

Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: January 23, 2025 4 pm

Members present: Chris Nicodemus, Jill Brewer, Michelle Sauque, Steve Schwartz; and Ginny Jeffryes by phone.

Minutes of 12/3/2024: reviewed. Jill moves to approve. Ginny seconds. Unanimously approved.

Annual report for 2024: Written by Chris and distributed by email. Chris received feedback on minor typos to correct. Discussion and agreement to add a bullet point mentioning the National Forests talk that we co-sponsored with Easton and Sugar Hill. Steve brings up Chris may want to include Elise Lawson's providing wetlands-related comments to Planning Board (PB) on the proposed zoning ordinance. Steve reports that PB discussed her comments, but not all of them were incorporated. Chris will see whether there's a feasible way to incorporate, given the space constraints. Steve also suggests that if space, it be noted that he joined us as the PB member.

Natural Resource Inventory (NRI): Chris sent the final document out via email. Elise incorporated our suggested edits to her draft. Discussion about a spelling correction, which Chris will send her. Agreement by all that it's a well done, professional, beautiful document. Next step is to arrange a public education session where Elise can present it to residents. She suggested Wednesday March 26 at 6 pm. Chris suggests we decide whether to combine it with our next meeting, with eventual consensus being that her presentation is a stand-alone event. Discussion about how to promote the event to get good attendance. Steve wonders how the high turnout for the Plymouth State students' water resources presentation was achieved. Ginny says she knows that Easton CC promoted it. Not sure how else. Brainstorming done about NRI presentation promotion possibilities: maybe via library email list, Franconia Facebook groups, a sign on the town bulletin board in post office, an announcement on main page of town webpage, maybe a PSA in the Courier or mini-Caledonian Record. Michelle brings up possibly putting it on Zoom. Jill suggests maybe it can be recorded and posted on the website after. Steve suggests sharing a link to her power point on town website. Michelle says she can ask a specific AV person if available. Michelle agrees to take on promotion, other than social media promotion. Ginny can take on the Facebook posting, once it's on the website. Chris thinks it's likely to end at 7:30 pm.

Presby's proposed new propane filling facility on Easton Road: Chris reviews that it got through the DES wetlands permit approval [wetlands disturbance and wetlands filling] in July, though we were not notified of approval despite our written objection filed with DES last spring. Chris reports there is a Planning Board public hearing Feb 11. Steve requests more info on proposal, history and concerns, because he wasn't on FCC last year during that period. Ginny and Chris describe our concerns: riparian habitat close to Ham Branch; a habitat which contains "species of concern" wood turtles; importance of the flood plain resilience; various other issues. Ginny walked the area last spring, and saw flooding evidence on the Presby side of the Ham Branch. Further discussion about limited regulatory role of DES Wetlands bureau re potential environmental hazards in flood plains. Ginny suggests reviewing the FCC minutes of March or more likely April 2024 to review more details. Chris mentions the possibility of expansion creep once it's there. Jill thinks it's important we raise our concerns at the PB hearing. Ginny plans to go. Steve may be out of town. Chris will send out a reminder to FCC to encourage attendance. He is not sure what other process is involved in approval, if any, after the PB session. Ginny will forward to Steve the letter of concern which we sent DES Wetlands Bureau.

Fox Hill Park, Forest Society's Coffin Easement: Chris says SPNHF sent town a letter that it's time for the annual boundary walk. And they asked about the status of determining exact boundaries along the

border areas where pins are missing. Jill says she spoke to Libby about putting out a request for survey quotes for that. Wants Chris to help Libby with the specific language. Chris suggests that if FCC is spending money to do that section of the boundary, it probably wouldn't be a lot more expensive to verify the other corners. He will reach out to Libby.

Other business: Ginny noticed that the list of FCC members on town website is old. Has done a draft email to Jenny about member additions and deletions, but doesn't know term expiration dates of the various new members and alternates. Jill says that Jenny can find that on our SB appointment papers. Ginny will send the corrections to Jenny.

McKenzie Woods annual easement monitoring: Chris reminds us it's due in March. Will arrange at next meeting.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 3 pm

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes