

## Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes February 13, 2024

**Present:** Gregg Thibodeau, Rob Traver, Mark Girard, Kathi Bradt, Scott Travers, Janet Slocum

**Absent:** Robin Ungeheuer, Jennifer Bland

**Public:** Aaron Wechsler ([aaron@aec-nh.com](mailto:aaron@aec-nh.com)) Aspen Environmental Consultants, LLC; Lisa Hyatt (Acworth resident)

**Meeting opened 7:00pm.**

**Review and approve the minutes of January 10, 2024** – Janet motioned to approve; Rob 2<sup>nd</sup>; motion carried; minutes approved.

**Review/approve minutes of December 13, 2023** – Mark motioned to approve; Rob 2<sup>nd</sup>; motion carried; minutes approved.

### Public

- **Proposed Residential/Agricultural Driveway** (Sanville, Map 210 Lot 37) & minimum impact expedited application. Aaron Wechsler Wetland Scientist presented his case for the expedited, low impact permit application vs. the full application. Aaron also reviewed the wetland and erosion control plans, topography and design for the driveway and stream crossing. Aaron fielded many questions from all commission members. Commission observations:
  1. Possible Town Driveway Violation – Lot 37 is the result of merging 3 properties. Prior to the merge, the eastern most property had a driveway from Shaw Road (private road) to their home. Sanville’s stated that another driveway was approved for a separate lot (to the west) that had road frontage on Cold Pond. At that time there were two separate lots. Since then, the Sandville’s purchased a 3<sup>rd</sup> lot from the town auction (also along Cold Pond Road) and have since merged all 3 lots. It’s the Sanville’s intent that Lot 37 has two driveways, one on Shaw Road with access to their residence and a driveway on Cold Pond. The plans that we reviewed intend to create a parking area off Cold Pond and extend access from the parking lot across the stream to the eastern portion of lot 37 that leads up to their residence. **Action:** Gregg to forward the driveway circumstances to the Planning Board, Zoning board and/or Bob Porter the town code enforcement officer for review of compliance.
  2. Thorough Engineer Plan – It was agreed that the plan that Aaron outlined was thorough and addressed most of our conservation concerns.
  3. Construction Concern – We learned that Aaron would not likely be involved or oversee the construction phase. Aaron indicated that the construction would likely be completed by Deanne Sandville’s son with no oversight. The risk is if the Sanville’s do not follow the details provided by Aaron in the plan.
  4. Two additional oversight options were discussed. (1) Select Board or Planning Board to add in language requiring adherence to standards for culverts in driveways. (2) During construction if any water quality issues arise, any abutter, resident or commission member could file a complaint with NH’s Department of Environmental Services (NH DES).
  5. Motion made by Mark G. to sign the expedited, low impact application with the assumption that the landowner will complete all the work as defined by the engineer in the Aspen Environmental Consultants LLC, Sanville Wetland Permitting Plan Details, Erosion Control, & Equipment Notes. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Scott. Unanimous vote in favor of signing the application. Motion passed.
  6. **Action:** Aaron to correct two errors that were noted on the plans and provide Gregg with a copy.
- **Interested Resident** - Lisa Hyatt introduced herself highlighting her experience with soils, geology, and outreach programs. She expressed interest in assisting our efforts and was interested in being kept involved and informed. **Action:** Gregg to add Lisa to our list of volunteers.

### Organizational

- **Funds/Budget**
  - Forest Maintenance Fund           \$3,909.66 (+ \$0.33 interest)
  - Conservation Land Use Fund       \$21,041.49 (- \$225 2023 Crescent Lake monitoring + \$1.74 interest)

- Turbidity meter options < Topic to be addressed at our March meeting >
- **Conservation Plan**
  - Introduction – We reviewed the changes recommended by Rob and made by Gregg. No further changes required.
  - Acknowledgement references – **Action:** Gregg and Janet to post any acknowledgements to their additions to the plan.
  - High Value Area (HVA) Map and Descriptions (Janet)
    - Mitchell Pond – Bowers Brook HVA Scope – It was agreed to add Mitchell Pond (2 ponds) to the Bowers Brook HVA.
    - It was also agreed that we should limit the number and amount of scope that we add into our HVA's.
  - Develop specific goals for the 5 priority high value areas <Tabled to the March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting >
  - Climate Change
    - Gregg provided a brief overview of the training he is involved with that will result in an adaptation vulnerability assessment and adaptation recommended actions.
  - Commission discussed options for an Outreach program for our conservation plan and decided on the following:
    - 3 channels (possibly others) would be utilized. (1) targeted presentation to select groups of residents. (2) town presentation and (3) fall survey.
    - Targeted audience would include water quality Crescent Lake residents, past conservation representatives, HVA landowners (Janet to assess), agricultural leaders (Luther, Bascom, Elsesser and Gowen) **Action:** Janet to look at our 5 HVA's areas and determine if there are landowners with some significant (TBD) amount of land that could be considered for our targeted outreach.
    - Targeted presentation would be accomplished this summer. This group would be provided with a draft of the plan. This group would be solicited to provide feedback toward engaging the rest of the community.
    - Lisa also confirmed that this is a similar approach that her business takes for outreach. Lisa offered her services toward our outreach efforts.
  - Other Updates
    - Complaints and violations Timber Harvests, Wetlands – new section reviewed and received positive feedback.
  - Next Steps
    - Create goals for one of the 5 HVA's, likely to be Keyes Hollow because of its wetland significance and its impact to Cold River and our flooding events.
    - Subsequent meetings will address the other 4 HVA's.
    - Develop an outreach program for each goal as they are identified <Tabled to the March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting >
- **Bylaws** – No changes

