

Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: Sept 5, 2023, 3 pm at Town Hall.

Members present: Chris Nicodemus (Chair), Ginny Jeffryes, Jill Brewer, Art Daily, Red McCarthy

Guests: Stephen Schwartz (PB alternate)

Red moves to approve 8-1-23 minutes. Art seconds. All voted in favor.

Chris: Update on plan to update Natural Resource Inventory (NRI): Chris moves that we accept the proposal by Elise Lawson of Watershed to Wildlife to update our NRI, using the Conservation Fund; and that we recommend to the Select Board that they approve the contract. Red seconds. Ginny mentions that Conservation Fund expenditures do not require SB approval. Chris thinks that contracts need signature. Motion passes unanimously.

Town Forester: Chris: No new information. Ginny suggests there be a notebook kept in office to keep logging permits issued. Bethlehem does this, and their CC reviews at meetings. Jill will mention idea to Libby.

Budget process: Chris suggests that we discuss having a reserve budget for next year. Discussion: Ginny says Conservation Fund takes care of NRI expense and acquisition of properties, and doesn't require being part of the town budget process per statute. Chris thinks that we should consider other issues that may arise, such as grant help, maybe a hydrology study, other.

Revision of the Town Master Plan Chapter 10: Chris has started adding ideas on a redline Word document. Says we should include in the revision PFAS detection issue and heavy metals being released by excavation. Maybe issue of E coli in Echo Lake this summer. One objective of Master Plan will include updating the NRI. He suggests a subcommittee revise it to bring back to FCC next meeting. We can show our revision to Elise to review it. Chris, Ginny, and Steve volunteer today. Steve suggests that hydrology is highly topical with aquifers dropping, including one well that's being monitored near here. Also says climate change is topical. Further discussion about hydrology studies. Jill mentions books about climate change: The Light Pirate – fiction, and The Heat Will Kill US All – nonfiction. Chris to ask other FCC members to give him input to guide revision by next week.

Town Forest (lot 17-2) and Lot 17-3 conservation: Chris says there is now a possibility for private funding donation for ACT conservation expenses, rather than applying for grants. ACT will let us know. Ginny thinks we should be talking soon about what restrictions we want on the land. Chris says Elise Lawson will be helpful to us looking at restrictions once she's involved.

Lawrence Family Forest possible new NEMBA trails: Chris - No update so far.

Sabados property erosion stabilization plan: Red - no new communication from DES.

Easement markers on Middle Earth trail – awaiting cold weather.

Stephen Schwartz informs us there is a Planning Board-NCC housing session for the public on October 23 to get input from town residents for that part of Master Plan. Invites our attendance.

Next meeting: Likely the first Tuesday in October.

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes