



# TOWN OF HUDSON

## Conservation Commission



Ken Dickinson, Chairman

Marilyn McGrath, Selectmen Liaison

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**DATE: March 14, 2016**

**MEETING MINUTES:** Below is a listing of minutes for the Hudson Conservation Commission. Minutes are not a verbatim record of each meeting, but rather represent a summary of the discussion and actions taken at the meeting. All Conservation Commission meetings are televised live and repeated during the following week on HCTV, cable television channel 22. Official copies of the minutes are available to read and copy at the Town Engineer's Office during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.).

Should you have any questions concerning these minutes or wish to see the original recording, please contact the Town Engineer's Office at 603-886-6008.

A regular meeting of the Hudson Conservation Commission (HCC) was held in the Community Development Conference Room of Town Hall.

**Members of the Commission present:** J. Battis, R. Brownrigg, K. Dickinson, R. Matos and M. Tranfaglia

**Members of the Commission absent:** W. Collins, excused

**Member of Town Staff:** None

**Board of Selectman Representative:** None

**Seating of Alternates:** None

Called to Order at 07:15 p.m.

**As no members of the public were in attendance, no public input was presented or discussed.**

### **I. OLD BUSINESS**

Note: Some of the proceeding presentation was not captured on video

- A. Continued conversation of a potential farmland conservation easement opportunity of land currently owned by Bill and Lavinia Miller. Reference town tax maps 135-017-000, 126-034-000 and 126-032-000. This item was initially discussed at the HCC meeting held January 11, 2016.

Ryan Young from the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) and the property owner Bill Miller were back before the commission to continue discussions of a potential land conservation easement opportunity Miller property. Mr. Young thanked the commission members for attending the site walk of the Miller property and said it was useful and informative in the decision making process. He went on to say that the SPNHF was ready to move forward with the project and stated that partnering with the town would be very favorable to all parties concerned. Mr. Young gave a quick outline of the steps that would be taken if an agreement to pursue was indicated. He also named the Natural Resources Conservation Services Agricultural Land and Easement Program (RCSALE) as a potential source of funding to help offset expenses of such a project. He stated that the RCSALE will fund up to fifty percent of the easement value depending on the property. Mr. Young added that the Miller property met the programs qualification in many respects.

Mr. Young stated that he sent out request for appraisal costs to four different companies but received only one quote back for \$5500. He believed with some negotiating he might be able to get NRCS to agree to a preliminary appraisal cost of \$3500. Mr. Young said that the forest society would be willing to cover half the cost and asked if the HCC would be willing to cover the other half of up to \$2750 to obtain the cost estimate. He also added that if the costs for the appraisal were negotiated lower than the HCC would only be required to pay half of the final amount.

With Mr. Young's presentation completed the commission chairman opened the floor to question.

Mr. Brownrigg asked what the red box drawn on the map represented. Mr. Young answered that it represented the property that would be exclude from any easement agreement.

Mr. Matos said he thought that the box indicating the excluded property was going to be bigger and included an existing structure. Mr. Young said that the depicted box size would grow (or how much property would be retained by the Millers) but was undecided at this point.

Mr. Battis asked if the appraiser would take into account the pending utility easements running through the property. Mr. Young said the appraiser would more than likely take into account this issue. He assumed that the appraisal cost would be based on house lots and not acreage.

Mr. Battis than asked if the property south of Griffin Road would be included in the easement. Both Mr. Young and Mr. Miller said it would be.

Mr. Battis mentioned that there was mention of an interest in potentially farming the

property and asked if there would be any problems if the land was subdivided. Mr. Young stated that the goal was to keep the land under one conservation easement and further explained only the funding for purchase of said easement might be split among various programs.

Mr. Dickinson asked if a variance was ever granted if soil conditions were not favorable. Mr. Young said no.

Mr. Dickinson voiced some concern over the appraisal fee and stated that a similar project had a cost which was lower. He asked if there was any flexibility in the cost. Mr. Young stated he would try to meet with NRCS representatives to negotiate a better price.

Mr. Dickinson asked if there were any concerns among commission members in regards to moving forward with any funding.

Mr. Battis asked if there would be stipulation imposed by the federal government in regards to the monetary contributions that they would provide. Mr. Young said that the requirements for good stewardship would be similar to LCHP with a similar annual reporting scheme.

Mr. Dickinson if this project would be a continuation of the tri-town forest. Mr. Young answered that it would be if a portion of the property came under ownership of SPNHF but the goal was to keep all the land as its own easement.

