



**Town of Amherst, NH
Conservation Commission
FINAL MINUTES**

Barbara Landry Conference Room

Wednesday, 14 February 2018, 7:00 PM

*Conservation Commission members in attendance were: Rob Clemens, Lee Gilman,
Frank Montesanto, and William Widmer - Alternate.
Also in attendance: Will Ludt, Kristan Patenaude*

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rob Clemens called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. Girl Scout Troop 22515 Proposal

Girl Scout Troop 22515 presented the Commission with a proposal to help them earn their Silver Award. The Troop hopes to build a platform, bench, and camera post in an area of the Hemlock Trail in order to allow the public to watch the regrowth of trees in the area over time. The group will do fundraising and use volunteer help in order to pay for and build these items. They are hoping the area can be used to educate people about the logging, as well as allow trail users a place to relax. Pictures taken from the camera post can be uploaded to a website that will allow the group to display the effects of regrowth over time.

Mr. Clemens explained to the Troop that there is already a proposed project to reestablish New England cottontail habitat in that area. He has sent an email to the County Forester, Ethan Belair, regarding the Troop's proposal and he's very excited to try to tie them together, if possible. Mr. Clemens suggested Mr. Montesanto as a mentor for this project.

The Commission discussed different materials that might be available to the Troop and the difficulty of bringing construction materials up the steep areas of the Hemlock Trail. Mr. Clemens and the Troop agreed to meet on a Saturday before the Commission's next meeting for a site visit of the trail.

43 **III. Non-Public Session NH RSA 91-A:3 II (I)**
44 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Clemens and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to enter into non-*
45 *public session at 7:21 p.m. By roll call vote Widmer: yes, Montesanto: yes, Gilman: yes,*
46 *Clemens: yes.*

47
48 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Montesanto and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to exit non-*
49 *public session.*

50 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

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52 **IV. LaBelle Proposal – Bragdon Sledding Hill**

53 Mr. Clemens explained that Bill Drescher reviewed the quick claim deed for this plot of
54 land; the language of which makes the proposal from LaBelle Winery not supportable by
55 the Commission. He also stated that the Commission continues to have a strong interest in
56 partnering with LaBelle in the future for other items.

57

58 Mr. Ken Clinton thanked the Commission for pursuing the possibility.

59

60 The Commission discussed what can be done regarding the precarious parking across from
61 the sledding hill. There is a hope to work with DPW to make the tunnel safer in the future.

62

63 **V. Chair Comments**

64 Chairman Clemens had no comments.

65

66 **VI. Meeting Minute Review from 1/10/2018**

67 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Gilman and SECONDED by Mr. Montesanto to accept the*
68 *meeting minutes from January 10, 2018 as amended.*

69 *Voting: 3 ayes, 1 abstention. Motion carried.*

70

71 **VII. Treasurer’s Report**

72 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Montesanto and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to accept the*
73 *Treasurer’s Report as submitted.*

74 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

75

76 **VIII. Planning Board Update**

77 Mr. Clemens stated that he’s unsure of what’s happening with the current proposal by
78 LaBelle to acquire a portion of the Camp Young Judaea property.

79

80 Mr. Clemens and Mr. Will Ludt discussed the possibility of the use of the trail behind
81 LaBelle for the public. Mr. Ludt suggested that he may bring up the question to LaBelle on
82 behalf of the Heritage Commission.

83

84 **IX. 2018 Warrant Article Support**

85 Mr. Clemens stated that there were no questions regarding the ACC’s warrant articles at
86 the Deliberative Session. He explained that Ms. Kristan Patenaude created flyers to educate
87 the public and request their vote in support of the warrant articles. Copies have since been
88 posted at Moulton’s, Homestead, the Library, and some were given to the Recreation

89 Department. Ms. Patenaude also developed an article and Letter to the Editor that were
90 published in the Citizen. It is hoped that the Cabinet will also decide to publish them. Mr.
91 Gilman suggested posting flyers at the Amherst Garden Center and the bike shop in
92 Salzburg Square.

