

**Chair Levergood made a motion, seconded by Ms. Merrill, to seal the minutes.
Motion carried by roll call vote 6/0.**

Upcoming Meetings:

June 7, 2022, at 7:15

Motion to adjourn is accepted at 8:48 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Austin, Land Use Assistant