Mr. Matos asked for clarification of the steps to purchase the property. Mr. Young went over the steps to purchase the easement.

Mr. Battis pointed out that the final decision to purchase land falls to the Board of Selectman and that once all the costs were received it would have to go before the BOS and maybe the voters for approval. He added that the process could take up to a year to complete.

Mr. Dickinson asked if there was a motion to expend funds to cover the appraisal cost.

**A motion for the commission to provide from the conservation fund up to \$2750 to support the appraisal of lots 135-017-000, 126-034-000 and 126-032-000. This is for the purpose of establishing the cost of a potential purchase of a conservation easement on land owned by Bill and Lavinia Miller**

**Motion by: J. Battis**

**Seconded by: R. Brownrigg**

**Vote:** For:   5   Opposed:   0   Abstain:   0  

The chairman thanked Mr. Young for his presentation.

## II. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Wetlands Special Exception application for utility improvements along the R.O.W from Powers Street Substation to McCrady Drive, Eversource Energy.

Hutton Snow introduced himself as the project manager for the Y151 transmission line rebuild project and gave a brief synopsis of why the Y151 transmission was selected for updating he then introduced the projects Wetlands Scientist and Wildlife Biologist Tracy Tarr from GZA to further elaborate on the scope of the work to take place. Ms. Tarr reiterated that the transmission line re-build started at Power Street and ran 3.7 miles to McCrady drive. She said that her function was to delineate the wetlands along the route and that GZA had filed the permits and wetland special exception applications. She then provided more details about construction, wetland details and the different species of aquatic life that could be encountered. Mr. Tarr went on to say that she would be on site and provide reports to the state Fish and Game as to what was observed construction. Mr. Tarr added that only 2 poles of 37 poles being replaced were in wetlands and that the temporary wetland impact would be 24,637 square feet and the permanent wetland impact 970 square feet. Mr. Tarr said that daily monitoring takes place during pole replacement and that the erosion control system was monitored weekly. All observation made during the monitoring process were then included in a Storm Water Pollution Prevention plan prepared by GZA and presented to Eversource. Ms. Tarr concluded her presentation by going over the fees that would be paid to the states wetland mitigation fund.

Mr. Dickinson asked if there was any limitation as to how the mitigation fees paid by Eversource could be spent.

Mr. Tarr said that she could setup a meeting with Lori Summer from NECS to discuss alternative uses for the fees paid. She suggested having somebody from the HCC attend the meeting to discuss the matter.

Mr. Tranfaglia asked about reporting of endangered species and how these animals are handled.

Ms. Tarr said all sightings are documented reported to the New Hampshire Fish and Game. She also added that the construction crews are notified and told to be stay vigilant to prevent harm to the wildlife.

Mr. Matos asked about traffic control. Ms. Tarr pointed out the different access points chosen and marked on the plan set and also briefly discussed when and if police details were needed to handle traffic issues.

Mr. Brownrigg asked for clarity in regards to what and how many structures were being replaced.

Ms. Tarr went over the construction plan set that was handed out to the commission members describing the color coding of old poles verses new poles she further stated that the total pole replacement was thirty-seven.

Mr. Battis ask if the five-foot steel caissons depicted on the Caisson Foundation Detail were new or was the plan to use existing caissons to install the new poles.

Ms. Tarr said the steel caissons shown were only going to be used at the pole 9 location she asked Matt Moroe an Eversource Line Engineer working on this project to elaborate more on this detail. Mr. Moroe stated that more than likely that pole 9 currently installed in Glover Brook was just driven into the ground. He said that installing caisson would help with stability of the poles to prevent damage from high winds. He further explained the construction and installation of such caissons.

Mr. Matos asked if there were any requirements for de-watering of the caisson location.

Mr. Tarr answered that there was a plan in place to handle de-watering if it was required.

Mr. Battis asked about removal of the old poles. Ms. Tarr and Mr. Moroe both answered that the old poles would be cut flush with the grade and added that it was the preferred method over total removal of the poles

Mr. Brownrigg asked about the anchoring systems used to support the pole construction. Ms. Tarr and Mr. Moroe said that these anchors were small and posed little impact when installed.

Mr. Dickinson asked about the swamp crossing at the pole 32 and pole 33 locations. Mr. Tarr said that matting would be temporarily installed in the narrowest part of the water way to facilitate pole 32 replacement.

Mr. Dickinson asked if the utility corridor would be cleaned up as work was completed and also asked about removal of two couches that were tossed to the side of the road near pole 33. Mr. Tarr answered that Eversource takes pride in leaving the sight in as good if not better shape than when construction began. She added that if the town needed additional help disposing of the couches something could be worked out.

Mr. Dickinson made further comments on access points along the route and asked if access points could be moved or altered to lesson impacts. Ms. Tarr said alterations to the plan could be made to help lesson impacts to buffers and wetlands.

Mr. Dickinson asked about the construction time line. Ms. Tarr said that the project would probably completed by November of this year.

Further discussion took place on the types of construction techniques, buffer impacts and soil erosion controls took place. Questions asked by the commission members were

answered satisfactorily by the Eversource team.

At the conclusion of the question and answer part of the presentation a “joint commission” site walk of the corridor was scheduled for March 26, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Members were scheduled to meet at the Jackson Dr. and Monroe Dr. intersection to start the site walk.

A follow up special meeting of the HCC will be held after the site walk on March 26, 2016 at 12:00 p.m. in the Town Hall’s Community Development Room to finish discussion and possibly recommend the WSE being sought by Eversource Utilities.

**A motion was made to continue the discussion of the Eversource Y151 rebuild project on March 26, 2016 at 12:00 p.m. to consider recommendation of the WSE being sought by Eversource utilities.**

**Motion by:** J. Battis

**Seconded by:** M. Tranfaglia

**Vote:** For:   5   Opposed:   0   Abstain:   0  

The chairman thanked the Eversource team for their participation in tonight’s meeting.

Mr. Battis provided some insight as to the issues that could arise from trying to hold a public meeting in the field preceding a site walk. Mr. Dickinson pointed out that it was probably not the best method to garner public input due to insufficient record keeping.

### III. OTHER BUSINESS

#### A. Stewardship of Conserved Lands: Kiosk Information and Rules Signs

Continued discussion of rule signs that would be placed at the kiosks located at the town forest and Musquash Pond conserved lands. Mr. Matos was tasked with obtaining pricing quotes. Mr. Matos said he received quotes from “online” companies but added that the quality of these signs was not very good. He said the typical 18” x 24” would cost \$41.00 and with shipping and handling the cost would be well over \$50.00 per unit.

Mr. Matos went on to tell the commission that he also received a quote from Signarama a Chelmsford MA based company. He felt that the quality of the materials used for these signs were of a higher grade and would last longer in the field. Mr. Matos reported that the preliminary cost of 12” x 18” signs would be \$49.00 an 18” x24” sign would cost \$58.00 and a sign measuring 3’ x 4’ would be in the \$150 to \$200 range.

Discussion took place of the materials used and placement locations for any sign purchased. It was decided to address the content of the signs prior to getting any quotes. It was also decided to write up the contents of any signs being considered then present the suggested wording to the BOS for their input.

At the end of the discussion it was determined that the signs to be placed at the town forest and Musquash Pond will require more refinement by various commission members.

**B. Timber Survey day.**

A timber survey day was held on February 20, 2016 to inventory the harvestable standing timber at the town forest. It was noticed that there is a fair amount of timber that can be monitored for growth but that there is no current plan for cutting.

Mr. Dickinson asked if there was an interest in a trail work day this month of March but most commission members had busy schedules and could not commit to a date.

Mr. Dickinson mentioned that there was an inquiry as to whether the commission would be interested in contributing a sum of money to help replace trail marker post.

**IV. FINANCIAL STATUS**

Currently over budget for professional services.

BOS accepted the full grant amount to continue invasive species control at Hudson's two major water bodies.

The commission chairman asked that a motion be made to expend \$20 dollars to cover the annual renewal fee for New Hampshire Association of Research Scientist.

**A motion was made to expend \$20.00 to cover the annual renewal fee for the New Hampshire Association of Research Scientists**

**Motion by:** M. Tranfaglia  
**Seconded by:** R. Brownrigg

**Vote:** For:   5   Opposed:   0   Abstain:   0  

**A motion was made to expend no more than \$300.00 to cover the cost of signage material to be used at the Town Forest and Musquash Pond Conservation areas**

**Motion by:** J. Battis  
**Seconded by:** M. Tranfaglia

**Vote:** For:   5   Opposed:   0   Abstain:   0

**V. CORRESPONDENCE**

Letter from NHDOT referencing sign replacement near Sagamore Bridge.

Letter pertaining to the Eagles Nest Subdivision stating approval by NHDES.

**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No previous meeting minutes were discussed.

**VII. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

None

**Motion to adjourn:**

Motion by: J. Battis  
Seconded by: R. Brownrigg

Vote: For: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Meeting Adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

  
Ken Dickinson, Chairman