



*Town of Weare*  
*Conservation Commission*

15 Flanders Memorial Road

Weare, NH 03281

Fax: (603) 529-4554

Email: [conservation@weare.nh.gov](mailto:conservation@weare.nh.gov)

Website: [www.weare.nh.gov](http://www.weare.nh.gov)

**Conservation Commission**

Andrew Fulton, Chairman  
Stephen Najjar, Vice Chair  
Jeff Jackson  
Lisa Grolljahn  
William Bolton

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION – September 9, 2015 draft MINUTES**

Meeting called to order at 7:08 PM by Chairman Fulton.

Members present: Andy Fulton, Steve Najjar, Bill Bolton, and Jeff Jackson

Guests: Dave Ward, Mike Lambert, Peter DeSantis

1. Eastman Conservation Area Town Forest Trails - Dave Ward of the Trails Subcommittee spoke of items that would be required to make a parking area at the south end of the conservation land, using a portion of the existing and recently active log landing. He mentioned driveway upgrades, snow plowing arrangements, and snow storage allowances. Mr. Najjar suggested that Jeremy Turner should be involved. Discussion ensued concerning involving the Board of Selectmen, town Road Agent, sight distances on Rte. 77/Concord Stage Road, signage, driveway width, security, ROW of neighbor, winter use expectations, and expense. Conversation moved on without action items at this time.

Peter DeSantis of Comprehensive Trails Services presented his property trails assessment report. He recommended trail mowing and moving a portion of the loop trail to the newly reclaimed meadow at the south end of the property. During his property investigation he spoke with the athletic director at John Stark Regional High School and found him interested in the possibilities of continued and potentially increased student usage of the conservation land. Mr. Najjar suggested that we write a letter to the SAU superintendent formalizing the shared interest between the CC and the SAU re conservation land usage and access. Mr. DeSantis outlined the existing trail network, its scope and conditions, and suggested some potential directions the town could go for additional trail development on the property. Mr. Bolton asked if there was a monetary proposal for additional work with the trails assessment report. Apparently there was one in the works but not something that could be handed out at the time of meeting. Mr. Najjar shared his concern that any trail network on conservation property not be overly dense since ecological degradation typically results. The CC considered what it would take to properly maintain existing trails at the property and to develop additional trails. It was discussed that funds for trail maintenance could come from a warrant article, the CC annual budget, or allowances within the approved annual town forest maintenance budget. Funds for new trails might be allocated from the Conservation Fund, the Town Forest Account, or by warrant article. Mr. DeSantis verbally presented the outlines of his proposal for new trail development – a sustainable properly built 0.8-mile trail costing approximately \$6,000. Mr. Ward interjected that Mike Lambert would also be interested in bidding on trail construction and that Mr. Lambert has trails ideas for the property.

Mr. Lambert proposed trail improvement and construction work including 8 foot wide wetland crossings using salvaged zinc treated timbers that he has available. White oak was also discussed as a preferred building material. Mr. Najjar asked that 14 foot wide crossings be considered on the main trunk trail that would also be used a haul road during forestry harvest operations. Mr. Lambert suggested that the increased width would double the size and be oversized for the existing path. Mr. Najjar commented that we should not build something that would be incompatible with anticipated uses. Mr. Bolton suggested that such use would be so infrequent that in his opinion it should be a non-concern. Culverting was discussed but Mr. Lambert thought it impractical due to site conditions. He was not swayed from his timbered sluice proposal as the preferred crossing structure. Mr. Najjar suggested that Jeremy Turner should be involved in the discussion in his role as our town forester. Andy Fulton inquired with Mr. Lambert about the possibility of constructing wetlands crossings in a manner similar to

the woods road constructed by Mt. William Inc. a few years ago. Mr. Lambert (who had been the wetlands consultant on the project) replied that site conditions at the Eastman Conservation Area Town Forest are not amenable to such an approach. A ready supply of appropriately sized boulders and gradational building material is not available as it had been in the Mt. William vicinity.

Mr. Lambert proposed raking the trunk trail with a heavy York rake to get it into shape for easy walking without ankle benders. Mr. Najjar suggested smoothing with a small dozer as another option. Mr. Lambert thought that additional material might have to be brought in to allow proper dozer grading whereas raking wouldn't require such. Mr. Lambert thought the proposed raking would result in a 15-16 foot wide trail, ditch line to ditch line.

Mr. Lambert wrapped up his presentation with the comment that he would aspire to keep things simple, cheap, and doable and that he would be very interested in playing a role.

Mr. Najjar asked Mr. Ward if there was any prospect of securing grant money for trail work. Mr. DeSantis and Mr. Bolton opined that there wasn't much grant activity (RTP) ongoing due to the state budget situation. Mr. Ward commented that even if a grant application was successful, we would not be able to do any trail work with it until next summer and he was hoping to have some improvements accomplished this year.

