

Town of Farmington
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 13, 2022
356 Main Street-Farmington, NH 03835

Commission Members Present:

Bill Fisher, Chairman
Richard Ballou, Vice Chairman
Blanche Tanner, Secretary
Gerry Vachon, Selectmen's Rep.

Commission Members Absent:

Larry Fitzgerald, excused
Adam Talon, unexcused

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Fisher called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Public Comment: None

4). Review of Minutes:

March 16, 2022- Public session – No errors or omissions

Motion: (Ballou, second Tanner) to accept the minutes as written passed 4-0.

5).Old Business:

a). Spring Clean-up- Mr. Fisher said the town cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 23 and he will be in the parking lot of the Municipal Office Building at 7:30 a.m. with the vests, bags and gloves and he will take the names of the people who want to clean up and where they would like them to pick up their garbage. He said he hoped there will be a good turnout and that Ms. Tanner has posted notices around town and he planned to do the same tomorrow.

He said they need more gloves and asked the members how they felt about buying more gloves. He said he could purchase 10 pairs for \$10 at Home Depot and he was considering buying \$20 worth and called for a motion to approve the purchase. He then added he would like to add \$5 to the total so he could also purchase a box of rubber gloves.

Motion: (Tanner, second Ballou) to spend up to \$25 to purchase gloves passed 4-0.

Ms. Tanner asked who will be picking up the bags.

Mr. Fisher said he would be picking up the bags.

Ms. Tanner asked if the people could bring the bags back to the Municipal Office Building and then Mr. Fisher wouldn't have to drive all over town to pick up the bags. She asked who else would be available to help pick up the bags.

Mr. Fisher said Doug Staples has said he would like to participate in the cleanup and will be riding with him and if not he would get his son to help him. He said if the people want to bring

the bags here he will come by and pick them up.

Ms. Tanner said her plans have changed and she will be available that day and offered to go with Mr. Fisher and help pick up the bags.

Mr. Fisher said at the last cleanup he was picking up bags until 3:15 p.m. and then hurrying through town to try to make it to the Transfer Station by 3:30 p.m. so they could close out the scales by 3:45 p.m.

Ms. Tanner suggested they tell people they need be done by 2 p.m. so he could get all the bags to the Transfer Station before 3:45 p.m.

Mr. Fisher said that is what they put on the flyers. He said he also contacted the NRRA and sent them the paperwork and they have been approved to pick up 10 cases of bags but the bags haven't been delivered yet and they hope they will be there on Monday. He said he would call them on Monday to see if there are in and if so he will go pick them up.

Ms. Tanner asked for the definition of NRRA.

Mr. Vachon said it stands for Northeast Resource Recovery Association.

Mr. Fisher said they are located at 2101 Dover Road in Epsom, NH.

Mr. Vachon said he just received a message that someone in town has a box of medium rubber gloves they would like to donate for the cleanup.

Mr. Fisher said "sure!" and they can put his name or "Con Com" on it and drop them off at the Municipal Offices and he will pick them up. We appreciate that he said.

b). Goodwin Library Donation- Mr. Fisher said the Con Com's \$500 donation for the story boards at the McCarthy Trail was received by the library. He said he spoke with the Director last night and she said the materials will cost a little over \$1,000 and some businesses in town have donated the remaining amount so it won't cost the taxpayers anything to get the signs made except for what the Con Com donated. He said the library plans to put up the story boards at the trail in May or June so there will be something else out there for the "young'uns" to do.

6).New Business:

a). Intent to Excavate- Mr. Fisher said they received a packet from the Planning Dept. containing a notice of intent to excavate the property at Tax Map R-14, Lot 1, 291 NH Rt. 11. He said the property is on the left hand side of Rt. 11 if you are traveling toward Wal Mart and is where the old red building and barn was torn down near Farmington Family Health Care. He said this proposal is to excavate gravel and to level out the property. He said there is about a 10' or 12' height difference between the top of the property and Rt. 11 and they want to level it out for potential businesses coming in. He said this does not involve any wetlands, it does not encroach on anyone else's property and there are no easements though the property. Mr. Fisher then held up the plan for the camera so viewers at home might see that it is a weird piece of property that is fat on one end and tiny on the other end and looks like a megahorn. He said they would be scraping the property down and leveling it out and the gravel will be sold and used for other projects.

He pointed out the location of Rt. 11 at the bottom of plan and said it should not be much of a disruption to traffic and they figure there may be 3 or 4 trips an hour during normal working hours of the day with a truck leaving about every 15 or 20 minutes when they are removing gravel but that is not all the time-just when they are removing gravel maybe 1-2 days a week. He said he believes the gravel is going to Barron Bros. and that they are doing the work.

