



Town of Amherst, NH

Conservation Commission

Draft Minutes

Barbara Landry Meeting Room

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

1 *Conservation Commission members in attendance were: Rob Clemens, John Harvey,*
2 *Jared Hardner, Vick Bennison, Bill Widmer, Rich Hart, Bill Stoughton, Mike*
3 *Cohen, and Peter Lyon.*
4 *Also in attendance: Kristan Patenaude*
5

6 **I. Call to Order**

7 Rob Clemens called the meeting to order at 6:57 PM.
8

9 **II. Review of Meeting Minutes – August 13, 2018 Public Hearing**

10 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Bennison and SECONDED by Mr. Cohen to approve the*
11 *meeting minutes from August 13, 2018, as written.*
12 *Voting: 3-0-4; motion carried.*
13

14 *Mr. Stoughton voting for Mr. Gilman. Mr. Widmer voting for Mr. Robertson.*
15

16 **III. Treasurer's Report**

17 Mr. Harvey presented the Treasurer's Report.
18

19 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Harvey and SECONDED by Mr. Hardner to approve the*
20 *expenditures to Currier Lumber made by Mr. Montesanto.*
21 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*
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23 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Harvey and SECONDED by Mr. Hardner to approve the*
24 *expenditure to Vegetation Control Services in the amount of \$6,457.75 from the*
25 *Conservation Fund.*
26 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*
27

28 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Harvey and SECONDED by Mr. Widmer to expend \$66.71*
29 *from the town budget to pay for 5 name plates for the Commission.*
30 *This motion was suspended pending further research into this item.*
31 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

32 **IV. Public Education and Outreach Plan**

33 Mr. Cohen presented his ideas for a Public Education and Outreach Plan. He hopes that the
34 format will serve as a guideline and a way to educate other committees in town and help the
35 community understand the work of the ACC.

36
37 The Commission discussed the Plan, made some specific notes and agreed to revisit it at a
38 future meeting to continue to work on it.

39
40 **V. Wheeler Lot Proposal**

41 Mr. Harvey stated that he is proposing a trail at the Spring Road/Lynch Farm Road junction.
42 There are some items of heritage interest there. He would like for a sign to be erected on or
43 near the trail, stating "Site of Hank Thomas Sawmill," and for there to be a small
44 picnic/resting area place. Horace Thomas was the 3rd owner back of this land, but
45 unfortunately there's been no luck in finding the deed that sold this land to him. This trail
46 will continue on from the Beaver Dam Overlook trail, down to Lynch Farm Road, and
47 continue to the sawmill site. Mr. Harvey stated that this is highly valuable conservation land,
48 and he believes that this is a trail future Commissioners will want to extend.

49
50 Mr. Will Ludt stated that the Heritage Commission is in agreement about this new trail. He
51 believes it will bring people closer to the Nahill property and maybe give a greater
52 understanding of the heritage of this area.

53
54 The Commission discussed the concern over a concrete "pool" that is found near the
55 proposed new trail. The Commission also discussed what the sign holding the sawblade
56 might look like. They agreed to discuss the kiosk/sign with Mr. Montesanto and Mr. Eric
57 Hahn.

58
59 The Commission agreed to have a site walk of the property.

60
61 Mr. Hardner explained that he and Mr. Robertson went and walked the proposed trail near
62 the corn crib and believe the area is too wet to make a spur trail on it. Mr. Clemens
63 recommended the group check the area again when it is dry, as this has been one of the
64 wettest years on record and it's hard to tell what the area would be like normally.

65
66 **VI. Lot Consolidation Proposal**

67 Mr. Harvey explained that he has done this type of consolidation of properties in the past. His
68 hope is to consolidate adjacent properties in order to merge easements onto non-protected
69 land, in order to protect conservation land from having changes made to it at future town
70 meetings.

71
72 Mr. Stoughton explained that he believes future townspeople should be able to vote on what
73 they would like to do with town properties. Mr. Lyon agreed that if the town in 100 years
74 needs the land for something else they should not be restricted from using it.

75
76 Mr. Clemens stated that, in other surrounding towns, conservation lands have had their usage
77 changed by the Board of Selectmen because there were no restrictions on the land.

Mr. Cohen stated that conservation is not a relative value – it doesn't change. The public trusts the Commission to conserve the land and the value of that land doesn't change.

Mr. Harvey stated that he is looking at consolidation for the Davis and North of Davis properties, where one property has a conservation restriction and the other does not. He is also looking at consolidation of the Pond Parish and Wheeler properties, neither of which has conservation restrictions in their deeds.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Clemens and SECONDED by Mr. Bennison to consolidate the Pond Parish and Wheeler properties in the process previously outlined by Mr. Harvey. Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

The Commission agreed to find exactly what would happen when trying to merge two properties, one which has restrictions on it and one which does not, before further pursuing consolidating the Davis and North of Davis properties.

VII. Round Table

Mr. Hardner explained that the Commission currently has a backlog of infrastructure projects and Mr. Montesanto is quite busy with work. He's wondered if there's a way to outsource some of the work. Mr. Stoughton stated that he works with Habitat for Humanity and is sure they would be interested in helping with some construction projects.

Mr. Clemens stated that there will be a Regional Open Space Team Meeting next Wednesday in Milford.

Ms. Patenaude stated that she got a few quotes for the Trail Brochures. She will work to adjust the map on the brochure to see if it can hold GPS coordinates to the trailheads.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to enter into Non-Public Session (pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (1)) at 9:04 p.m. By roll-call vote: Hardner, yes; Hart, yes; Clemens, yes; Harvey, yes; Bennison, yes; Stoughton, yes.

VIII. Non-Public Session (Pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (1))

IX. Public Session

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to exit Non-Public Session.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session for 90 days.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Cohen and SECONDED by Mr. Bennison to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

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126 *Respectfully submitted,*

127 *Kristan Patenaude*