Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: Feb 20, 2018 8 am.

Members present: Chris Nicodemus, Ginny Jeffryes, Mary Grote, Mark Ober, Jill Brewer

Minutes 1/23/2018 reviewed. Chris moves to approve. Mary seconds. Unanimously approved.

DES Wetlands Draft rules update: Chris gives background: A massive reworking of the rules. Trying to bring their rules in sync with other regulations. Public comment sessions are in progress, w/upcoming remaining ones: Concord 2/26, Laconia March 1st, March 7th Lancaster 5 pm. We have till April 20th to make official comments on the draft. The document is linked on their website. Complex changes, not clear what might be the impact. First complete rewrite of the rules since 1991. Ginny will email Cheryl Jensen, Easton CC to see if they have reviewed and have concerns. She will try to attend the Lancaster meeting. Red sent an info email yesterday saying he did not see any changes re roads/bridges, the section he looked at. Next meeting we will address whether we want to make an official statement.

Profile Trails update: (Chris and Jill). Didn’t get the grant, but there was a benefit to having applied for it. A resident along the Ham Branch portion changed her mind about giving permission to access her land: apparently her neighbor who is not an abutter was concerned. Jill is working on the bike lane. The section at Rocks Estate will be assessed with Will Abbott and John Morton to make sure no Vernal pools, as they work on the Master Plan. Morton was concerned about altitude changes between Franconia and Profile and Bethlehem, but his plan makes it much longer and much more expensive. 1000 foot contour from Village, HS is 1100 feet. Morton did a great map for a user-friendly trail.

Gale River walk trail (behind businesses): Jill reports it will be worked on in the spring. Will again have volunteers from White Mtn School. Kim contacted Ginny re management of the knotweed patches, which encroach on the trail in an area behind Presby’s. Ginny reports that the only options are to smother it with black plastic for a few years, impractical since needs a wide area covered beyond the knotweed, or herbicide. Cutting/mowing the young shoots repeatedly also works but takes years. Any digging of any pieces of living root or living plant material spreads it further. If plan is to use an herbicide, any knotweed treated within 25 feet of the river requires a specially licensed herbicide sprayer, and a special herbicide, rather than glyphosate (Roundup). Not sure yet if the patches encroach closer than 25 feet. Herbicides will be fairly ineffective in spring – need to wait till mid-August flowering, or early Sept when plants storing energy for winter. Most targeted, safer approach is to use a stem injector to inject the individual canes near their bases with a concentrated version, rather than spraying. She knows a landowner in Whitefield who used this approach who may still have the stem injector – will check on whether we could borrow it, if so. The 25-foot licensing requirement still applies, however. There are other patches behind the P.O. and Village Store, but not sure if abut trail.

ACT’s Crocker Preserve: moving more slowly than expected. Still hasn’t closed, but will happen perhaps during first quarter.

NH HB 1343 – Beaver trapping/dam intervention reporting. As planned at our 1/23/18 meeting, Ginny sent FCC’s letter supporting the bill to F& G & Marine Resources NH House Committee. The bill did not make it out of Committee - it was sent to be studied.

Next meeting: Mar 20th 8 am.

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes.