

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
June 6, 2017**

Chair Grace Levergood calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Grace Levergood, Vice Chair Shelley Frost, Steve Hampl, Tom Chase, and Wini Young.

Voting Designation: Chair Grace Levergood, Vice Chair Shelley Frost, Steve Hampl, Tom Chase, and Wini Young.

Town Staff:

Linda Smith, Board Administrator and Susan Austin, Land Use Secretary.

Minutes

Mr. Chase made a motion to accept the minutes of May 2, 2017 as amended. Ms. Frost seconded. Motion carried 4/0/1. Ms. Frost abstained.

In reviewing the minutes of May 2, 2017, it should be noted the Mr. Roy was not reappointed to the commission when this meeting occurred.

Draft of the conservation easement Map 202 Lot 01

Lynn Sweet was present to present the board with the draft of the conservation easement for Map 202 Lot1.

Ms. Levergood asked who will write the stewardship plan. Ms. Sweet stated that they have a forester named Steve Bodkin. He also did the stewardship for their other lot. Bear Paw will review the stewardship plan. Ms. Sweet stated that these easements are boiler plate easements that Bear Paw provides. It's usually very similar in wording with most of the easements. If down the road their son decided to have a dairy farm, he would have to go to Bear Paw to get permission. The Strafford side of their property has a federal easement, and that is far stricter than the Northwood side. For anything to happen on the Northwood piece it would have to be able to happen on the Strafford side. Because of the way that the town of Strafford did their protections, in order to get funds for other projects, they put federal watershed easements on it on top of the Bear Paw and the Town of Strafford easement language, therefore making it difficult to do anything on that land. Ms. Sweet stated that the snowmobile trails that run through the property are open to the public. Ms. Frost stated that she loved the purposes, and the values stated and found that there was very little detail about how those values would be upheld. She noted that the values include farming, orchards, and animal husbandry. Her initial reaction was they could clear cut the land. She stated she is concerned, but at the same time, who knows what the future holds in terms of needs for agriculture. She stated that she sees that there are two competing goals, and she doesn't see how contiguous property can be upheld if the property is developed for agriculture. It seems that there is an inherent conflict in the language, and yet for the longer-term vision, it should probably remain in

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there. Ms. Levergood stated that she feels the same, she was curious about fencing, because she didn't see a mention of fencing. Ms. Sweet stated that in 50 or 75 years down the road, the language would allow for that. She stated that she gets audited every year by Bear Paw. They walk the property and talk about long term goals. They are being held accountable. Ms. Frost stated that in terms of who does any contesting about it, which is the grantees Bear Paw and the Town of Northwood who holds the executive interest in it, she would like to make sure the committee understands what the level of interest is. Finally, on page 9, if the grantee in its sole discretion determines that circumstances require immediate action to prevent or mediate significant damage to the conservation values of the property, the grantee may pursue remedies. Ms. Frost stated that significant was not defined. Ms. Frost asked if they wanted to insert the Town of Northwood into the language, so there is some sort of commentary they could provide. Ms. Sweet stated that she feels that because of the way these easements read, they are very confusing to the landowner, and they sometimes feel like they are giving up all of their rights to the land. She stated that buying the first parcel of land, it's been the best decision they have ever made. A lot of people were shocked when they timber harvested the parcel, but it really needed to be cleaned out. Ms. Levergood asked when they would see the final copy. Ms. Sweet stated that if they decide that this is what they like, they will move forward with this.

Ms. Levergood made a motion to accept the Draft Easement for Map 202 Lot 1. Mr. Chase seconded. Motion carried 4/0/1. Ms. Frost abstained.

Mr. Gunter was present to speak about the trails project. He stated that he wanted to thank Ms. Young. Ms. Young had spent a few days with the prison labor crew. The crew worked on cleaning up the trails. He also wanted to touch base and see what they can do on the town side to see what else they can do. He stated that they are working on signs, and he feels pretty good about the conservation efforts so far, this year.

Ms. Levergood stated that she wanted to know about the status of Mr. Roy's reappointment. Mr. Gunter stated that he had sent him an email inviting him to attend the next Board of Selectmen meeting. Ms. Levergood stated that at one point they had discussed attending the meeting as well. Mr. Chase stated that he would attend if he thought it was useful. He would also be sensitive about Mr. Roy's feelings about having him or the committee attend as an official body.

Mr. Chase asked if the commission is agreeing to the easement, but it's really the board of selectmen in charge, are they okay with the commission's word on their review? Mr. Gunter stated that he would forward the selectmen a copy of the draft. Ms. Frost stated she would attend the meeting.

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Guptill Trails update

Ms. Young stated that she had a wetland report available. She presented the commission with a map from NALMC. She stated that there were four major wetlands on the property. She pointed out the existing logging road. All of the trails go off of the main road. She pointed out the trails they took on the map for the commission, and discussed the work that they have done so far, and the work she did with the prison crew. She also stated that she applied for a trail finding mapping intern from UNH. Ms. Young distributed her "next steps" memo about the trails project. She discussed the names and trail blazing colors. She discussed the barbed wire they found, and she stated that she had marked it with surveyor tape.

Tom Chase left at 8:20PM

Voting Designation: Chair Grace Levergood, Vice Chair Shelley Frost, Steve Hampl, and Wini Young.

Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3, II (d)

Chair Levergood made a motion to go into non-public under RSA 91A-:3, II (D), seconded by Ms. Frost seconded at 8:42 pm. Motion carries; 6/0.

Roll Call

**Chair Grace Levergood -Aye
Vice Chair Shelley Frost-Aye
Steven Hampl -Aye
Wini Young-Aye**

Chair Levergood made a motion to come out of non-public and seal the minutes, seconded by Ms. Frost at 8:50 pm. Motion carries; 4/0.

Roll Call

**Chair Grace Levergood -Aye
Vice Chair Shelley Frost -Aye
Steven Hampl -Aye
Wini Young-Aye**

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**Mr. Hampl made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 PM, Ms. Young seconded.
Motion carried 4/0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Austin, Land Use Secretary

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