



Town of Warner, New Hampshire  
Conservation Commission  
Draft Minutes  
Warner Town Hall  
November 6, 2024, 7:00 pm  
In Person Meeting

Warner Conservation Commission (WCC) members present: Nancy Martin-Chair, Ken Cogswell, Susi von Oettingen, Michael Amaral, Alice Chamberlin, Scott Warren (alternate), Jackie Germain (alternate for Doug Allen)

Members of the public present: Michael Smith, Selectman; Harry Seidel, Selectman; Bret Ingold, James Gaffney

Meeting began at 7:01 pm

1. KCLT.org and Affordable Housing-Bret Ingold – KCLT, a community land trust balancing land conservation with affordable housing. First project is at 22 Loud Lane (Foster Farm) in Warner. One of KCLT’s priorities is to support land-based livelihoods. Explained the focus of the conservation interest in in the Mink Hills, most likely New Hampshire’s largest tract of unfragmented forested habitat south of the White Mountains. The Foster Farm property of about 40 acres would connect existing and potential future conservation easements to create a “green belt” in the Mink Hills. Mr. Ingold passed out a map of highlighting protected areas (Map 2 from the Mink Hills Recreation Study Committee Final Report) and 3 future conservation areas (one in progress) (map submitted to the files). The presentation was made to explore the WCC interest in assisting in acquiring an easement, including financial and logistical support for getting the easement built.
2. Auctionable Properties Recommendations
  - Tom Pond- Map 28; Lot 2 - on hold, needs more precise survey information regarding access, and Map 28; Lot 4-1 (across the street) – WCC recommends this lot to be sold at auction.
  - Larry Richard- Map 17; Lots 17 (0.1 acres) & 15 (6.1 acres) on Rte. 103 – both lots are attached to another lot on the other side of the Town Line with Sutton. Map 17, lot 15 is land locked. The WCC recommends these lots be sold at auction.
  - Beyond the Toll Booth- Map 22;Lot 14 (1.05 acres), Map 22;Lot 16 (0.99 acres), Map 22;Lot 17 (0.9 acres) –the Society for the Protection of Forests suggested that the Town not sell the lots at auction in order for the parcels to ultimately go to the State to add to the park. Selectman Smith will see if the Town can give the lots to the State (donation/land swap/etc) to add to the Park. The WCC recommends that the Town not auction these three lots above the Toll Booth.
  - Kearsarge Mt Rd.-Map 31; Lot 31(0.66 acres) – a buildable lot, recently used for parking for the Warner Fall Foliage Festival (Nichols field). Anecdotally, it appears that the lot was donated by Mrs. Nichols specifically for parking for the WFFF. Recommended that the

WFFF board be contacted regarding auctioning this lot. Comment was made that the lot has low conservation value. The WCC recommends that the Selectboard proceed with the auction of this lot following discussions with the WFFF board and Historical Society. All but one aye voted for this recommendation.