Mr. Bolton interjected that he couldn't understand why Mr. Najjar was so dead set against Mr. Ward's efforts to develop trails at the Eastman. He suggested that Mr. Najjar was being obstructionist and demoralizing and that the required funding should be made available to act on Mr. Ward's proposals. Mr. Bolton called the process into question and stated that he didn't know how the trails consideration was initiated but that he presumed it came from the board. Mr. Bolton expressed his displeasure with the proceedings and stated that he feels that things are backward.

Mr. Najjar rejected the characterization and questioning of his motives and stated that he felt the comments were a personal attack, and that such was totally unacceptable to him. He stated that his prime concern was for the ecological integrity of the land as he had been on properties where significant degradation resulted from inappropriate trails and trail usage.

Mr. Fulton addressed Mr. Bolton's process question and explained that the Conservation Commission had not initiated a trail development program for the property. The initial commission sanctioned trail activity on the Eastman has been a neighbor's request to be allowed to groom a ski trail using existing paths. The Trails Subcommittee had developed from a former Conservation Commission member's interest in trails; to which the commission had agreed that posting a request for volunteers on the Conservation Commission web site would be acceptable. Volunteers including Mr. Ward did respond and show interest that fairly quickly focused on the Eastman. Mr. Ward made a trail development proposal that resulted in the commission suggesting that the proposal might benefit from some professional involvement. Mr. Ward subsequently made contact with Mr. DeSantis and Mr. Lambert and invited them to conservation meetings.

Mr. Lambert interjected that we'll have to deal with usage conflicts and develop a vision for the property. Mr. DeSantis added that we should encourage use of the property so that the populace experiences the direct benefit of having conservation lands, thereby increasing support for future acquisitions

Mr. Najjar stated that the commission needs to write up a request for quotes in a similar fashion as we had done for forester services and the lower Ferrin parking area bridge. This could be done next month and would benefit in having a response from the SAU as to their potential partnership interest. The commission discussed whether it would be better to have a letter to the SAU come from the commission or the Board of Selectmen and decided from the commission might be best initially. Town

Administrator Naomi Bolton should at least be informed of the commission's intent to reach out to the SAU. Mr. Najjar also suggested and the commission agreed that Mr. Ward should contact PLC and inform them that we are entertaining the development of a 100 ft. x 100 ft. parking area at the landing.

2. Russel Foundation Bridge Loan Repayment - Mr. Fulton brought up the Russell Farm and Forest Foundation's request for payment of a \$5,000 bridge loan to the town made during the purchase of the Shmid Banks land off of Center Road. Mr. Fulton mentioned that the commission had previously approved payment to the Russel Foundation from the Conservation Fund once the Emma Sawyer Trust had made a deposit of the same to the Conservation Fund for that purpose. The trust had since decided that it didn't want to make piecemeal payments for the amount pledged on the project; preferring to wait until all aspects of their commitment to funding the conservation easement work were complete and final expenses determined. Mr. Najjar commented that the commission had essentially committed the entirety of the Conservation Fund to the land purchase and was essentially tapped out, and unable to make more than the requested repayment at this time. Mr. Fulton affirmed that there are no substantial land purchase or easement project reserves remaining in the Conservation Fund and the balance will not grow appreciably until development takes off again. Mr. Najjar **motioned** and Jeff Jackson seconded the motion to reimburse the \$5,000 loaned by the Russell Foundation from the Conservation Fund with the understanding that the Emma Sawyer Trust has pledged that amount and will deposit it to the Conservation Fund at easement project completion. Misters Najjar, Jackson, and Fulton approved and Mr. Bolton abstained.
3. Eastman Conservation Area Town Forest Annual Field Mowing - Mr. Najjar **motioned** and Mr. Bolton seconded the motion to approve contacting Gary Wilson to mow the small Eastman field on Rte. 77 adjacent to the cemetery and to fund the mowing from the commission operating budget. All approved. Mr. Najjar is to contact Mr. Wilson. The expense is nominal and expected to be similar to what it was last year.
4. Duck Pond Water Levels and DOT Activity - Mr. Najjar commented that Burt Brown had spoken with him about his concern for Duck Pond. Mr. Brown related that DOT dredging activities were lowering the pond level below the norm and that wetlands rules may have been violated. It was noted that beaver debris has been an issue for DOT and that we are not sure who actually owns the pond. Mr. Fulton agreed to pass the concern along to the DES Wetlands Bureau.
5. Tabled Agenda Items - Agenda items not discussed due to the length of the meeting included a September 8, 2015 revised site plan for 14/21 B&B Lane paving; an August 2015 amended subdivision plan for the Martin trust (408/44-44.1); Brian Hotz's (SPNHF) inquiry regarding the status of the Banks easement and surveying; and mail items including NHACC dues, NHTOA's annual report, NH Timber Harvesting Council Loggers & Truckers Convention, Meadowsend's amended FSA for Chevy Hill/Jewett Road lots, and unrestricted grant account statements.

Mr. Jackson **motioned** and Mr. Najjar seconded, all voted in favor, and meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Fulton (WCC Chair)