

**Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the
Walpole Conservation Commission
December 9, 2019**

Members Present: Alicia Flammia (Chair), Laura Hayes, Lewis Shelley, France Menk, Steven Dumont, John Peska, Jackie Kensen, Peggy Pschirrer (Selectboard Liason), Jean Kobeski

Alternate Present: Gary Speed

Call to Order: Alicia called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in Walpole Town Hall.

Review and Approval of Minutes: John wants the minutes of 11/4 to read that the Barry 4-H wants to know attendees by mid-February. He is still the contact person. Lew moved to accept minutes as corrected. John seconded, and all were in favor.

Public Business: There is no Treasury Report or Correspondence this month.

New Business

Stream and Wetland Buffers: Alicia stated that the conservation plan has a resident building buffer of 100'. The state has an RSA with a buffer of 50'. If a town doesn't have an ordinance, it must follow the state's. Alicia said a resident wants to build closer than 100' to Mad Brook. France stated that 50 ft. is too close; 100 ft. would be okay. Steven presented Hanover's 75' plan as a comparison. France stated that, with changing weather patterns, an ordinance should be in place.

An ordinance should be written and voted on. Peggy said it needs to be taken to the Planning and Zoning Boards who will then present it to the public. The Zoning Board issues the ordinance and the Planning Board will issue building permits. Peggy states the process would likely take a year. Alicia stated that, if the commission feels strongly about it, they need to act on it.

Joint Meeting of Boards on the Conservation Plan: Alicia recommended annual or perhaps quarterly joint meetings with other boards to press on recommendations they make on the conservation plan.

Monadnock Conservancy: Peggy gave a brief history of the Conservancy and explained the roles of the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director. She stated it is the first land trust in NH to be accredited and it has an endowment of over four million dollars. 15 board members oversee 21,000 acres of land.

Peggy asked the WCC three questions: 1. What are your views of the Conservancy? 2. What are some commitment needs? 3. What do we do next?

Gary said it is our "go-to" organization for advice and help. Jackie said the website would be better with maps. Lew works with the Conservancy and said they are always helpful and

respectful of needs. Alicia said that the Conservancy not only preserves pristine lands, but working lands as well.

Alicia stated she would like to see trail maps of our town. John went a step further by suggesting they collect maps of all the towns and try to create a network of trails for the region. Lew said that is a project he could work on.

Lew asked Peggy about logging. Alicia said the Hooper asked the WCC about logging. Peggy said she has never heard of logging the land the Conservancy owns and manages.

As far as community needs, Lew felt the Conservancy should educate the public more about easements either in a workshop format or gathering in Town Hall.

Jackie asked how the Conservancy conducts outreach and suggested community information and fundraising meetings. WCC members present agreed that they would be interested in collaborating with the MC on this idea.

Alicia questioned what the Conservancy is doing about invasive species.

Lew asked how the Conservancy relates to businesses and business members; it is mainly by fundraising.

Laura would like to see Devin Preserve on the website. It's easily accessible and it would be helpful to show fishing locations.

Peggy reported that the Conservancy is healthy now that there is a second in command for fundraising and planning. They also have a succession plan, which she said is vital to the success of an organization.

The Walpole Gateway: Alicia tried to get an article in the Clarion but was having trouble doing so. France offered to take the information from Alicia and contact Ray Boas. Steven said he would work with France. In the meantime, the kiosk provides information.

The Pollinator Garden did not go through. Steven said the land would need to be prepped for a year for organic planting in 2021. Jackie reported the Gowdy family offered to hay the area: Alicia wants to know when Gowdys would like an answer to their offer of organic haying.

Barry 4-H Conservation Camp: John said the name of the attendee is due Mid-February, and school counselor Amy Treat will select the student.

Reservoir Dam: France walked the reservoir and spotted invasive species and an animal camera. She questioned whether this is permissible. Gary stated many people believe they can't hunt on town land, but they can. The camera is all right, but hunters must get permission from landowners to put up tree stands. France distributed an article on invasive species.

John asked Mark where he was with the DES in regard to the pricing and permit for the culvert. Fuss and O'Neil has had turnover, which has delayed the project. They are now using Phil Forsley, a dam engineer from Manchester, CT. He will be in Walpole the afternoon of December 19. The DES has encouraged the WCC to work through Fuss and O'Neill . They will need to reengage with F & O, but they won't know the timeline for the project until after the 19th. During the initial survey for the culvert, Mark Houghton showed Fuss and O'Neill the original blueprints.

Peggy stated the WCC could use state money that was given to the town for infrastructure. Steven asked if a letter is needed to reserve some of the money. John offered to write the letter.

Peggy said the state DES has had frequent turnover, and this has delayed the progress, but getting the culvert taken care of is an immediate need.

Mill Pond Tree: Thee tree is still down, but Lew is now free to clean it up.

Duncan Watson submitted a letter of interest in being an alternate.

Roby Speed submitted an invoice for rest area clean-up in the Mason Forest from April 2 - November 5. It will be paid out of the Fanny Mason Account.

John moved, Jackie seconded, and all agreed to pay Longview Gardens from the Forestry Account.

Steven stated that five assessments have been done and four are left to do. Alicia asked if they should halt and do the Mill Pond. They group agreed they want the last four done.

Lew stated the roofing at Mason Forest is deteriorating. Gary said he would take a look at it.

Alicia stated she wants to invite Helen Delback, Hooper Institute Director, to attend the next meeting to get acquainted, hear her ideas, and brainstorm ways the Hooper and WCC can collaborate.

Alicia moved, Gary seconded, and all agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:42.

The next meeting is Wednesday, January 6, at Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean Kobeski, Recording Secretary

*** These minutes are in draft form until approved by the Commission on January 6.