

Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC) - draft

Meeting: Nov 7, 2023, 3 pm at Town Hall.

Members present: Chris Nicodemus (Chair), Ginny Jeffryes, Jill Brewer

Guests: Julie Weisman

No quorum.

Minutes: deferred due to no quorum.

New member: Unable to vote due to lack of quorum.

Master Plan update: Chris sent out the subcommittee's draft of our chapter, and received no feedback from members, so he will submit it to Planning Board as it exists post our updates.

NRI update: Chris reviews Elise's proposed fieldwork plans, which sound good. Ginny suggests that we ask her to briefly revisit our new conservation parcels in the spring for vernal pools and for looking for rare spring or summer plants and reptiles. There may be wood turtles. Julie mentions seeing wood turtles in her area.

Plymouth State student project: Chris had a zoom meeting yesterday with Sugar Hill CC, Easton CC, and PSU about possibility of their senior seminar doing a project to help us further develop the story board aspects they worked on last spring.

Town forest easement: Chris says we need to think about it prior to ACT meeting with us planned for Dec 5. Discussion: Ginny thinks the new conservation land shouldn't have trails, given the extent of wetlands, and wildlife disturbance issues. She went NHACC conference 3 days ago and one good presentation was about the amount of wildlife stress which occurs due to people on trails – 400 feet either side causes mammals stress; 150 feet either side for birds to alert; and amphibians and reptiles flee when people are detected 60 feet away. The amount of wildlife disturbance can be minimized by calculating and mapping these trail-related disturbance zones, then minimizing them in sensitive areas. She shared the booklet about this tool. Julie asks for clarification about who decides on restrictions, and Chris explains the process. He says one example of a decision we need to make is whether to restrict forestry there or not. Ginny thinks no forestry due to prominent wetlands.

Budget process: Chris mentioned to Town Administrator having discretionary funds for an environmental consulting fund, for maybe wetlands science or maybe a forester, when needed. Jill says budget planning starts in December.

Next meeting: December 5 at 3 pm

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes