



Town of Amherst, NH

Conservation Commission

Final Minutes

Barbara Landry Meeting Room

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Conservation Commission members in attendance were: Chairman Rob Clemens, Jared Hardner, John Harvey, Lee Gilman, Bill Widmer, Rich Hart, Bill Stoughton, Michael Cohen, Peter Lyon - BOS.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Clemens called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. Trail Proposal/Schweiker Easement – Bill Birchard, ALT

Bill Birchard, of the Amherst Land Trust, presented a proposal to the Commission for a trail to run from Baboosic Lake Road over to Baboosic Lake. The proposed trail would hopefully be created by an Eagle Scout (Chris Sadders) and eventually be taken care of by the ACC and become incorporated into their trail portfolio. There would be access to this trail from Hillside Ave, with parking at the Town Beach.

In response to a question from Mr. Hardner, Mr. Birchard stated that he believes this trail would be able to directly connect to the unofficial trail system off of Curran Lane.

In response to a question from Mr. Hardner, Mr. Birchard explained that he is hoping that the ACC would eventually take care of the trail maintenance and monitoring for this new trail.

In response to a question from Mr. Cohen, Mr. Birchard stated that the proposed trail will be 0.6 miles from lake to road, and 0.2 miles from road to road, for a total of 0.8 miles.

In response to a question from Mr. Lyon, Mr. Birchard explained that the proposed road crossing for the trail is not at a good spot. It is on a hill and at a curve in the road.

The Commission discussed the road crossing for the proposed trail.

Mr. Widmer agreed to go walk the proposed trail with Mr. Birchard to see the feasibility of the proposed road crossing.

Eagle Scout member, Chris Soddors, explained that he hopes to be approved to start the trail project by early June.

The Commission discussed the issues of the ACC spending funds on a non-public ALT easement. Mr. Hardner suggested that the trail be built as an Eagle Scout project and that the ACC then informally have a trail steward assigned to take care of the ALT trail.

III. Chair Comments

Chairman Clemens gave his thanks to Commission members, Mr. Widmer and Mr. Bennison, for their work on the Cleanup Day and Trail Steward get together respectively.

IV. Minutes (from 4/24)

The Commission agreed to table to minutes until the next meeting.

V. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Widmer explained that the group is significantly underrunning the town budget so far.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Widmer and SECONDED by Mr. Hardner to allocate \$139.02 out of the town budget, Gift Account line, for a plaque at Sky Meadow.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Widmer and SECONDED by Mr. Hardner to allocate \$82.80 from the town budget to cover Ms. Patenaude's costs for printing and laminating items for Cleanup Day.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to allocate \$2,800 from the town budget, Land Management line, for Charlie Koch to finish the data collection necessary to update the Forest Management Plan.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to allocate \$2,348 from the town budget, Water Crossing Repair and Maintenance line, for lumber from P.J. Currier to be purchased before July 1, 2019.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to allocate \$840 from the town budget, Kiosk line, for lumber from P.J. Currier to be purchased before July 1, 2019.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

The Commission discussed other budget items that would need to be addressed. Mr. Widmer suggested the Commission contract with Ms. Patenaude to support the ACC with postings, pictures, and articles to help bolster their public education and outreach goal.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Harvey and SECONDED by Mr. Hardner to allocate up to \$1,000 from the town budget, Educational Outreach & Professional Development line, for Kristan Patenaude to provide public relations services to the ACC at the town approved rate.

An AMENDED MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to allocate up to \$750 from the town budget, Educational Outreach & Professional Development line, for Kristan Patenaude to provide public relations services to the ACC at the town approved rate.

Voting; all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to allocate \$1,750 to invasive species treatment at Lindabury Orchard from the town budget: \$650 from Land Management line, \$600 from Water Crossing line, \$160 from Kiosk line, \$200 from Signage line, \$140 from Invasives line.

Voting; all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Harvey to accept the Finance Report as presented.

Voting; all aye; motion carried unanimously.

VI. Planning & Permits

The Commission reviewed a few lot line adjustments but had no comments or questions.

VII. Amherst Clean-up Day Post-Mortem

Mr. Widmer stated that the Clean-up Day seemed to be a success again this year.

Approximately 400 bags of trash were collected; this is approximately a 20-30% increase from last year. Maps were used to mark down where people had collected trash from in town, and that data will be used to help distribute cleanup efforts more thoroughly next year.

John Nuxoll and a group from his Christs Church, helped to clean up along 101 and the on/off ramps.

Unfortunately, 1 syringe was recovered during the cleanup and was safely collected thanks to the Amherst Police Department.

VIII. Lands and Easements Monitoring Update

Mr. Stoughton explained that the first 3 easements were monitored, and the landowners of all 3 were interested in participating. The next set of letters is ready to be sent out, but the group can begin the process on its own properties at any time.

IX. Grasslands Workshop (5/24)

Mr. Harvey stated that the Grasslands Workshop will be held at PMEC and a field in Bedford, starting at 7:45 am on May 24th. The presentation is tailored to landowners, conservation commission members, and natural resource consultants. The group will initially

learn how to scientifically observe and count birds at a field in Bedford, and will then hear a presentation on managing grasslands at PMEC.

X. Taylor-Bower Easement Update

Mr. Hardner stated that he spoke with Mr. Bower, who agreed to allow the Commission to redraft the contract for the property in order to address the issues with public access and the structure of the contract to allow for clearer commitments. Mr. Stoughton has agreed to draft a document that would then be reviewed by the appropriate town lawyer.

XI. Fourth of July

Chairman Clemens explained that the ACC will again have a booth on the Green for the 4th of July festivities. Mr. Cohen has agreed to help coordinate the effort this year. The group discussed possible items for display at the event and will continue to work on ideas.

XII. Other Business

Chairman Clemens explained that there are trees along an easement at Joe English Brook which an abutter is concerned could fall onto his property. The group discussed who has the responsibility to remove these trees and who has the liability if they do fall.

Town Administrator Shankle stated that the new Finance Director will start May 13th. Also, interviews for the new Community Development Director will occur tomorrow afternoon.

Mr. Hart stated that he reserved the Library display case for the ACC for January 2020.\

XIII. Round Table

The group discussed moving the canoe stairs downstream approximately 10 feet into an eddy area.

The next ACC meeting will be on June 12th.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Harvey and SECONDED by Mr. Hardner to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 pm.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude*