

**CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
June 10, 2015**

The June meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:40 P.M. at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway.

Present: Vice Chairman Larry Huemmler, Dan Lucy, Pat Ferland, Alternate; Linda Comeau of USVLT

Absent: Chairman Rob Adair, Carol Lyman, Karla Allen, Linda Kearney, Matt Coughlin, Dave Weathers

Also Present: Forester Don Johnson, Paula Churchill of WM NEMBA, Julie Ferland, Rob Zimmerman

There is no quorum at this meeting; the discussions will be informational and no votes will be taken.

1. Approval of the Minutes 5/13/2015 - Tabled for the next meeting.

2. Reports:

- a. **USVLT – Lucy Easement:** Linda Comeau spoke about the proposal for the project on West Side Road, which is to purchase an easement that protects 44 acres of land on the Lucy Farm. Located next to the Saco River, it protects important farm land, which has good agricultural soil. It's also the focus area of the Natural Resource Conservation Service. In the State of NH the Saco River area is protected as an important watershed. The Saco River basin is the only one in NH that meets Federal Clean Water Standards. The total cost of the project will be \$300,000, of which \$280,000 is already raised. \$130,000 was received from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, a Federal program which purchases easements on important agricultural lands, and makes this purchase important state wide. \$75,000 was received from L-Chip. Linda asked the Conway Conservation Commission to support the project as well. She thanked the CCC for past support for other projects on West Side Road and also for their support of the Strategic Conservation Planning Process. In a recent appraisal, the land is valued at \$260,000, as was suggested in a letter by Browning Appraisal; however, a full appraisal will have to be done to meet Federal Standards. The market value of the land is not known. The easements retire the development rights which causes the full value of future development potential to go away. The true value is the remainder of market value after easements are in place. Linda will send the Letter of Opinion from Sheri Browning to the CCC, showing the value before the easement and then again after the easement is in place. They would like to get the project to the Federal Government for review by September and close the purchase by December 31st. Linda is willing to come back in July, if it will be helpful. Vice Chair Larry Huemmler will let her know.

- b. **Marshall – West Side Road site visit review:** Last Month's visit – Don Johnson reported on what has been done and what is being done since then. The Kiel Logging Company cleared the land and regraded it; they did a nice job. On the road in, they build water bars, according to Don's instructions. They're more like a notch, creating a very straight angle. The snowmobile club uses a groomer which grinds down to the dirt and so this type of water bar will not affect the groomer. The problem is that the big bulldozer made the water bars 14 to 16 inches deep, instead of 8 inches deep. However they can be reshaped if needed in the future. The next step is to get the landing seeded and mulched; Don is getting a mulcher. It should be done within the next couple of weeks.

Another project for the year Don worked on was to investigate creating and reopening a view on Hurricane Mountain Road, which is overgrown with small trees. In the State of NH if a town exceeds a certain amount of cutting along a public right of way, a variance will be needed. The Law is called the Basal Area Law. Don filled out a form and sent it to the Department of Resources and Economic Development foresters in Concord. He has not yet heard back from them. Since it is a historic view of both ledges, he expects that it will be approved. It's a small item in the budget.

- c. **NEMBA Trails Discussion:** Paula Churchill spoke about three items. At the **Marshall** land after the site visit review they found some old quarries; Rob is proposing a trail; WMNEMBA are requesting permission to put that trail in. A lot of people come here July 25th and 26th for the Mountain Bike Weekend, which offers a great opportunity to capture a lot of free man power. They are asking CCC for the approval to use that weekend to do those trails. If the Conservation Committee doesn't approve the exact trail as described in Rob's e-mail, they still want to schedule the work and get all the things in place. They have flagged a set of switchbacks on the left side of the road to make the first climb easier. The trails are in good shape. They also are trying to get some traffic off Thompson Road. It would be a great access place. No vote can be taken until July 8th

Mauler Trail - The trail located by Walmart, parallels the power line all the way to Thompson Road. It weaves in and out to Pudding Pond. The power line was removed from the last part of the trail and now it's just all sandy and it floods when it rains. They would like to move that part of the trail into the woods.

Cardiac Hill Loop – It starts at Thompson Road and goes up the logging road. It's a terrible climb, and coming down there are a series of turns that need to be fixed; they are a little bit tight for riding. The other problem is that there was access at the top of the loop that went through some swampy areas. They proposed closing that off. Then it would be a safe and an enjoyable ride.

Paula has this all written up and will e-mail it to Jean. They would like to have this all approved by July so they can begin the work. It will help the Eastside and make it more manageable.

3. **Public Comment:** Rob Zimmerman introduced himself as one of the abutters to the Marshall property. H has been using the property for recreation for 10 years. His request is about the old location road, which comes out of the Kennett Company property; that trail is still usable and has been used all year round by people who snowshoe, skiers, hikers and bikers. He is asking permission to continue to use that trail. The Town owns some of the property, and he will also have to talk with Hussie who also owns some property the trail in on. It goes to the White Mountain National Forest behind Cedar Creek. The trail is flat land. Rob is looking for access for beginners and families. This trail provides that, if it can be accessed from the landing area. Right now people come in through the golf course (which families will not do) or from the mineral side that makes them go up the hill. He is asking to establish this trail as a beginner trail. There are not enough beginner trails that have easy access. In discussion many of those present agreed that there are not enough beginner trails.

A suggested was made not to rush into this too quickly. A Plan is needed, which may not move the project along as fast as some people would like it to. Each trail should be planned out so that all the groups involved can work together.

4. **Selectmen's Report:** Dave Weathers not present – no report.
5. **Member Roundtable:** None.
6. **Next Meeting – July 8, 2015 @ 6:30 PM at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway**

Adjourn: There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:11 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theresa Ann Gallagher

Recording Secretary