

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex
April 18, 2023
Minutes

Present: Alan Hardy, Chair, Aurel Mihai, Norman LaPierre, Jeff Abbe,

Alternate Members Present: Henry Carrier, Betsey McNaughten

Absent: Matt Burdick, Lyman Cousens, Mark Kaplan

Late arrivals: Kearsten O'Brien, Planning and Community Development Director (6:58 pm), Charlie Niebling, Town Forester (6:35 pm) and Bill Bevens, Ex-Officio (6:50 pm)

Staff Present: Kara Gallagher, Planning and Community Development Assistant, and Rose Fife, Recording Secretary

Discussion regarding consent agenda format. Instead of it reading 'review minutes', it should read 'Minutes of'. Chair appointed Betsey McNaughten as a voting member for this meeting.

Consent Agenda:

- Open by Chair – 6:30 pm
- Roll call by recording secretary
- Accountant's Report
- Review Minutes of 3.21.23

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. LaPierre, seconded by Mr. Mihai and passed by a unanimous vote.

New Business:

• Snowmobile Trails- Scott Hill – Norm LaPierre presented along with Scott Hill, Trail Administrator. Mr. LaPierre would like to bypass the walking trail around a part of the trail that is flooded and move it to higher ground. It is a dangerous spot. The woods in that area are open and he does not believe he would need to take down any trees. Scott Hill spoke about possibly needing to clear brush. Mr. LaPierre requested permission from the Conservation Commission as there is a small seasonal stream that they would need to build a 10-12-foot-wide bridge over. They do not need to go to EPA. They will need to open a stone wall. They have materials and help. The wall would only need to be opened 10 feet wide. Scott Hill noted that the wall is somewhat open now. Mr. Abbe asked about the location in question. Scott Hill explained where it was located. He also noted it is where the Hardy Loop is located. It is unwalkable during hiking season. Mr. Abbe would like to see the area they are discussing ribboned off for a better visual of where they are going to be doing the work. He does not care for the idea of with breaking through walls. Mr. Hill answered that if they cannot break through the wall, they may be able to find a different area. He noted that they would have to be 75-100 feet up into the woods to get around it. Mr. LaPierre noted that they are not too far from the Concord town line. Mr. Abbe asked if it intersected twice on the Hardy Loop Trail. Ms. McNaughten asked how far the new trail would be from the wetlands. If it was located away from the wet area, they could close the walking trail and people could use the snowmobile trail. Would the bridge be further up? Mr. LaPierre answered that the bridge would be further up where the stream is located. When you move a trail and create a snowmobile trail, you create a multi-use trail. Ms. McNaughten does not think it's a bad thing to move the walking trail away from the wetlands. She asked if they were getting a grant for this work. Mr. Hill answered they were not as it would only be around \$1,000 for lumber and the club would fund that. Mr. Abbe asked if the bridge would accommodate the drag behind the snowcat? Mr. LaPierre answered that the

groomer was 8 feet wide. Most of the bridges they are building are 10 feet wide. They will be above the water line. Mr. Abbe wants to see it laid out with ribbon. Mr. Hardy agreed that ribboning it off makes sense. He asked if they could do that before next meeting. Scott Hill answered yes. He asked to meet with Mr. Abbe to walk the area. Mr. Abbe answered that they could do that. Mr. Hardy asked them to let Kara Gallagher know when they are set to do that so she can let the Commission know. Mr. Niebling would like to go as well. He agrees they should close the Hardy bypass. Mr. Hardy is uncomfortable opening the stone walls as well, but if it works best to open them up, they can put the stones on either side so they can use them to close it back up if it was no longer used. Mr. Hill will be using telephone poles with pressure treated 4 x 6 in 10-foot length to use to make the bridge. He also submitted an arial photo from google to help as a visual. Mr. LaPierre asked if they would like to do the walk on a Conservation meeting night. Mr. Hardy would like it scheduled for the Saturday before meeting. Ms. Gallagher reminded the commission that if they went out as a group it would be considered a meeting and would need to be noticed accordingly. Mr. Abbe asked Mr. Hill to call him to schedule a time for them to walk it.

- Five Rivers Conservation Trust Regional Conservation Plan – Tim Fleury, County Forester spoke. He is here tonight on behalf of the Five River Trust. They are undergoing a strategic plan effort as well as a mapping effort. They want to engage with the Conservation Commission more frequently. A survey was sent out to the town. One June 5th there is a regional Conservation Commission planning workshop in Concord. He submitted a flier. This is a planning effort on their part and they are soliciting the Commission's feedback. Mr. Niebling would like to attend on June 5th. Mr. Abbe has it on his calendar as well. Mr. Fleury explained that Five River has identified certain important areas of the town. They will be doing regional meetings for the town. Ms. McNaughten asked if he had ever partnered with the Town and give a scenario. Mr. Abbe answered that Five Rivers oversees John Keagan's conservation easement. Mr. Abbe asked if there was anything Mr. Fleury needed from the Commission. Mr. Fleury answered there was not. Mr. Abbe noted that Boscawen has about 20% conservation property, according to an email he received from Mr. Fleury. Mr. Hardy asked a report could be pulled out of Avitar showing the acres that was in Conservation. Ms. O'Brien answered no, they can only pull Current Use property into a report. Mr. Hardy suggested they go to the 'NH Granit' website to get that information. Mr. Niebling offered to help Ms. O'Brien obtain that information.

