

Town of Farmington
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Commission Members Present:

Bill Fisher, Chairman
Doug Staples, Selectmen's Rep.
Richard Ballou
Larry Fitzgerald

Commission Members Absent:

Randy Orvis, Vice Chairman
Laura Bogardus, excused

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Fisher called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Public Comment: None

4). Review of Minutes:

May 12, 2021 – No errors or omissions

Motion: (Staples, second Fitzgerald) to accept the meeting minutes of May 12, 2021 passed 4-0.

June 9, 2021 – No errors or omissions

Motion: (Fisher, second Fitzgerald) to approve the June 9, 2021 minutes passed 4-0.

5). Old Business:

a). Barry 4-H Camp – Mr. Fisher said the weekly camp sessions were postponed 2 years ago because of the beginning of COVID-19 and it has been postponed again. He said they didn't know when or if it's ever going to be active again because they're having staffing problems. The money we spent to fund a young lad has been returned to us he said.

b). Route 11 Land Transfer – Mr. Fisher said a couple of months ago he spoke about a piece of land up off of Rte. 11 (Tax Map R03, Lot 17, approx. 12.76 acres) and they talked about the land being transferred from the Town to the **Conservation Commission** and everybody was in favor of it. He said he now has the Quitclaim Deed that was seen by the Board of Selectmen and they approved the transfer and he wanted to make sure the members still approved of it before he signed it.

Consensus of the members was to accept the land.

Chairman Fisher then signed the document.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if they were going to do anything with that land such as put in trails.

Mr. Fisher said no and they have something bigger coming up he thought would be more useful for the town and a much better use of their money. He said the approx. 13 acre parcel will be used for a buffer between two other pieces of industrial property and it gives a little bit of area

for people to walk on if they so choose to.

Mr. Fitzgerald said he would like to see it preserved because they are trying to clear cut everything and build in there.

Mr. Fisher said the owner of the land that it attaches to on the west side is thinking of putting that land into a conservation easement and this piece would be an entrance into that land. If he does do that we could take the 12 acres and put in a kiosk and a parking lot and there is another entrance on the back side of his property but that's in the future he said.

c). Con Com Bylaws – Mr. Fisher said currently their bylaws state they must have 7 members on the commission and they presently have 5 members and they need 4 members present for a quorum to hold a meeting.

Mr. Ballou corrected they have 6 members with Mr. Orvis, Ms. Bogardus and the 4 of them present.

Mr. Fisher said they haven't had enough people showing up to meetings lately for a quorum and he has had to cancel 2 meetings because of that. He said he went into the state RSA's and it says they can have a minimum of 4 people on the Con Com and months ago he proposed changing their membership requiring 7 members to read having 4 to 7 members and if they only have 3 people show up they have a quorum.

Mr. Fisher noted one of the members has been very sick and hasn't been to a meeting in almost a year and Ms. Bogardus isn't here because she has some family matters to take care of. He said he understood people have things they have to do and sometimes the weather is bad and it is hard to get around but he didn't want people to show up and waste their time if he only has 3 people here so he wanted to change the bylaws and proposed the following changes:

Article IX –Members, Section A- Qualifications and Appointments, item #1- change "The Commission shall consist of seven (7) regular members and one (1) Selectmen's Representative" to read "The Board of Selectmen shall appoint not less than 3 or more than 7 regular members of the Commission."

Article XII- Meetings, Section B-Quorum- change to read "Three members, two of which must be regular members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of regular business."

He said if the members agreed with this he would make the changes and submit them to the Selectmen for their approval and get them entered into the record.

Motion: (Ballou, second Fitzgerald) to accept the revisions passed 4-0.

6). New Business:

a). Dept. of Environmental Services Wetlands Permits – Mr. Fisher said the following permit applications to do work within the wetlands were approved by DES:

1). Pamela Dumont and Svend Eric Filby of Gilford, NH, forestry statutory permit by notification RSA 482-a, project location: Tax Map R18, Lot 04. He said it does not say what they are going to do other than some maintenance on the property.

2). Daniel Day of Cornish, Maine, project location: Tax Map R52, Lot 13, property maintenance.

b). Monitoring Inspection Report- Mr. Fisher said there was a monitoring inspection done on the LeClair Property located at 436 Sheepboro Road and the primary interest holder is the City of Rochester but some of the property is in Farmington. He said the property is acres of beautiful pasture lands and trees that they put it into conservation several years ago and it was monitored by John Wallace for the DES Water Supply Protection Program.

