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North Hampton Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes – June 13, 2023

Administrative: The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. via Channel 22 from the Town Hall. The agenda was posted in compliance with RSA 91-A requirements.

Roll Call: Members present: Lisa Wilson, (Chair), Kathy Grant (Co-Chair), Dave Ciccalone, Lauri Etela, Audrey Prior. ***A motion was made by Audrey Prior, duly seconded by Lauri Etela, to allow Andrew Vorkink to join the meeting remotely.*** The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken.

Approval of May 9, 2023 Draft Minutes: After review of the May 9, 2023 minutes, ***a motion was made by Lauri Etela, duly seconded by Audrey Prior to accept the minutes as written.*** The motion carried with Kathy Grant abstaining. A roll call vote was taken.

New Business: NH DES Expedited Minimum Impact (EXP) Wetlands Permit application: MWS Paving LLC., 56 Esker Road, Hampton, NH 03842, on behalf of Lora and Michael Spector, 4 Boulter's Cove (Tax Map 1, Lot 14), North Hampton, NH 03862, prepared the wetlands application for a 2000 sq. ft. project to replace the existing driveway with pervious asphalt, add approximately one foot of pervious pavement to each side of the driveway, and add an 18'x10' asphalt pad to the right side of the existing shed. After some discussion, ***a motion was made by Andrew Vorkink, duly seconded by Kathy Grant, to authorize the Chair to sign the Expedited Minimum Impact Wetlands application after seeking clarification for three line items on the Army Corps of Engineers checklist provided the responses are consistent with the requirements of the application.*** The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken.

Old Business:

Conservation Easement Subcommittee Update – Andy Vorkink reported the outcome of the site walks at Forest Hills Farm. As a follow-up to the site walk conducted on May 11 with representatives from Sagamore Golf, Inc., Andy and Kate Dardinski revisited the site and determined that approximately 220-250 feet of bog bridges will be needed along the seasonally wet black/yellow trail located within the access easement to the Forest Hills Farm conservation land.

At Forest Hills Farm along the Greenland border, Phil Thayer and Kate Dardinski marked the purple trail extension to the green trail. The Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire (SELT), the holder of the Forest Hills Farm conservation easement, is required to approve any new plans for the conservation land as well as any updates to the Forest Hills Farm Management Plan. Kathy Grant volunteered to attend a site walk along the proposed new trail with Deborah Goard, SELT Stewardship and Land Engagement Director.

Updated Summer/Fall Work Plan and Budget: Following site walks along the trails in May and upon review of the topographical maps and plans to improve the trail network along three conservation parcels, the Commission has determined that approximately 550 feet of bog bridges along three trails will be needed as opposed to the 220 feet previously proposed in the May 2023 workplan. The revised June 2023 work plan includes extending the Forest Hills Farm purple trail along its one-half mile property boundary abutting the Greenland border. The trail will originate from the eastern property boundary and extend to the western power line connecting to the green trail, all on town-owned land. The extension will also connect to the existing north/south purple trail located within the access easement. Proposed work includes creating a new map for Forest Hills Farm and revisions to the trail guide. Revisions will depict the addition of Map 21-45, the Forest Hills Farm conservation parcel inadvertently omitted from past and recent trail maps, but depicted correctly on the town conservation land and tax map. Forest Hills Farm is comprised of two lots, 22-3 and 21-45.

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Kate's updated work plan no longer includes the cost of lumber. In view of Eldredge Lumber's generous offer to provide marine grade lumber at cost for these community projects, it is most cost effective to order lumber for the three projects to be delivered to Kate's workshop/barn. During the May 9, 2023 meeting the Commission authorized an expenditure up to \$5000 for proposed work to include materials and labor for approximately 220' of bog bridges along three trails. Following discussion of the expanded scope of work to include approximately 550' of bog bridges, ***a motion was made by Andrew Vorkink, duly seconded by Lauri Etela, to approve an additional expenditure up to \$5000.00 for the 2023 summer and fall projects.*** The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken.

Trail Maintenance Update: The gate to be installed at the entrance to the Dalton Town Forest trail has not yet arrived. The SPN permit applications for the Forest Hills Farm black/yellow trail and the Dustin-Booker Farm trails have been completed. The Commission has received from New Hampshire Fish and Game (NHF& G) recommendations to protect the spotted turtle, reported on the Natural Heritage Bureau database to have been located in the vicinity of the proposed work.

Conservation Signage: Lisa Wilson noted that during the May 2020 meeting the Commission authorized an expenditure to purchase permanent maintenance-free road signs for Dustin-Booker Farm and Oliver Brook Trail. Only the Oliver Brook sign was purchased in 2021 with funding from the NH Bureau of Trails grant program. Following discussion of the need to install various types of signage to include signs to remind hikers to take precautions during hunting season and signs to notify the public that motorized vehicles are not permitted beyond certain areas, ***a motion was made by Lauri Etela, duly seconded by Dave Ciccalone, to authorize up to \$1,500.00 to order the Dustin-Booker Farm road sign from Arete Industries and other necessary signage throughout the year.*** The motion carried. A roll call vote was taken.

Future Projects: The Commission plans to contact Rob Pruyne, GIS Manager, Rockingham Planning Commission to update the "Conservation Land and Tax Map" with any new information, to add the Nordstrom Eltzroth Woods conservation parcel to the map, and to provide the updates to NHF& G. Additional future projects might include identifying culverts in need of approval and to identify 2024 grant opportunities to meet next year's spring/summer deadlines. The Commission discussed conducting reliable and economical ways to test the water quality of the Winnicut River and the Little River to collect data with the goal of identifying ways to improve the quality of the water. The Commission also discussed clearing a trail along the Boies conservation land as a possible future project.

Other Business: None

There being no further business to discuss, ***a motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Audrey Prior,*** to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Moore
Recording Secretary

"These minutes were prepared within five (5) business days as required by NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by the majority vote by the Commission".