Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: Aug 7, 2018, 8 am.

Members present: Chris Nicodemus, Kim Cowles (for initial 40 min of meeting), Mary Grote, Ginny Jeffryes, Mark Ober

The completed conservation easement placards arrived: we agree the design is nice.

Transportation Alternatives program grant (Kim and Chris): Jill Brewer sent a message last week notifying us that the Town is applying for a grant from that program for extension of a sidewalk to run south along Easton Road from the end of existing sidewalk to Bickford Hill Road. This would be an alternative to last fall’s CMAQ grant application for a Hamm Branch path, which was rejected. Jill requested that we consider authorizing her to send letter of support for the grant from the FCC, based on the letter which we sent in support of last fall’s grant application.

Discussion today that walking and biking along the blind curve approaching Bickford Hill Road seems somewhat unsafe, so sidewalk would be beneficial. There may be landowner objections to granting an easement for a sidewalk. Kim moves that FCC write a letter of support for the TAP grant. Chris seconds. Kim and Chris note that Jill has already written a draft, ready to send, if approved. Unanimously passed.

Beaver activity on Lawrence property: Selectboard received letter from Fransted Campground owners expressing their concern about beavers building a new dam at the old dam of 5+ years ago. Ginny reports that she walked and bushwhacked around the Meadowbrook area on June 30, and saw the currently active dam and current lodge, as well as a dam on an adjacent narrow channel, all of which are well upstream of the old dam. She says the furthest upstream dam - of 1-2 years ago - remains abandoned and empty. Chris also explored the area a few weeks ago, and saw additional activity just below the old earthen/sandy log-landing berm where the older dam was (which is upstream a ways from Sawmill Lane). Discussion that the purpose of the conservation easement on the property is to protect the watershed and preserve the existing flood plain. The beavers have been part of this ecosystem for many decades, and are going to continue to be there. We recommend taking no action on the beaver dams.

(Kim not present for the subsequent portion of the meeting.)

Minutes of June 19, 2018 reviewed. Chris moves to accept, Mary seconds. Unanimously approved.

DOT Wetlands permit application for new Route 18 Lafayette Brook Bridge: Received by us > 30 days after date on application/addenda. Discussion that this project was initially noticed several years ago. It involves some rerouting of stream w/rip-rap due to the abrupt curve after current bridge, apparently. No action taken.

Profile Lake plans: Jill received emailed map of plans for the Profile Lake from NH DRED on 6/19 or 6/20, after our last FCC meeting, and forwarded to each of us. Discussion today that it was difficult to navigate due to the size/formatting of the plans. Ginny reports that she eventually deciphered the revised plans [which involve as noted in June 19 minutes -wetlands alterations at the north end with a bridge/walkway, a fishing platform built into the northeast end, and bridge at the Pemi River outlet at the south end of the lake]. Some trees will be cut. On 7/10/18 she walked around most of Profile Lake, except the rip-rap portion abutting I-93. There was a lot of flagging tape around the south end. She thinks wetlands at both ends of the lake will still be negatively impacted, as will the view from I-93 of the north end of the lake. It isn’t as bad as last year’s plan. The traffic noise of the revised project remains a big negative for attracting visitors. She thinks the project is unnecessary and unhelpful, but doesn’t think FCC will have any impact on the ultimate State decision by objecting to the revised plans. Discussion re this. No action taken.

McKenzie Woods conservation easement: Before posting the conservation easement placards, we need to hear update from Red on the location of the corner closest to Wells Road. No new info on owners’ plans. It doesn’t appear thus far that the trails within the easement have been encroached upon.

Crocker Property: Chris says property title not yet transferred to Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust. Nothing for FCC to discuss yet.

Next meeting: Sept 18, 4:30 pm (note new afternoon time).

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes.