Franconia Conservation Commission - minutes.

June 1, 2016, 5 pm

Members present: Kim Cowles, Mary Grote, Red McCarthy, John LaChapelle, Chris Nicodemus, Ginny Jeffryes.

Guest: Rebecca Brown, ACT Exec Director, for portion of the meeting about Lawrence property and Brewer property conservation easements.

Kim: Need to review a wetlands permit request for 143 County Road West to build a pond, Maureen Roianov. Applicant Sam Stephenson, plans by John Seely.

Discussion: Some available members of FCC to walk property – decided on 7 a.m. tomorrow June 2, parties notified/ok.

There is an existing swamp/wetlands there. Applicant to create small pond, and put the dredging on the upland side near house side, to get more usable space next to house. Dug area would create standing water. Per Red, ponds need to be 6-8 feet deep to not be just a mosquito breeding site. Some concerns expressed about plan drawing specifics needing clarification.

Rebecca Brown:

Lawrence property:

---Rebecca provided draft of Grant of Conservation Easement.

Eric unable to attend today, so sent email request that we discuss today the 50 foot river buffer area within which trails cannot be per Easement draft – he thinks too large a buffer.

Rebecca explains: Our Grant funder requires on all grants a minimum of 50 foot buffer around wetlands and rivers. That is the primary purpose of their grant. In the conversations with the funder, they were very clear they did not want trails within 50 feet of the rivers or wetlands, and they had specific concerns about our application. This does not prohibit grantor for making exceptions for essential stream crossings or other eventualities which might arise. Definition of edge of river is the top of the bank.

Discussion of name of brook in draft labeled “Black Brook”, aka “Lafayette Brook” after their confluence upstream of the property. Shown both ways on various maps/documents.

A few minor section numbering issues need correcting in the draft. Rebecca will correct them as discussed.

Kim makes a motion to accept the draft of Grant of Conservation Easement grant. Chris seconds. Unanimously voted to accept.

After correcting the numbering issues, Rebecca will send to Kim to give to Select Board to review/vote on.

---Attorney decided to wait to close until Smith survey is completed, being done right now.

---Discussion about eventually putting up a sign by entrance describing funding, purpose, accepted uses.

Brewer property easement progress:

--ACT holding easement for landowner, and requesting Conservation Commission be backup easement holder. It applies only to the river and land just adjacent to Ham Branch for stream habitat protection. This land was surveyed by Clean Water Healthy Trout.

Rebecca supplied the Easement. Reviewed, no concerns.

Chris makes motion to accept, Red seconds. Unanimously accepted.

Further discussion on direct access to Lawrence property, no option ideal.

1. Easiest is off the final spur of Old County Road but would need permission to cross private property.
2. Or, parking on Rte 18 and walking down a private driveway to Meadow Brook area.
3. Or, the ROW off Rte 18 to the town Forest, but no way to cross Lafayette (AKA Black) Brook there – a very wide meandering wet area/stream.
4. The end of Sawmill Lane option, with a stream crossing required.

Currently can be accessed on foot from Fox Hill Park trails.

To be discussed/determined further in future.

Next meeting Thursday June 30th, 5 pm, Town Hall.

Submitted by Ginny Jeffryes.