



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

Barbara Landry Conference Room

Wednesday, 13 September 2017, 7:00 PM

*Conservation Commission members in attendance were: Rob Clemens, Jared Hardner,
Rich Hart, Peter Lyon, Lee Gilman.*

Also in attendance: Simon Corson – Planner, Will Ludt, Kristan Patenaude

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rob Clemens called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

II. Trapping Request – Brandon Dubois

Mr. Brandon Dubois explained that this is his 7th year trapping in New Hampshire. He traps mostly on farms and private land. He creates kits from most of his traps and donates them to the International Trapping Association or gifts them for educational purposes. He believes there is still a need for trapping due to the high number of predators and disease (mange, rabies) associated with these animals.

In response to a question from Mr. Clemens, Mr. Dubois explained that he generally likes to trap on the Thorton Ferry II side of the Souhegan River, near the high school. He generally catches mink, muskrats, coyotes, beaver, and foxes.

In response to a question from Mr. Clemens, Mr. Dubois explained that a fur kit means that the hide has been sent to the tannery and is safe to handle. This allows people to study animals they might not see otherwise.

Mr. Dubois explained that he keeps a record of everything he catches and reports it to the state. He is concerned regarding the high beaver population in the Souhegan. He spoke to a Wildlife Biologist at the state who believes that the beavers continue to territorially attack each other, even once caught in the traps. He doesn't find many beaver that are less than 30lbs. and he doesn't catch any kits. He hasn't had any decrease in numbers of beaver caught in this area over the years.

45 In response to a question from Mr. Lyon, Mr. Dubois explained that his traps are very safe
46 to the general public that might be walking near the area. They aren't meant to harm, but
47 hold the animal until he arrives.

48
49 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Hart to approve Mr.*
50 *Brandon Dubois' request to trap on Conservation lands in Amherst.*
51 *Voting: all aye. Motion carried unanimously.*
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53 Mr. Clemens requested a report from Mr. Dubois at the end of his trapping season, which
54 he agreed to.

56 **III. Review of Minutes from August 9, 2017**

57 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Gilman and SECONDED by Mr. Hart to approve the August*
58 *9, 2017 minutes as submitted.*
59 *Voting: all aye. Motion carried unanimously.*
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61 **IV. Treasurer's Report – John (in absentia)**

62 Mr. Clemens accepted Mr. Harvey's report in his absence.
63

64 **V. Planning Board Update – Rich**

65 Mr. Hart reviewed the map for a proposed subdivision development off of Route 122 near
66 the Hollis border. There is a plan to have open space, conservation land, a recreation area,
67 and similar items within the proposed land area. Mr. Hart suggested asking the
68 development to use trees to shade the brook that is located on the property.
69

70 In response to a question from Mr. Clemens, Mr. Hart stated that this is the Stickney family
71 land and that he believes the development will actually open up a lot of land space that isn't
72 currently available for use.
73

74 Mr. Clemens explained that this is the first property slated for development under a new
75 ordinance that grants bonuses to the developer in response to their willingness to contribute
76 access to conservation and open space. This particular property should create about 23
77 acres of conservation easement.
78

79 Mr. Hart stated that he is looking at the zoning regulations for subdivisions, in order to
80 examine the top level process. He wants to get a map of important conservation areas and
81 work to preserve those with the highest value.
82

83 **VI. Chair Comments – Rob**

84 Mr. Clemens acknowledged Mr. Hart's work on the Ciderfest history information that's on
85 display at the library.
86

87 Mr. Clemens explained that there is a Basswood in Amherst that has been named the co-
88 champ for Hillsborough County by the NH Big Tree Program.
89

90 **VII. GIS/Mapping Update – Simon Corson**

91 Mr. Corson explained that the town currently has an iPad on loan from UNH that is being
92 used for pedestrian infrastructure data and closed/open drainage data collection. There is
93 also a Trimble on loan which is being used for more exact data on local trails.

