Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: Jan 21, 2020 3:00 pm

Members present: Mary Grote, Ginny Jeffryes, Chris Nicodemus, Red McCarthy

Meeting convened at 3:20 pm when quorum reached.

Chris Nicodemus agrees to become Chair.

Old minutes: Red moves to accept 12/3/2019 minutes. Mary seconds. Unanimously approved.

No update available on follow-up about the Save Forest Lake interest groups’ outreach to us from 10/20/2019.

Local conservation projects:

a) 60+ acre parcel abutting the town’s Lawrence Family Forest off County Line Road: Red and Chris met with owner’s friend Chrissy Valar Breen on 1/18 per owner’s request. The trails around the parcel perimeter are fine. They have some concern re the long-term preservation of the Pebble Beach trail (an old woods road) because it separates off 1/5 of the property from the other 4/5. The 1/5 portion is what abuts the Lawrence Family Forest. Various options for how to best conserve the important Pebble Beach Trail via an easement or deed discussed. The trail is vital to the Franconia trail system. Chrissy will have further discussions with owner.

b) Van Pelt’s 10 acres for sale on Wells Road for trail preservation: Ginny talked to Rebecca Brown, who hasn’t heard back from the abutter who initiated the question of ACT getting involved in preserving it for the benefit of the trail system through it. Rebecca isn’t interested in a letter of support from the FCC – by “support”, she had in mind a small financial contribution. From ACT’s perspective, there needs to be adequate public benefit – which the trail system preservation is - and participants’ commitment. If there’s some movement about this, she will let us know. Ginny told Rebecca there’s no budget with money for this, but maybe current use Conservation fund might be available to us. Rebecca suggested discussing uses of conservation funds with Barbara Richter of the NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC).

c) Conservation funds: Per communication from Holly, her information is that Conservation funds can be used for conservation easements. Ginny is awaiting a return call from Barbara Richter to inquire further about multiple specifics about this. Jill isn’t here to update us on the balance.

d) McKenzie Woods existing conservation easement - Red, Chris, and Ginny will walk a portion of the easement on 1/29/20 at 9 a.m.

Wetlands applications:

Reviewed the wetland application responses received from the State of NH for the Franconia Ski Club’s project at base of Mittersill. No concerns.

Reviewed the wetlands application response cc’d to us from the State of NH for a pond project off Ski Pines Road. The State has multiple concerns about the project, among which are that the maps don’t reflect the satellite images of the site; and that the pond is proposed to replace the wetlands, rather than to abut them; and that the satellite images suggest that there may have been non-permitted wetlands disturbance already. Red is familiar with where this is – a large house is being constructed there – access from Sugar Hill but the structure is in Franconia. Discussion that we share the concerns. Also, we didn’t receive a cc of the initial wetlands application from the applicant or the applicant’s agent, as required. Ginny will check with Town Clerk about whether she is providing us with copies of wetlands applications. Red is going to look into the Ski Pines wetlands situation further.

Next meeting:

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes