

**CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 10, 2018**

The January monthly meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 P.M. at the Whitaker Home Site Meeting House in North Conway.

Present: Chairman Rob Adair, Dan Lucy, Linda Kearney, Pat Ferland, Alternate; Selectmen Representative Dave Weathers

Absent: Vice Chairman Larry Huemmler, Carol Lyman, Treasurer; Karla Allen, Nat Lucy, Alternate; Theresa Gallagher, Recording Secretary

Also Attending: Larry Garland, MWV Rec Path

1. **Approval of the Minutes for 9/13/2017:** Chairman Rob Adair asked for a motion to accept the September 13, 2017 meeting minutes; Dave Weathers had 3 s: 1) The first sentence on page 2 “the DOT is building up” should state “the DOT is delineating for the rec path.” 2) The first sentence on page 3 “they plan to make recommendations before the end of the year.” Who are “they”? Rob Adair said he will find out. 3) Third paragraph, line states “and he wants to know if there are any savings in that plan.” It should read “Don Johnson will review the plans to see if there are any savings.” Linda Kearney had a correction on page 1, “The key element is to use the rec path in the bypass corridor as a recreation path.”; “rec path” is redundant; the 4th line from the bottom should state “in the field” not “on the field”. Dave weathers made a motion to accept the September 13, 2017 meeting minutes as amended; seconded by Linda Kearney. Rob Adair called for a vote to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2017 meeting minutes as amended. Motion passed (5-0).
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Reports and Other Business:
 - a. Larry Garland, MWV Rec Path: Larry Garland reported that the project was recently awarded a major grant of \$1.2 Million, which is a State distribution of Federal Funds. It puts the project half way through their campaign. It means that the State DOT allows the Rec Path Project to use the By-Pass Corridor; that was confirmed by the Executive Council who voted in favor of it. Dave Weathers commented that he would expect an official announcement to come from the NH DOT stating that the By-Pass Corridor is now granted for use by the MWV Rec Path. Larry Garland said he expects a letter soon. However, discussions will continue between the State, the DOT and the Federal Highway Administration on logistical maneuvers and paperwork. Rob Adair asked if the grant application included the conceptual design that showed the path in the By-Pass Corridor. Larry Garland said he is not sure it was submitted with the application. He explained that The Rec Path Committee would like to build the path on the land that is most appropriate for their purposes. However, the understanding is, if in 25 years the State DOT decides to put a road in that location, the rec path will be literally wiped out; the reason is because when they will change the grade profiles, and with all the drainage it will destroy the rec path. The Rec Path Project Committee accepts that possibility. If that happens, they know that they will have to do some reconstruction on the rec path.

Larry Garland confirmed that the Rec Path Project has not put together all the details of the design at this time; it will evolve while working with the State. Right now the proposal is to work within the right-of-way corridor. Larry Garland presented a map of the conceptual plan, which shows a line where they will be working in the corridor. Discussion continued regarding possibilities, location and cost of the rec path.

Larry Garland spoke about the Town land involved in the project. He explained the path would begin somewhere near the border of Hemlock Lane, between the North South Road and the railroad tracks to Pudding Pond. He asked if the State took land from within the Pudding Pond Conservation Area; Rob commented that he thought they did, and gave the Town \$300,000 for a strip of land. Larry Garland explained in detail where the trail would be located on the map, including the crossing at Pudding Pond and the existing trail configuration. The Rec Path Project Committee is looking for input from the Town of Conway

Larry Garland explained two possibilities: making the trail within the railroad right of way, or making a perpendicular crossing over the railroad right of way. They chose to stay out of the railroad right of way. He pointed out the most practical crossing of the Pudding Pond area. They plan to build a raised boardwalk in the wetlands area. On the other side of the trail they decided to use existing trails, because it has a slope that is less than a 5% grade. They also did not want to take away the experience people currently enjoy as they travel the existing path. The other area being considered is near the kiosk, the existing service road access. The issue is that it's not a built road. They would have to dig down with base fill, remove stumps and then build it back up. The question is if it is acceptable to have an access from there; otherwise they will have to plan for other options. Larry Garland described the rea for a parking lot. They could improve the parking area by putting up signs and curbs, as well as making a crosswalk in that area. Larry Garland asked the Conway Conservation Commission for comments.

Dave Weathers commented that the State will like the raised walkway with the least amount of impact; he asked if the reason for crossing the railroad at the 90 degree angle is because it is favorable to Russ Seybold and his Associates, or is it because it will create a quicker crossing. Larry Garland told him that they want to have the least amount of impact on the railroad. Crossing it perpendicularly is what the railroad would like to see, and the DOT has to approve it. Dave Weathers asked how Larry would envision doing any forest management using the access off Thompson Road, and how does that impact the emergency vehicles having access. Larry Garland said the road has to be built to a standard that accepts vehicles traveling on it. Dan Lucy asked about the expense of building a paved road that will stand up to time, compared to a boardwalk. Will the boardwalk work if it goes through the wetlands? Dave Weathers stated that would be a less expensive option. Discussion continued on details of the options presented.

A question came up about the number of parking spaces in the parking area. Rob Adair said the design engineer is following the guidelines for ASTRO standards. There is a limited amount of space for parking. Dave Weathers asked about parking on the northern end; there is no other access point south until you reach the Redstone area. Larry Garland said yes, that is correct for parking access; however, there are intersecting trails for access to the trail. Rob Adair commented that from the mountain bike perspective, they encourage people to use Cranmore and Hemlock, and try to steer away from Thompson Road, because there's a limited amount of cars that can fit in the area, and the vehicles have to back out into the residential street . The

DOT would need to approve the parking design. Dan Lucy commented that if the By-Pass Highway were ever to go through the area, the parking spaces would just disappear.

Larry Garland asked the Conway Conservation Commission if they should move forward, or if there are any suggestions or alterations. He asked if there are any concerns about the Pudding Pond raised boardwalk. No one has any concerns.

Larry Garland asked if anyone has concerns about the new alignment on the land that avoids the existing paths. The Conway Conservation Commission agrees in putting a new alignment off the road, and leave the access road alone because it will save money. Dave Weather suggested doing some cutting between the boardwalk and the exiting road for sunlight penetration. He also reminded everyone that the recommendations from the Conway Conservation Commission have to be presented to the Conway Board of Selectmen. Dave summarized the plan, which is to relocate the rec path to the west in the northern section and to leave the existing trail that is already in place.

Rob Adair asked for a motion. Linda Kearney made a motion to accept the conceptual plan of using the boardwalk on the northern end to keep the exiting access separate, and of leaving the exiting trail in place. Pat Ferland seconded. Larry Garland asked about Thompson Road. Dave Weathers said the plans for that area have to be reviewed by Paul Degliangeli, because they involve an encroachment on the right of way on Thompson Road. Dan Lucy recommended keeping the path far away from the road so it doesn't require users to go down the road; they should only cross it. Larry Garland talked about the possibility of putting a crosswalk there with a sign for Pedestrian Crossing. Discussion continued on crosswalks in the Town. **Rob Adair asked for a vote to approve the motion. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0).** Rob Adair said he will schedule a time to present this discussion to the Board of Selectmen and recommendations by the Conway Conservation Commission.

- b. Forest Land Improvement: Rob Adair reported that Don Johnson called to say he could not make the meeting this evening. He gave Rob Adair his report for Whitaker Woods. The gross expense was \$40,632. There were standard deductions which were timber markings, gravel, and the Commission. The net expense was \$31,033.00, which was paid out of the budget for last year, and it allowed \$16K to be added to the Land Acquisition Account.
- c. Board of Selectmen Report: Dave Weathers stated there are no new applications and nothing to report.
- d. Conservation Lands Report: Rob Adair said he did some clearing at the Marshall Conservation Area.
- e. Round Table Discussion: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Next Conway Conservation Meeting – Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Respectfully Submitted, *Theresa Ann Gallagher* Recording Secretary