93 94 **X. Forest Management**

95 Mr. Clemens explained that Ethan Belair, County Forester, will be hosting a Woods Forum
96 on March 3rd at PMEC. The morning will be spent inside learning and discussing various
97 topics, and the afternoon will be spent educating the audience out on the Hemlock Trail.
98 The Conservation Commission is trying to target the private property landowners in town
99 to encourage them to attend.

100
101 Mr. Widmer explained that he has been looking into the emerald ash borer educational
102 materials that are available, but would like help from the Commission on deciding who to
103 reach with them and how.

104
105 Mr. Clemens stated that the Commission can reach out to the public on Facebook, and
106 through articles in the Citizen. This topic should also be addressed at the Woods Forum.
107 Mr. Gilman stated that he believes information on the hemlock pests should also be
108 mentioned during the Woods Forum.

109 110 **XI. Trail Development and Use**

111 Mr. Clemens explained that Mr. Hardner went through the Trail Development Standards
112 document and trimmed it down to two pages. The group agreed that the document looks
113 much more clear and concise now.

114
115 In response to a question from Mr. Ludt, Mr. Clemens explained that the Trails
116 subcommittee has not been formally disbanded, but is currently informally inactive.

117
118 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Montesanto and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to adopt the*
119 *Trail Development Standards document, with suggested edits, as submitted.*
120 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

121
122 The Commission reviewed a revised draft of their Trail Brochure, created by Ms.
123 Patenaude. After a map is created for the brochure, it will be reviewed again. Ms.
124 Patenaude suggested a future look at the ACC's Trail website in order to possibly tabulate
125 data and make more accessible to the public.

126
127 Mr. Clemens stated that Mr. Hardner has found donors willing to purchase a SnowDog
128 machine that will be used to groom certain town trails during the winter months. This will
129 allow for packed trails for biking, hiking, skiing, etc. Mr. Clemens and Mr. Hardner met
130 with Craig Fraley, and the Recreation Department is willing to store and be responsible for
131 the piece of equipment. There will be a small subset of people, probably from the ACC,
132 Recreation Department, and trail stewards, that will receive training in order to operate the
133 SnowDog.

134

135 In response to a question from Mr. Gilman, Mr. Clemens explained that the SnowDog will
136 need to be transported using a truck or minivan. It will be stored in a locked storage area at
137 the Recreation Department with controlled access to it.

138
139 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Montesanto and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to approve the*
140 *purchase of a SnowDog with donated funds.*

141 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*
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143 **XII. Round Table**

144 Mr. Widmer explained that last March there was discussion regarding an Amherst Clean-
145 up Day, possibly to be coupled with Earth Day, and he's hoping to renew that discussion.
146 Mr. Clemens stated that he would reach out to the DPW and try to find a point person to
147 spearhead the idea.

148
149 Mr. Gilman stated that he spoke with Mr. Simon Corson and the Division of Pesticide
150 Control regarding access of land for pest management. Mr. Corson created a map of
151 conservation lands and school district areas (not owned by the town) to aid in this
152 discussion. The lots will need different permit applications for the licenses.

153
154 The Commission discussed the plan for the invasives projects at Great Meadow and
155 Bragdon. Mr. Gilman explained which months the work will be done, or continued, for
156 each property.

157
158 Mr. Clemens stated that there is a presentation by the Bedford Land Trust on April 4th at
159 the Bedford Library regarding restoring the American chestnut. The Saving Special Places
160 conference is on April 7th in Alton, NH.

161 Mr. Gilman stated that there is a winter conference of the Northeast Organic Farming
162 Association in Concord on March 18th. There is also a spring meeting of the New
163 Hampshire Arborists Association on March 20th in Concord.

164
165 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Gilman and SECONDED by Mr. Montesanto to adjourn the*
166 *meeting at 9:15 p.m.*

167 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*
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172 *Respectfully submitted,*

173 *Kristan Patenaude*