Mr. Fisher read that 12,890 cubic yards of material would be removed from the site and that the proposed site grading will create a more desirable lot for future development which is the main reason for the excavation. He said the access to the excavation will be located in the same location as the existing driveway to the past house. A temporary NH Dept. Of Transportation permit will be required during the excavation time frame, they have applied for that permit and the first step is to get the excavation permit approved he said.

He read that in discussions with Barron Bros. Development the contractor selected to remove the excavation material and the removal will be done over a period of time depending on their needs and schedules. He said so it is not a constant removal process and it will be on an as needed basis and it is expected to take 1 to 2 years to remove all the material.

Mr. Fisher said this is just for the excavation permit and is not for any development which would have to go through other boards for review. He said this still has to be voted on by the Planning Board but the Con Com is tasked with taking a look at it and providing any comments. He then asked if there were any specific comments they would like him to pass on to the Planning Board.

Ms. Tanner asked if the Planning Director had any issues as far as the Con Com is concerned.

Mr. Fisher said he doesn't see any problems as far as the Planning Dept. is concerned and it is up to the members for conservation issues. He said he didn't see any issues as it doesn't involve any wetlands, they have dug test pits to make sure they're not reaching into the ground water and all but 1 or 2 of the pits have proven there is no disruption to the water table. As they level it off they're going to go back to the higher test pits and drill them down further to make sure they're not going to disrupt the water table. Right now it is looking really good for no disruption to the ground water, any rivers or wetlands surrounding the property he said.

He said he would recommend that some type of silt fence be put up at the boundary between the property and Rt. 11 to make sure there is no washout of materials out onto Rt. 11 in case of a heavy rain with whatever their engineer determines is the best thing to use.

Mr. Ballou asked if the commission needs to make a motion to recommend the proposal.

Mr. Fisher said they could move to forward a letter to the Planning Dept. with the Con Com's comments one being to be sure there's silt fencing put in between the SW border and Rt. 11 to ensure any silt doesn't wash out onto Rt. 11 during the excavation.

Motion: (Ballou, second Vachon) to forward a letter to the Planning Dept. with the following comments: that silt fencing be placed between the excavation site and Route 11 passed 4-0.

b). Intent to Cut- Tax Map R-04, Lot 7- Ten Rod Road, parcel size: 80 acres, to be cut: 50 acres,

proposed by God the Father, Inc., contact: Richard Ellis, to clear land in preparation for 50 campsites for a camping area/religious retreat

Tax Map R-64, Lot 5- 1204 NH Rt. 11, parcel size: 2 acres, to be cut: 1.5 acres, owner: Richard Huppe, Middleton Equipment Sales

Tax Map R-64, Lots 10, 11 and 12- NH Rt. 11, total acreage: 50 acres, to be cut: 25 acres

Tax Map R-61, Lot 10- Fox Trot Drive, parcel size: 22.3 acres, to be cut: 15 acres, to clear land in preparation for a 6 lot subdivision

Tax Map R-42, Lot 7- Scruton Rd., lot size: 420 acres, to be cut: 100 acres, owner: Ruth Scruton Ms. Tanner asked if these were brought before the commission just for informational purposes. She asked if anyone has to approve an Intent to Cut notice.

Mr. Fisher said there are 3 signatures from 3 Town officials but he couldn't read the signatures. He said before anybody can cut, their property taxes have to be paid because they're taking this wood and selling it for various uses and determine the people doing it actually own the land.

c). DOT Study- Mr. Fisher said he received notification that the NH DOT will be looking at the intersection of NH Rt. 11 and Central Street near Cameron's Home and Garden Center. He described how the road narrows there and the dangers of making a left turn on to Central Street. He said all of the Town boards received copies of this letter notifying them that they will start looking at that stretch of road north and south of the garden center and the potential improvements but it does not state an actual start date for the study.

He said they may have to take out the bridge to widen the road and put in a left turn lane.

Mr. Vachon said they have already studied that intersection and a few years ago they came to the Selectmen with multiple options for traffic calming through there. He said the big one is the line of sight-because of the corner you can't see towards Rite Aid and the width of the bridge which he doesn't believe is in that bad of shape.

He said there is no way to put a turn lane there because the bridge is right there and the last thing they were looking at was a right turn only so leaving Central Street you'd have to go to New Durham and getting on to Central Street you'd have to be coming from Rochester. There would be no more left turns and no more traffic sitting under that blinking light and getting slammed in the back end he said.

Mr. Fisher said he didn't know why they don't put a traffic light there.