Mr. Fisher gave a brief summary of Mr. Wallace's report which says the property was inspected on May 12 and that he found no problems except for having to bushwhack through a stand of young trees and vegetation because his dog decided to chase a rabbit and the only thing he regrets is he can't spend more time out there.

c). Update on Property Transfer for Tax Map R60, Lots 17 and 18- Mr. Fisher said he is very excited about these two pieces of property that were owned by Bruce Cartwright and have been put before the Selectmen and are being worked on at the lawyer stage. He said the executor sent him a text message Sunday night saying she has talked with the family in CA and they are in favor of donating this land to the Town to be used for recreational purposes. He said Mr. Cartwright loved trails, nature, hiking, camping, fishing and anything to do with being outside.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if one the trails could be named after Mr. Cartwright.

Mr. Fisher said he would like to name this the Bruce Cartwright Trails or the Bruce Cartwright Grant or something similar to honor this man. He said this land is two pieces of property, one consisting 123.68 acres and the other one is 210.31 acres located off of Spring Street and goes all the way to Bay Road and the Cocheco River runs all the way across it.

He said there are a lot of wetlands, marshes and great areas to go out and explore. He said he would like to put up a professionally made kiosk and put in 2 parking areas, one off of Bay Road and one off of Spring Street so people could get to it from either side. He said he would like it to have bicycle, hiking and running trails, picnic tables so families can have a picnic close to the water and possibly a handicapped fishing spot at the pond or at the Cocheco River.

Mr. Fisher said they already have 18 acres of conservation land there and the 333 acres of land being donated will join that piece.

Mr. Ballou asked if the land was being donated to the Town or the Con Com.

Mr. Fisher said it will probably come to the Town first and then the Town will transfer it to the Con Com. He said it is in the lawyers' hands right now and they have to finish probate of the land and it is in the beginning stages. Once that is done hopefully we can get some trails put in as soon as possible and get some signs put up so people can start using it he said.

He said the property is currently being logged which was started by another person that owns part of the land and there are some land swaps involved in this process and hopefully by the end of the year they will know more.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if there is anybody from the Con Com or the community that is on the Cocheco River committee.

Mr. Fisher said there is a Cocheco River Local Advisory Committee and he used to be the local representative but he resigned for personal reasons and no one has volunteered to fill the seat. Mr. Fitzgerald asked what the committee does and if he could become the local rep.

Mr. Fisher said they meet once a month in Rochester at the Strafford Regional Planning Commission offices. He said for any type of construction that happens along the river the paperwork has to go through the CRLAC to make sure that it would not be a detriment to the river and precautions are taken.

d). French and Dubois Properties Annual Monitoring Visit – Mr. Fisher said Ms. Bogardus received an e-mail from Charlotte Hardin who is the new Stewardship Specialist working with Steve Walker for the Conservation Land Stewardship Management Program saying she is looking forward to visiting the properties but it does not say when she plans to visit them. He asked if any of the members would be available to walk the properties.

Mr. Ballou said he has done it before and would be willing to do it again.

Mr. Fisher said he would contact Ms. Hardin and let them know what he finds out.

e). Guided Hike with Goodwin Library- Mr. Fisher said he received an e-mail from Children's Services Supervisor Kayla Morin-Riordan and they have put in a new storybook trail at the McCarthy Trail and she wanted to know if anybody on the Con Com would be interested in conducting a guided tour for children at the McCarthy Trail or at the French property. He asked the members if this is something they would like to do and added he is unable to do it at this time due to some health issues.

He said he would still like to get the cutouts they had made and are stored at the old fire station put up on the McCarthy Trail but he didn't know how they would get it done this year. He said the trail is marked and the library has installed story boards and the first Town water well which is a water tower is located out there but you can't go in and look at it because it's boarded up because needs some masonry work.

Consensus of the members was to postpone further discussion of this matter until the other members are present.

f). Moose Mountain Regional Greenways- Mr. Fisher said MMRG will hold their Woods, Water and Wildlife Festival on Saturday, August 14 and the event is open to the public at no cost to members and \$5 per person or \$10 per family for non-members. He said the festival will be held at Branch Hill Farm in Milton, NH and more information is available on the MMRG website. He said they will hold their Annual Meeting on Sunday, Sept. 5 from 1-4:30 p.m. at Camp Sentinel in Center Tuftonboro, NH. He said activities include an optional hike, a catered barbecue lunch, an educational program by Dr. Rick Van de Poll (Ecosystems Management Consultants), conservation awards and acknowledgments, a silent auction, raffle items and a celebration of the merger with Dan Hole Pond Watershed Trust. Reservations are required and you must RSVP no later than August 20 he said.

Mr. Fisher said that due to the expense of the catered materials MMRG is asking that guests

consider an optional donation of \$10 per person or \$25 per family. He asked if anybody would like to go.

Mr. Ballou said he is a member and has already signed up to go.