- Rte 103 West-Map 17; Lot 34 (0.2 acres) Map 17; Lot 4 – borders Rt. 103 and on either side of District Road by Roby Road. Suggested that the State Highways be contacted to see if there is interest in acquiring the lot. Neither lot is buildable. Recommend postponing a recommendation until after Selectman Smith talks to the State about their interest (possibly adding to a land swap) and the WCC has an opportunity to walk the lots.
  - Map 16; Lot 25 (0.4 acres) – small cabin across on Laing Bridge Lane. The WCC recommends the lot be put for auction.
  - Map 18; Lot 5 (4.7 acres) and Map 18; Lot 6 (39 acres) – steep, bouldery, abuts Stevens Brook and I89. High value as a travel corridor for wildlife. Recommend that the WCC run both lots through the Natural Resource Inventory process. In 2021, the WCC reviewed both lots through an earlier conservation criteria for auctionable properties and ranked high for conservation. The WCC recommends to the Selectboard not to auction Map 18; 5 and Map 18; Lot 6 based on high conservation value for Stevens Brook and Town Water Quality.
  - Map 18; Lot 9 (1.75 acres) – on Stevens Brook. Flat terrain. The WCC recommends the lot be walked by the WCC prior to recommending whether or not to auction the lot. Selectman Smith also recommends the WCC walk the following nearby lots 18-2, 18-9, 18-12, 18-15, 18-16 that are on the Town auctionable list. Conservation members will meet at the Police Station at 9 am, Saturday, November 9 for the walk.
3. Future Easement Addition- Jonathan Stone-Brian Hotz (SPNHF) – Nancy Martin, chair, read an email from Brian Hotz recommending that the Town not auction lots above the Toll Booth so that the State can add the acreage to the Park.
  4. Mt. Kearsarge Mountain Bike Trail-Reschedule trail hike – Nancy Martin contacted Ben Kramer regarding the potential mountain bike rail trail. Ms. Martin read an email response from Mr. Kramer (submitted to the files). Mr. Kramer has not submitted the application but does plan on submitting the application by the end of the year. Mr. Kramer is offering to lead a small group of WCC members on a portion of the trail and will contact the WCC with a date. If there is to be a walk with WCC members, the walk must be posted as a public WCC activity, and the public is invited to participate. Ms. Martin will respond to Mr. Kramer’s email with interest to hike the bottom portion of the trail, but because WCC members will be present the walk must be posted and open to the public.
  5. Water Quality Data – Barbara Marty is a team leader with the Warner stream monitoring program. Presented the water quality data on 7 streams (monitoring report submitted for the files). All streams appear to be relatively healthy. Hope to get more streams monitored earlier in the year (May and June). Suggestion was made to draft an article and include the data in the online Warner Library and Community News.
  6. Rail Trail Permitting- Response to B. Marty Letter – Discussion on the permitting process review by the WCC for this project. Ms. Marty’s letter has been submitted to the files requesting the WCC be better informed by the FCLSR. A portion of the trail is being built (parallel to I89) and questions were raised about conservation measures being implemented to protect natural resources within the river corridor. Mr. Gaffney suggested the FCLSR hold public informational hearings to update Warner residents on the project. Ms. Chamberlin

suggested inviting Tim Blagden to present an update on the trail's development. Selectman Seidel suggested a walk to highlight the conservation measures implemented to protect natural resources. Ms. Martin will ask Tim Blagden to invite members of the FCLRST board to come to the meeting and update the WCC. Ask for the information that will be provided be sent to the WCC for public input prior to the meeting.

7. Conservation Fund- Balance and future projects – Ms. Martin updated the WCC on the balance of the Conservation Fund. Suggestion was made to put the moneys in an interest bearing account. Ms. Martin read a recommendation for the moneys to be put in a NH Deposit Investment Pool through the Sugar River bank. The system would provide flexibility for spending as needed, but would provide interest on the funds. The rates for the Deposit Investment Pool change daily depending on the Fed. The Pillsbury Library does this. The Investment Pool was created by the State and banks for municipal funds to have better interest rates in combination with flexibility for spending as needed. Ms. Martin will pursue the possibility of putting the Conservation Funds in the Investment Pool.
8. Zoning Board Special Exception Application- Warner Aggregates – Zoning Board has informally received word that the application will be withdrawn.
9. Executory Interest- Blue Moon Berry Farm, BOS Decision 9/5/2024 – Selectboard voted to accept the executory interest for the conservation easement. The conservation easement is almost complete.
10. Collins Land Donation-Letter of Thanks. Ms. Martin sent WCC members a draft letter for review and incorporated the edits. All members present signed the final letter.
11. Economic Development Committee-Community Center Listening Results – Nancy Martin passed on the Listening Results to the Selectmen for review and consideration as the budget is being developed.
12. Conservation Easement Monitoring this fall – Nancy Martin brought the packs of information for conservation easement monitoring to be distributed by WCC members.
13. Housing Committee-Update- Jackie Germain – The Planning Board has taken over the document.
14. Forestry/Wetlands permits – Ken Cogswell. A few Intent to Cut permits pending on the Nevins property. There is a pending Intent to Cut permit for a proposed development off Rt 103 (between Exit 7 and 8).
15. Warner Beautification Program – Harry Seidel – Let's Shade Main Street, Plant a Tree sign. An initiative to plant trees was recently started to plant trees to shade Main Street or other streets within and near Town center. This will be a long term effort that will be funded by private donations. Because it's a long term program, the trees will need to be maintained (e.g. pruning). Suggest the Program partner with the WCC, consider using some of the Conservation Fund to assist in tree maintenance and/or a tree fund. The Division of Forest and Lands would advise the types of trees to be planted in different areas and how to take care of the trees. Thought is that a small group of volunteers would plant the trees. George Pelletteri has volunteered to advise tree planting and care as well.

16. Approve Minutes- Sept.4 – Approved.

17. Adjourned at 9:40 pm.