Mr. Vachon said that was the option they were leaning toward at that meeting but they could have changed their minds. He said they did a big study on it and they received a packet on it when he first got on the board. Hopefully with this study they'll actually do something he said.

d). Wetlands Permit- Mr. Fisher said this permit is requested by New Style Homes for the parcel located at 52 Fox Trot Drive. He said they looked at this property a few meetings ago looking at the wetlands that were being disturbed by a proposed road that would service the 6 home sites off of Fox Trot Drive. He said they didn't have any comments other than the need for silt fencing and it was reviewed by the Planning Board after the Con Com looked at it and

they didn't find any problems with what he wanted to do.

He said the encroachment on the wetlands is a very small portion and it's not through flowing wetlands and is wetland only at certain times of the year. He said the next step is to file for a state permit and the state has to take a look at it and approve or deny the application.

He said the application was filed by Trittech Engineering President Robert Stowell and this letter was to inform the Con Com that they submitted their wetlands permit application to the state. They are in stage 3 of the wetlands approval so they can put in the road he said.

Mr. Fisher added that this subdivision has not been completely approved by the Planning Board. He said there were some concerns raised by the abutters which the Planning Board is taking a look at to try to come up with a good plan that pleases everybody. He said for example an abutter was concerned about the proposed road because the back of his house faces where the new road would be and people could look into his house. He said the applicant offered to put up a 6' privacy fence for this homeowner at no cost to him to block his backyard from the road. They're working well with everybody and so far they haven't faced a lot of objections to the subdivision going in he said.

e). Moose Mountains Regional Greenways- Mr. Fisher said he received an e-mail from MMRG about the group's Annual Woods, Water & Wildlife Festival that will be held on August 13, 2022 at Branch Hill Farm and that they are looking for sponsors. He said there are several levels of sponsors all the way from \$100 sponsors up to \$5,000 sponsors and in the past the Con Com has donated \$100 which also gives them a complimentary ticket for a family to attend the event. He asked if the commission wanted to sponsor the event again this year for \$100.

Motion: (Ballou, second Tanner) to support Moose Mountains Regional Greenways for \$100;

Discussion: Mr. Fisher said this isn't held in Farmington but MMRG does a lot for Farmington and they've helped out the Con Com, the Planning Board and gave free talks at the library. Ms. Tanner asked how the family ticket works and who chooses the family.

Mr. Fisher said it comes to the Con Com and they usually send a representative from the Con Com. He said if they put it out to the town they have to do it via a raffle which requires a state permit to do that. Since the Con Com is giving them the money we usually use it for somebody from the Con Com to go he said.

Vote: The motion passed 4-0.

f). Hay Day – Mr. Fisher asked Ms. Tanner if she has heard anything more about the plans for Hay Day and if they have decided exactly where they were going to do it this year.

Ms. Tanner said it will be downtown but what will be cut off has not been finalized yet. She said they are still looking for vendors and a number of people have signed up.

She said this year vendors will be asked to make a deposit for their space and if the vendor shows up they will get their deposit back. She said in the past they charged the vendors so much money it prevented people from coming back because they didn't make enough money to cover their costs. If they don't show up they don't get their deposit back she said.

Mr. Fisher said the Con Com usually rents a spot or two and asked if they need to put down a deposit for a space.

Ms. Tanner said no and that she already mentioned to the organizers that the Con Com will need 2 spaces.

Mr. Fisher said when it gets closer to the time he will get the fur kit from the state that has 15-20 different animal pelts and the kids have to guess what animal it is. He said people have tried to purchase them (they are not for sale-they belong to the state) and a person once tried to steal one and luckily another person caught him and they brought it back it. We took care of it on the spot without Police involvement-Mom and Dad whooped his little butt he said.

He said the library is planning on doing a book sale at Hay Day and they also will be starting a spring book sale next week. He said if you buy one of their tote bags (\$10) you can go into the library and fill it up with books at no extra charge.

Ms. Tanner asked viewers to spread the word that Hay Day is looking to be much bigger and much better than in the past. She said a lot of activities are planned in addition to the vendors, a lot of things for kids to do and hopefully there will be fireworks. She said in the past people have been disappointed in Hay Day but if people spread the word as we get closer to the August deadline people will be pleased with what they see in town on that day.

Mr. Fisher said he heard the Town has found somebody to do the fireworks display who was recommended by other towns who said they put on a really good show at a good price.

Ms. Tanner said now it's a matter of fund raising to pay for the fireworks.

Mr. Fisher said Hay Day is a great place to bring your kids and after 2 years of being locked down due to COVID we deserve a break. Hay Day is your day to celebrate so let's get out there and support Hay Day. He then encouraged all of the artisans in town to set up a booth at Hay Day and show off their work and maybe sell some of it at no cost to them.

7). Upcoming Dates:

Next Meeting- Wednesday, May 11, 2022

8). Adjournment:

Motion: (Ballou, second Vachon) to adjourn the meeting passed 4-0 at 6:53 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

William "Bill" Fisher, Chairman