94
95 The Trimble has been used to map Caesar’s Brook, various parking lots and kiosks along
96 the trails, the Rec Department’s new disk golf course, and other areas. The goal is to
97 eventually make an NRPC app which will allow people to access trail maps from their
98 mobile devices. It will be an empowering tool for some.

99
100 Mr. Corson explained that he will work to get a prioritized list of trails in town that still
101 need to be mapped for the project trail finder website to Emma Tutein, a GIS professional
102 for the state.

103

104 **VIII. Upper Bragdon Forest Management – Jared/Charlie Koch**

105 Mr. Clemens stated that there was a meeting at Bragdon Farm to discuss Upper Bragdon
106 for possible expansion of the edges around the grasslands. Mr. Hardner explained that the
107 group decided that Bragdon will not be a good pilot site and that Mr. Koch is currently
108 looking for another site.

109

110 In response to a question from Mr. Hart, Mr. Hardner explained that, following suggestions
111 from the state, the group is trying to enhance grassland habitat and young seral stage
112 forests.

113

114 Mr. Koch and the group are going to look at a property on the Merrimack line, near the
115 Grater Woods area, to decide if it’s an appropriate location.

116

117 **IX. Property Updates – 24 Brook Rd; Arnold/Sky Meadow**

118 Mr. Clemens explained that the group has decided not to place a bid on the 24 Brook Road
119 property at the auction. This is not due to lack of interest or amount of conservation value,
120 but ability to make a realistic bid at this time.

121

122 Mr. Clemens stated that the current Sky Meadow property owner has some conservation
123 restriction wishes that he has asked the Commission to consider to be added into any
124 easement language. This wish list is based on the history of the property and the love of the
125 land. The group discussed which of these wishes are in their control and the plan to go
126 through them all at a later date.

127

128 **X. Infrastructure Update – Frank**

129 Mr. Clemens stated that this item will be held until the next meeting.

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131 **XI. Metal Prospecting Policy – Bill**

132 Mr. Will Ludt stated that he sent an email to the stakeholders on September 6, requesting
133 their comments to the draft policy. Once the comments are compiled and the draft is
134 revised, he will bring it before the Board of Selectman for approval.

135

136 **XII. Round Table – All**

137 Mr. Gilman explained some of the work being done currently to Lindabury Orchard.

138

139 Mr. Hardner explained the trail work being done to reroute the Haseltine trails. The
140 volunteer effort included about 20 people. He also reviewed the donation of shrubs at the
141 BA (Betty Arnold) parking lot and the effort of an abutter in helping to keep them watered.
142 Mr. Hardner stated that he walked the BH trail, which connects the BA trails to the
143 Haseltine trails, with an abutter whose property contains part of the route. They came to a
144 handshake agreement that the route will be moved slightly onto the Commission's
145 easement. The current route will also remain on the abutter's property until he chooses to
146 have it closed.

147 Mr. Hardner also stated that there needs to be some repairs to the staircase on the BH trail.
148 This could be a good Eagle Scout or volunteer project in the future.

149 Mr. Hardner explained that he and Mr. Robertson walked the trail that may someday
150 connect the Bicentennial Trail to the BA trails and met the woman who owns the Tastee
151 Kone. She was excited about the possibility of a trail running by her property and will
152 promote it at her business. It will also be possible for people to park in that lot to hike the
153 trails from there.

154

155 Mr. Hart stated that he took a load of metal drums and buckets from the dump on
156 Lindabury to the recycling center and it looks much better now. He also explained that the
157 Ciderfest is looking for volunteers to help them on September 23rd.

158

159 Mr. Gilman explained that September 23rd is also the Beaver Brook Annual Art Show.

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161 **XIII. Adjournment**

162 Mr. Clemens adjourned the meeting at 8:43pm.

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172 Respectfully submitted,

173 Kristan Patenaude

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