



Town of Warner, New Hampshire  
Conservation Commission  
Wednesday, March 3, 2021  
Meeting Minutes

Preliminary preamble regarding the virtual meeting read by Nancy Martin.

Conservation Commission members present: Nancy Martin, Susi von Oettingen, Doug Allen, Alice Chamberlin, Phil Stockwell, Scott Warren, Ken Cogswell, Michael Amaral.

Members of the Public present: Boyd Smith, Matt Baronas, Derek Lick, Michelle Kendrick, Apryl Blood, Matt Esenwine, Lelia Mellen, David Bates, James Sherman, Tim Blagden, Karina Ramos, Graham Pellettieri

Meeting began at 7:02 pm

#### AGENDA

1. Tim Blagden- Former DOT Riverfront Parcels – Gave presentation on the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail. Completed one section by Bagley Field, abuts 9 acre and 2.09 acre surplus DOT parcels. Seeking to develop an extension of the rail trail on these 2 parcels. Gave a history of the acquisition of the 2 parcels of land for the rail trail expansion. Community survey results – primary concerns centered on impacts to species and wetlands, followed by trash concerns. Rail Trail committee will assist in acquiring the 2.09 sliver of land in order to extend the rail trail corridor. Asking what concerns the WCC has regarding the rail trail extension. Currently have 0.8 mile at Bagley, will extend another 2850 feet to a dead end and proposed viewing area. The next step – in the future – will be crossing the interstate, most likely under the highway. Have been working with the NHDOT to address trail crossing under the highway, appears achievable. Question re: contact with NHFG regarding natural resource impacts – Rail Trail committee has been coordinating with NHFG. If the Town acquires the parcels, the rail trail committee will seek funding for building the fence (required). If the parcel is acquired, the trail could be completed in 2022.

Members of the Public present - comments

Lelia Mellen – National Park Service has been supportive of the project.

David Bates – In support of the rail trail.

Comments from the public via the Zoom Chat:

Boyd Smith - I may have to jump off this meeting, but want to encourage the Commission to accept the land transfer that will allow extension of the rail trail. I can see from the results of the Commission's survey that the vast majority of Warner residents use conservation lands. From my own experience, rail trails - especially in population centers - are used and enjoyed by more folks than expected. I work with the Friends of Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, focusing in the Concord area where I live. The longer and better connected a trail system, the higher the social, environmental and economic value to the community. As a volunteer, I put a lot of time and energy in to expanding rail trails - because I LOVE to use them! Please support rail trail development in Warner. Thank you!

Matt Esenwine - Hello everyone, I'm currently in a WYSA Board Meeting right now, but I wanted to let you know I fully support the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail's plan to extend the bagley rail trail toward the village. Thank you.

Apryl Blood - I emailed the board our support for this. Here is what I said: Warner Parks and Recreation is in full support to continue the Rail Trail to connect Bagely Field to downtown Warner. This additional piece of 2550 feet would further that completion to allow residents and visitors a way to safely exercise by bike or foot. Any strides that we can make as a community to make this happen will be worth the outcome. Sincerely, Apryl Blood, President of Warner Parks and Rec.

Karina Ramos - I would like to briefly join in my support of Tim's presentation and the concord- lake Sunapee rail trail. Thank you.

2. Approve February Minutes – approved.
3. Town Owned Land for Sale- RSAs 80:89 and 41:14-A – Proposed auction of land parcels on hold, need to go before the Conservation Commission and Planning Board prior to being offered for sale. Suggestion to reach out to other towns about the process for reviewing the land parcels and also review the RSA to see if there is a state process.
4. Posting WCC Survey Results on Election Day – Matt Baronas, intern at Central NH Regional Planning Commission, shared the poster he developed of the WCC Survey results (4 questions). The poster will be available for viewing on Election Day (March 9, 2021). Suggestion – reference of where complete survey results can be found. Is use of weighted averages informative? Keep all information at the “score” level. Add language that full survey results will be available on the Town website.
5. Update on WCC Files/Monitoring Reports-Doug Allen provided an update about WCC files. The WCC now has a space on Google Drive to store electronic files (shared drive). Paper files may be backed up by the Town on microfilm. Suggestion that most recent conservation easement monitoring reports be scanned and uploaded on the Drive. Access is for WCC members only.
6. Recap on SPNHF Presentation Best Management Forestry Practices – Summarized presentation and discussion with SPNHF staff.
7. Mink Hills Recreation Study Committee Update- Nancy Martin provided an update. Next meeting Monday, March 8. Will be focusing on recreational use of the Minks and the future of recreational use. Need to ID a goal – including type of recreation, locations of state-listed species, creation of buffers around rare/listed species habitat.
8. Zoning Changes on Workforce Housing – Alice Chamberlin – Changes to Zoning Rules will be on the Town Ballet on March 9. One article recommended by Planning Board would bring Town regulation into conformity with State requirements – would allow multi-family housing in commercial and Intervale districts, removes limits of Article 4 (k and l) on number of units that could be put on a site. The next 2 articles submitted by petition – one allows detached accessory dwellings (recommended by Planning Board) with building permits, the other amendment allows multi-family housing would add C1 and Intervale districts.
9. Forestry/Wetlands Permits- Ken Cogswell update. One intent to cut – 10 acres off of Melvin Road. Intents to Cuts are also posted on the door at the Town Hall.

10. Communications – Letter from Bob Wright Warner River Local Advisory Committee – open to suggestions from the WCC re: the Warner River. Second letter re: development pressure at Mt. Sunapee and impacts to natural resources.

Eversource requested access across private property and town land near Willow Brook. Concerns about access and land disturbance. Access from Mt. Kearsarge Road not possible.

Five Rivers actively fund raising to secure additional funds for the Vegetable Ranch Property.

11. Adjourned 8:28 pm.