Mr. Fisher said rather than Mr. Ballou making a donation as he would be representing the Con Com he made the following motion:

Motion: (Fisher, second Fitzgerald) to donate \$25 to the MMRG Annual Meeting passed 4-0.

Wakefield Conservation Easement- Mr. Fisher said MMRG is requesting donations to help put 37 acres in Wakefield into a conservation easement preventing future development of the privately owned property and protecting its rural character forever. Donations would be matched up to \$5,000 he said.

He said this is a very worthy project and normally he would agree to make some type of donation but with this 333 acre property coming up he doesn't know how much that's going to cost them and there will be title fees and other costs coming out of the Con Com accounts to get it through. I'd rather spend the money on Farmington than on Wakefield he said.

Mr. Staples said that is the way he looks at it and to put the money into conserving our town.

Mr. Ballou noted that it is not even an adjacent town.

Consensus of the members was not to make a donation to the Wakefield project.

g). Southeast Land Trust – Mr. Fisher said SELT is asking for some money for a membership gift of \$100, \$50 or \$25 and that he believes the commission is a member of SELT but he didn't know at what level they have donated in the past. He said SELT has helped us out with several projects in town and asked if the members wanted to donate and keep the membership going.

Motion: (Ballou, second Fitzgerald) to give SELT \$100;

Discussion: Mr. Fisher said they have worked with SELT in the past and it would be an investment well spent.

Mr. Staples asked if they should cut it down a little bit and save money to invest in the property coming up.

Mr. Ballou said this is for membership in SELT.

Mr. Fisher said they may need SELT or MMRG to get that property through and he was not sure of what they will have to do to get this through.

Mr. Ballou said when he walked Sheepboro Road he saw a lot of SELT signs along the road and at the reservoir and on Reservoir Road.

Mr. Fisher said SELT also has a project going off of Bay Road and he felt good giving them \$100. This is something that goes hand-in-hand with Farmington whereas the one for Wakefield is just for Wakefield he said.

Mr. Staples asked what SELT does.

Mr. Fisher said they help manage our properties and oversee some of the lands.

Mr. Ballou said they helped with the Scruton dairy farm.

Mr. Fisher said they helped get the funding to get that land into conservation. He said they also

helped with getting the Cleary and Dubois properties into conservation.

Mr. Ballou said the Fernald property on Sheepboro Rd. has SELT signs on it and they are supervising that project.

Mr. Fitzgerald said he wanted to make sure they have money for the new property they are going to be doing.

Mr. Fisher said the biggest cost will be for the title transfer and he did not know if they will have to have it surveyed. That is something that SELT and MMRG could help us with I'm sure he said.

Vote: The motion passed 3-0-1 (Staples abstained).

7). FYI:

Notices of Intent to Cut:

Tax Map R32, Lot 6 – Chestnut Hill Road – 46 acres in size, 40 acres to be cut, owner: Torr family

Tax Map R03, Lot 004 – Route 11, 5 acres to be cut, owner: Joe Pepe III

Tax Map R34, Lot 09 – Dream Hill Road, 7 acres to be cut, owner: Corey Conway

Tax Map R03, Lot 16 – Route 11, 40 acres to be cut, owners: Charlie and Kathy King

Tax Map R25, Lot 03 – Meaderboro Road, 60 acres to be cut, owner: Ruth Scruton

Tax Map R32, Lot 06 – 40 acres to be cut, owners: Torr family

Tax Map R17, Lot 33 – 85 acres to be cut, owners: Woodlot & Grange LLC

Tax Map R14, Lot 13 – Route 11, 5 acres to be cut, owner: Malcolm Bradshear

Tax Map R21, Lots 5 & 15 – 40 acres to be cut, owner: Dorothy Bean Revocable Trust

Tax Map R67, Lot 02 – Meaderboro Road, 50 acres to be cut, owner: Michael Salvetti

Tax Map R49 & R60, Lot 58 & Lot 18 - 245.9 acres to cut, owner: Cheryl Harper

Tax Map R60, Lot 17 – Spring Street, owner: Cheryl Harper

Tax Map R18, Lot 04 – Chestnut Hill Road, 9 acres to be cut, owners: Eric Filby & Pam Dumont

Tax Map R52, Lot 13 – Hornetown Road, 125 acres to be cut, owner: Cheryl Nichols

Tax Map R42, Lot 07 – Scruton Road, 100 acres to be cut, owner: Ruth Scruton

8). Upcoming Dates:

Next Meeting – Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 6 p.m.

9). Adjournment:

Motion: (Fitzgerald, second Ballou) to adjourn the meeting passed 4-0 at 6:58 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon, Recording Secretary

William Fisher, Chairman