- Re-election of Chair and Vice Chair – A **motion** to continue with Mr. Hardy as Chairman and Mr. Abbe as Vice-Chair was made by Ms. McNaughten, seconded by Mr. Mihai and passed by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Abbe gave a short report on the Sharing Special Places 2023 event he went to and the 3 different programs he attended.

Old Business:

- Town Forest – Mr. Abbe has little to report on Boscawen Village Town Forest. Dagody Hill vernal pool had some trees down but they are gone now. Mr. Abbe discussed John Keagan's request for the invasive plan control strategy. The presentation was well put together and he would like the Commission to act on it. Ms. McNaughten noted that Mr. Keagan emailed her and she has not been able to reach him to speak with him. She was trying to get someone to come and speak about invasives. Mr. Abbe discussed BioBlitz. He picked up the information from the County Cooperative Extension. From what he understands, they bring in a team of experts and they gather data on what is out on the property. Discussion regarding how the program worked. Did they pick one town a year? Does the Cooperative Extension run the program? Ms. McNaughten noted that there is a presentation on Invasives on 4.26.23 at 6 pm in Gorham on CISMA. The Commission can attend through the Zoom platform.

Mr. Niebling spoke with Eric Monroe about access to the Barnard Lot. He emailed him today. He is hoping he would allow him to borrow the key to the barway on Corn Hill Road so he can go out to mark and tally. It is about 30 acres, mostly pine. It looks like there will be a strong cone crop this fall. He would like to get out there in the late fall/early winter after the cones have dropped. Mr. Mihai would be interested in going with him. Mr. Niebling noted that after he can mark and tally, they would better know the volume out there

and they can make a decision on how they would like to move forward. Mr. Hardy explained that the commission would have to talk with the Selectmen regarding how they can utilize the funds received from a timber cut. Mr. Niebling recalls the 2017 and 2018 proceeds from a timber harvest. The 2017 income financed the improvement work around the Weir Farmstead and restoration of 5 acres of fields and reconstruction of a roadway within the Town Forest. The 2018 sale that netted around \$32,000 or \$34,000 and that went into the town forest management fund and the Commission has used that to finance improvements to Weir Road and Village Town Forests. Mr. Abbe would be interested in going as well.

Mr. Niebling noted that he has not had a response to the letter he sent regarding the Parnasses lot. The property is now listed with Bean Group. It is on the market for 2.33 million. It is 330 acres in Concord, of which 70 of those acres are in Boscawen. The listing information notes that the seller is willing to discuss subdividing the property. Mr. Hardy will follow up with the realtor. Ms. O'Brien showed the property from their web site for the Commission to see. Discussion regarding the lot and possible subdivision as shown on realtor.com. Mr. Niebling thought the portion of the ownership in Boscawen is what they are interested in. The town cannot pay more than its fair market value by law. Mr. Niebling was asked by Katie Phelps and the Select Board to perambulate the City of Concord line with Paul Gendron, the City of Concord's Surveyor.

- Walker Pond – Mr. Hardy reported on the Courser meeting they had 4.13.23. Attorney Jim Raymond is ready to draft something regarding the dam. They are working on getting Web Stout out there to survey it. There are meeting notes that were submitted. Mr. Abbe was out there picking up trash on Saturday. They opened the alders that were growing in. They discussing access to the dam. There is a road going to the left side, and he could see the dam and he was about 200 feet from it. Mr. Hardy read some history of that area and noted that it was once heavily farmed around the pond. Ms. McNaughten asked how long the Coursers owned that property. Mr. Hardy thought Fred Courser has had quite a bit of property there for quite a while. Abbe asked if would need to be deeded as a passible lane. Ms. McNaughten answered it would not. But it may say maintain, rebuild, reconstruct, etc. Mr. Abbe left a message with Web Stout and has not heard back from him. Much discussion regarding the dam, its location, and the wild life around. Hardy wanted the sign changed out that reads 'by administrative rule'.

Remaining New Business:

- Wish List – Mr. Abbe received an email from Matt St.Onge regarding a wish list. They have worked with Matt in the past. He would like to put out a wish list of what hikers might want to see. He gave some examples.

Other Business:

- Planning and Community Development Department Updates – Mrs. O'Brien sent out an email 2 weeks ago regarding a survey. Central NH does a list with a range of different categories, there are some for recreational. She put Walker Pond on their list as a Recreational area. There are grants or funds available if chosen. It is a Planning Tactic. She'd like the survey filled out or they email her with ideas. She sent it out the survey on April 6th. She will resend it tomorrow. Currently they have the King Street project, 1913, Commercial Street. Mr. Niebling suggested that the recreational infrastructure on the river would be a logical thing to include. Boscawen Town Park. Hannah Dustin Park could also be part of the Commercial Street master plan. Discussion regarding reuse of granite from that EPA clean up.

Next Meeting: May 16th, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.

A **motion** to adjourn at 8:00 pm was made by LaPierre, Abbe, unanimous vote.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*