



Town of Warner, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission
Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Meeting began at 7:02.

Commission members present: Nancy Martin, Michael Amaral, Doug Allen, Ken Cogswell, Phil Stockwell, Alice Chamberlin

Public present: Tim Blagden, Lelia Mellen (National Park Service)

1. Approve April Minutes - Approved.
2. David Carroll's reply – Mr. Carroll was not able to make the meeting for the discussion.
3. WCC Survey- CNHRPC Update
Recommendation that a pilot survey be conducted, e.g. suggest family members try the survey as well as WCC members.
4. ARM Funds for culvert replacement on Ballard Brook- Update
Have engineering designs from DOT, hope to use the ARM funds to pay for installation of 3 culverts. This will allow connectivity for fish and amphibian movement in the stream. Tim Allen is working on a second quote for the price of replacing the culverts for negotiation. The quotes that DOT presented for materials is too high.
5. Posting Monitoring Reports-Municipal Assoc.- Alice
Will be provided at the next meeting.
6. DOT Surplus Riverfront Parcels- Update
 - I-89 1.8 acre parcel – is adjacent to the 9 acre parcel that the WCC is interested in acquiring. Will be sold at the same time as the 9 acre parcel, so at this time the sale of the 9 acre parcel is on hold. The 1.8 acre parcel is a sliver of land that includes the old railroad bed. Cost of the 1.8 acre parcel to be withdrawn from conservation funds is \$3,600. Possible use of the parcel – rail trail. To fulfill requirements of sale, will be able to install a less expensive fence than DOT originally required. Will have to do a survey of the parcel, a soil survey for contaminants, an archeological investigation, and consult with NH Fish and Game. Additional costs beyond the price of the land will be paid by rail trail groups. Nancy Martin, Phil Stockwell, Susi von Oettingen and Tim Blagden conducted a site walk on Sunday, May 3. DOT had cleared the area prior to the walk, offsets had been measured to observe existing boundary and provide an

approximation of the land requested of DOT. Ken Cogswell will talk to DOT for assistance in securing a state-certified archeologist to conduct the survey, and ask what is needed to address any the hazardous materials (PAHs) that might be present in the soils. Michael Amaral said he shared many of David Carroll's concerns about introducing public use/recreation into riparian habitat that has been more or less isolated for many decades. Michael questioned the use of WCC funds to purchase the 1.8 acre parcel, which appears to be solely for the purpose of facilitating a short extension of the rail trail and not for wildlife or habitat protection. He referred to a Connecticut research study that documented the decline of a rare turtle species after it had been opened to public use. Susi von Oettingen remarked that the WCC has other goals in addition to conservation, that include public education and promoting public appreciation of our local natural environment. Purchase of this small parcel will support those goals. Motion made and passed to respond in the affirmative to DOT. Nancy Martin votes in the affirmative, Doug Allen votes in the affirmative, Phil Stockwell votes in the affirmative, Ken Cogswell votes in the affirmative, Alice Chamberlin votes in the affirmative, Michael Amaral votes in affirmative, Susi von Oettingen votes in the affirmative.

- Map 16: Lot 24

7. Whitford-Ordway Easement

Received a monitoring report from SPNHF, one of the largest trees (an official Big Tree) in NH is on the parcel. It is about 135 feet tall. Suggestion – conduct a public walk to see the tree, (when public walks are possible). Information on the Big Tree Project is available from the WCC (contact Nancy Martin). Doug Allen said he would write an article for the town newsletter scheduled to come out in the fall.

8. ATVs in the Minks-Update

All Warner Class VI roads are closed at this time. Despite this, vehicles have been observed using the roads and causing damage to the roads. Increased enforcement of the road closure is anticipated. The ATV trails that have been discontinued in Warner have had ATV trail signs removed. These trails need to be signed as “No ATVs allowed”.

9. Outstanding Easement Monitoring Reports

McCauslands – still needs to be done.

10. Forestry/Wetlands Permits- Ken

Forestry permits are now being posted on the Town website. No wetlands permits have been posted on the One Stop website.

11. Communications to the WCC

- NHACC Public Information on Wetlands Permits – notice that there have been changes to the wetland permit notification, do not require WCC signatures at this time (due to Covid-19 guidelines).
- Granite State Tree Farmer
- Ausbon Sargent will host annual easement monitoring training in June.

12. New Business

Suggestion made to meet with the Warner LAC in person (when possible) to understand the Warner River management plan. Nancy Martin will send Ken Milander an email requesting a working meeting with the WCC.

13. Adjourned at 8:30 pm.