

**Final**



**WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 21, 2021**

**PRESENT:** FREDERICK W. HIPPLER, CHAIRMAN; JOHN (JACK) MEANEY, VICE CHAIRMAN; JONATHAN H. OSBORNE, SELECTMAN (via cell phone); SHERRY M. BURDICK, SELECTMAN; JOHN VAN LOENDERSLOOT, SELECTMAN

**ABSENT:** none

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:** Naomi L. Bolton

**GUESTS:** Conservation Commission Chairman Andy Fulton, Wendy Fulton, Conservation Commission Member Bill Bolton, Town Moderator Eileen Meaney, Tom Clow, Frank Campana, Heleen Kurk

Chairman Hippler opened the meeting at 7:00 pm., welcomed those present to the Thursday, October 21, 2021 meeting for the discussion of the North Stark Highway parcel, Tax Map 401, Lot 96 and proceeded with the pledge of allegiance. Chairman Hippler explained the purpose for tonight's meeting is because at their last meeting the Board's vote was deadlock. At that meeting, Vice Chairman Meaney stated he needed more time to research and review the documentation.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

1.) Tom Clow, Concord Stage Road, stated though he is interested in trails on public lands, trails should not be the consideration for this project. Conserved land is more than its trail system such as habitat and water sheds. Reported in the Concord Monitor, New England to lose more than 1.2 million acres of forest by 2060. This affects climate change. Forests remove carbon from the atmosphere.

2.) Wendy Fulton, Hemlock Drive, a 22-year resident, a geologist, and in full disclosure Conservation Commission Chairman Andy Fulton's wife. She reiterated the wildlife this property protects as stated at the previous meeting. This 85-acre parcel of land is critical in connecting other conserved properties in Town. She presented the Board her petition her four daughters persuaded her to post online. Gathered in 5.5 hours, signed by 104 people as texted to her per her daughter. Wendy read some comments from the internet her girls helped her to attain, one person proclaimed they are concerned for protected species, another wanted the land for motorized recreational trails and two property owners who live across the road stated they did not want to see the land developed. Another comment from the internet was a person her daughter found to be a wildlife biologist and highly educated scientist, Dr. Michelle Goldsmith. She commented on the online petition stating she supports the Commission purchasing the land and urged the Board to vote in the affirmative.

Selectman Osborne commented talk about strong-arming.

3.) Bill Bolton, Conservation Commission Member, speaking also as a Town citizen, stated the idea of conservation started in Weare back in 1970. As a member of the snowmobile club since the 1980's, the

club has grown their 100-mile trail system on a lot of conservation land. The Conservation Commission has been very gracious in supporting the use of snowmobiles, especially, regarding easements on PLC land. Developing hiking trails is more complicated, should not expect that to be the burden of the Town. Miles of trails already exist; anyone can work with the Commission, the snowmobile club and landowners for permission to use them. Throughout the winter, horseback riders and cross-country skiers can be found utilizing these trails. Maintaining trails takes commitment, funding, and many hardworking people.

Selectman Burdick asked Bill for a copy of the trail maps. Bill responded Town Administrator Naomi Bolton has access to programming that delineates the club's trail system.

4.) Andy Fulton, Conservation Chairman, presented the Board a table of Weare property assessments he prepared. Figures taken from the internet, listed land asking prices are from the MLS, sold properties sale prices from Zillow and assessed values from Avitar, axisgis.com. Comparable properties based on acreage and road frontage establish the property in question to be priced at close to the cheapest per acre at \$3521.00. Some are lesser-valued land at a higher cost. Very reasonable, this 85-acre property for \$300,000.00 is a bargain sale. Strategically located, this property allows for movement by animals and people. He stated, he is strongly trying, not arm-twisting or spoon-feeding, to provide information. The Commission has been waiting 10 years to purchase this property, historically owned by local families, the Woods and Pages. He continued, reinforcing his message of the land's attributes, preserving Nelson Barden's memories for the future children of Weare, a special place.

5.) Tom Clow, mentioned the cost of development. If each one of the 15 houses has one school aged child, the average cost is \$12,000.00 per year. The Town pays \$144,000.00 per child over the span of twelve years for education. Fifteen houses times fifteen is over two million dollars of educational cost at only one child per house. Developed lots are taxable property, but at a loss to the Town.

Chairman Hippler, to set the record straight, stated tonight's meeting is not to purchase the land. Over a month and a half ago, the P & S was signed. The vote is to waive the appraisal and survey. The Commission provided a survey from 1972. He stated the work the Commission and the Fultons did is commendable. The work the Conservation does is appreciated and he thanked them.

Chairman Hippler asked the Board if they had anything different to say from the other night: Selectman Van - no change; Selectman Osborne - no change; Chairman Hippler - no change, in favor of it, lived here his whole life does not want to see the land developed, does not want to lose the opportunity to conserve the land; Selectman Burdick - no change, Commission brought forth the requested information, protect the space, does not want it to look like Goffstown, she walks these large parcels and wants to keep it open; Vice Chairman Meaney asked if this is a polling, no motion has been made. Chairman Hippler stated a polling. Vice Chairman Meaney stated his vote had not changed, he will wait until the formal vote to speak his peace.

**Chairman Hippler stated he would entertain a motion. Selectman Burdick moved, Chairman Hippler seconded to waive the assessment and to move forward in purchasing this property.** Discussion: Vice Chairman Meaney expressed his dismay of the tactics that have been going on for months. The Conservation Commission was notified there was a question about the exact acreage; the Title Company wanted a survey. This is something the Commission knew about and failed to bring forward. That is not being transparent or above board. Instead, nearing the end of their deadline, they chose to ramrod a presentation. He, too, does not want to see the land go away, but there are contingencies. On the Commission's web page, their mission states all their land is available to all Weare residents for respectful use. He understands they have been helpful to the snowmobile club, but that leaves everyone else behind. There are companies that provide services that are designed to create trails. A formal request by the Conservation Commission has never been made. Former Selectman John Lawton has been unsuccessful many times at the podium asking for this. The Boy Scouts are responsible for the trail at Ferrin Pond. He

understands ATV traffic has a negative impact, but using the snowmobile trail system in conjunction with their leadership makes sense. Currently, on the Commission's website page their trail maps bring you to a NHDES link, no trail guide. A plan needs to come together within two years for access to trails where the public could use the land to hike, fish, hunt and snowmobile. As to the residence on the property, that would need to be removed in 90 days, permitted properly. There may be asbestos and asphalt shingles. The Town would have to have the rights to any resources on the purchased property, except timber. Other resources being gravel, harvested only for the Town under the auspice of the Commission. All these conditions have to be met or his vote is no.

Selectman Van asked how long would the Commission have. Vice Chairman Meaney responded it has to be in writing by November 1st as their closing is the 10th. The Commission has dragged this on since this summer. They would have to be ready for their public hearing on the 3rd. If this is agreed upon, the Commission can come to the Board's meeting on November 1st and Vice Chairman Meaney will vote yes.

**Chairman Hippler asked for a roll call vote. Selectman Van - no; Selectman Osborne - no; Chairman Hippler - yes; Selectman Burdick - yes; Vice Chairman Meaney - abstained until he has the paper.**

Chairman Hippler stated to reevaluate at the November 1st Board meeting. He asked any Board members to speak. There was none.

**Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Vice Chairman Meaney made a motion, Chairman Hippler seconded to adjourn at 7:48 pm. Passed 5-0-0**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A True Record.

*Karen Nelson*

Karen Nelson transcribed from

TA Bolton notes & You Tube recording