## Forestry and Conservation

- **Land Protection**
  - Hazardous Waste Coordination with Transfer Station <Tabled to the March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting >
  - Green Up Day – April 20 or 21 **Action Item:** Gregg to meet with Jen and confirm Jen's roll in planning and supporting the roadside cleanup coordination and communications.
  - Intents to Cut
    - 23-001-22 – Maps and lots: 236-9, 239-6, 239-5; River Road; Bassine Family Trust; Granite State Forestry; 220 acres – 190 to cut; 168 MBF – 4200 tons pulpwood – 200 cords of cordwood. Approved by Select Board 1/15/24. No concerns or issues were identified. It was reiterated that if there is a conservation concern with a harvest that the commission or any resident can submit a complaint to the state Forest Ranger in NH Division of Forest and Lands [.https://www.nh.gov/nhdfl/land-conservation/timber-harvesting-laws-and-enforcement.htm](https://www.nh.gov/nhdfl/land-conservation/timber-harvesting-laws-and-enforcement.htm)
  - Building, excavation, and other permits - None
  - South Acworth Forest (map 249, lot 9) – Forester inventory is in progress; establish goals is next.

- Land Surveys - Crescent Lake (map 201, lots 107 and 108) – awaiting additional survey follow-on work.
- Easement Monitoring
  - Clark Properties (Scott) LCIP - complete, sent and posted.
  - Keyes Hollow/Gove Road SPNHF (Gregg) – complete and posted.
  - South Acworth Forest Town (Mark) – complete and posted.
  - 5 Points, Roy Sugar House, Moody/Bascom LCIP (Jen) – in-progress
  - Pan-Northern Pierce Brook SPNHF (Jen) – in-progress
    - **Action:** Gregg to follow-up with Jen regarding submission of these reports.
    - Meet-and-greet introductory session with the new owner.
- Update Prouty/Honey Brook Property - Map 250 lot 2 – Update provided to Select Board: awaiting state next steps.
- **Water Protection** (Crescent Lake, Cold River, watersheds, wetlands, ponds, and perennial streams)
  - Shoreland Permit Issues – Update Map 201, Lot 106 Fong. Violation of RSA 483-B:9 (V) confirmed. Restoration Plan Approved.
  - Crescent Lake Water Quality Group Update – Gregg provided an update indicating that the water quality group is currently focused on identifying vendors for a watershed assessment of the Crescent Lake Watershed.

### Communications, Training and Outreach

- **Training-Education**
  - Land-Use Planning for Wildlife [2024 Taking Action for Wildlife Webinar Series] – 4 part series - <https://www.takingactionforwildlife.org/resources/2024-wildlife-webinar-series>
  - NH Association of Conservation Commissions - <https://www.nhacc.org/resources/resources>
- **Community Outreach**
  - Develop Outreach Plan (Gregg) – Outreach for the conservation plan is listed above and the outreach for our HVA’s goals and objectives will be developed along with each HVA.
  - Volunteer Field Events – Crescent Lake Boundary Marking and Cleanup. Keyes Hollow Nature Trail - Items would be left on our agenda for future consideration.
  - Other educational topics – Climate change impacts; shoreland and wetland restrictions/limitations/requirements, property conservation options, conservation plan
- **Next Meeting** – 13 March 2024 at 7pm in the Town Hall.
- **Meeting Adjourned** – 8:55pm.

### Conservation Commission Members:

- Jennifer Bland
- Gregg Thibodeau
- Kathi Bradt, Select Board Rep
- Mark Girard
- Scott Travers
- Janet Slocum
- Rob Traver
- Robin Ungeheuer (alt)

### Contact information:

- Webpage <https://www.acworthnh.net/conservation-commission>
- E-mail [acworthconservation@gmail.com](mailto:acworthconservation@gmail.com)
- Meeting 7:00 p.m. every 2nd Wednesday of month at the Town Hall
- Mail 13 Town Hall Rd., P.O. Box 37, Acworth, NH 03601, Attention: Conservation Commission
- Phone 603-835-6879 (town office)