

Warner Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting May 2, 2018

Attending: Nancy Martin, Michael Amaral, Susi von Oettingen, Phil Stockwell, Alice Chamberlin

Also Attending: Stephanie Monette, Chris Connors (Trout Unlimited), Tim Blagden (Executive Director of the Concord to Sunapee Rail Trail)

April Minutes approval:

The minutes of April 4, 2018 were approved with no corrections other than one typo – change propped to proposed.

New Conservation Commission member – Russ St. Pierre recommended Stephanie Monette, who has been invited to attend the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting next Tuesday (May 8). Russ submitted his letter of resignation. Stephanie, after approval from the BOS, will need to be sworn in by the Town Clerk.

Brown Family-Frazier Brook Farm Update

Ausbon Sargent Land Trust successfully raising funds for easement. Has pursued grants and donations to close funding gap. Received a grant for \$10k and donations totaling \$16k. Waiting to hear from a second grant for \$10k.

Children's Brook Project –

- Meeting with Fish & Game. Nancy Martin met with the members of F&G and had a great reception. Members raised questions about parking and asked that Five Rivers do their publicity after the event as there was a concern about too much traffic with children in the area. The event will be part of the annual Children's Fishing Derby. 450 trout stocked the day before the Derby. Will have a banner celebrating the Derby and the Celebration of the protection of Willow Brook (aka Children's Brook). Fish and Game and Five Rivers will help pay for the banner that will announce the public/private partnership of the Children's Brook project. The Concord Monitor and Intertown Record were notified.

Chris Connors - Trout Unlimited and NH Fish and Game made the case for the easements due to trout being in the stream. The TU Chapter would like to gift a temperature data logger to teach the children the importance of cold water for trout. The NH Fish and Game will hold on to the data logger, TU will deploy it as part of their conservation activities. Every year at the Derby, they will go over the data and discuss the importance of water temperatures to fish. The NHFG and TU will compile the data. The Local Advisory Committee (formed as a result of the Warner River designation) will be managing the data.

- Celebratory Event May 12, 7-11:00 am

Warner River Designation to River Management Protection Program led by Warner, Bradford, Sutton and Hopkinton

- Passed 242 – 60, waiting for Governor’s signature.
- Warner is the 19th river in the program, and added 20 miles to the program.
- Suggesting someone call Governor to let him know about the pending bill. Upcoming on 30th anniversary of the RMPP, hoping to get a celebration with the Governor to get him to sign it. Nancy offered to call Michelle Trembley (Wild and Scenic River Counsel) and Tracie Sales (DES).
- Regarding the process, because the designation is not yet official, Chris Connors submitted a letter to the Warner Conservation Commission providing information about next steps, in particular establishing the LACs (Local Advisory Committee). Each town must nominate individuals to be LAC members to be appointed by the Governor (see attachment).
- The LAC will have to write a river corridor management plan, timing important because of grant rounds coming (see attachment)
- TU has a student interested in helping the LAC in applying for grants (see attachment).
- TU also hoping to obtain additional funding through grants to assist in the development of the corridor management plan and supporting the student.
- Suggestion that at a minimum the link to the Guide to River Corridor Management Plans be uploaded to the Warner website. Chris Connors offered to provide an additional link that has all of the designated river management plans.

Volunteer River Assessment Project (VRAP) – objective is to monitor changes in the river water quality. Data collected by volunteers. Eventually, there will be a link to DES website with information on the water data. Seven sites monitored in the watershed in 2017, added 6 more sites (mostly tributaries). As part of the intern’s work this summer, Plymouth State will lend 2 data loggers to the VRAP volunteers, one will monitor temp and conductivity, the other will monitor temperature every 20 minutes. Will also loan rock baskets to monitor macroinvertebrates.

VRAP is also monitoring storm water in down town areas of Bradford and Warner, need substructure plans for the storm water system. Recommend that Chris Connors contact the highway department for the information (Tim Allen).

Update on DOT surplus riverfront lots:

- Map 16, Lot 24 – The Conservation Commission is securing a stamped field survey to determine the status of any abutters, doing due diligence to determine whether the land is owned by a private (unknown) individual or the Town. Hoping to get survey review done by the end of this week. Will then submit survey to DOT to finish transfer of surplus property.
- Map 7; Lot 1 – DOT investigation for additional sliver of land to accommodate rail trail is 2/3rds complete, no new information.

Friends of the Mink Hills survey of recreational use of the Mink Hills

- Have mapped recreational activities of trails and class VI roads

- Created an educational package with information about trail establishment, management, regulations for towns (put together by Ross Bennett of Henniker)
- Committee created a short survey sent to landowners abutting class VI roads in the Mink Hills of Warner.
- Sent 120 surveys, April 30th being deadline. 39 responses. Preliminary results indicate landowners primarily use the area for passive recreation.
- Upcoming committee meeting May 14 (Monday) to discuss the results of the survey.

ZBA site walk – Schoodac Road

Nancy Martin, Susi von Oettingen and Scott Warren participated with the ZBA and members of the general public. J. Mendola applied to the ZBA for a variance for 13 lots on a 15 acre parcel. Warner's manufactured housing ordinance allows for 40' manufactured homes on parcels of 10 acres or more. Variance is to make lots smaller, clustered so that 3-4 lots would have a single well and septic system. Design under a variance would reduce the length of road, rather than the designing per existing ordinance. The applicant would remain the landowner and sell the individual houses (similar to a manufactured housing park).

Site walk was an official ZBA meeting with minutes. ConComm members observed an old culvert crossing Barclely Brook, leading into an extensive wetland and vernal pools. The existing gravel trail would be expanded into a much wider road (40 to 50 feet). Most wetlands were delineated with the exception of an open sedge wetland at the base of the gravel.

See Scott Warren's summary of meeting and site walk (attached).

Warner Conservation Easement Monitoring

Katherine Brown easement monitoring was completed in December 2017 by Ausbon Sargent. Michael Amaral walked the former Indian Museum easement, well marked. Have new landowners for this easement. Need to sign NO OHRVs on the trail on this property.

Nemec's Property to be done in two weeks or so. Karrick Easement to be done in the next few weeks as well.

Ries easement monitoring needs to be completed, Michael Amaral offered to organize easement monitoring.

Stockwell-Bartlett easement to be done second half of June (Nancy volunteered)

"Trail Finder" plans for spring –
Doug will discuss at next month's meeting.

Wetlands Protection – Upon confirmation of position, Stephanie Monette will take over reporting on wetlands protection.

Change in members - Stephanie Monette will be an alternate member of the ConComm and Susi von Oettingen will become a full time member.

New Business – June 6 Meeting changed to June 27th with no July meeting planned.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.