

Minutes

Kingston Conservation Commission

2/8/2024

Meeting called to order at 6:53 pm at the Kingston Community Library

Present: Evy Nathan, Linda Foss, Greg Senko (Zoom), Bob Smith, Charles Hart (Select Board Ex Officio - Zoom)

Excused Absences: Shaw Tilton, Marghi Bean, Elizabeth Mello

Guests: Ron Klemarczyk, Foreco
Jeff Sluder, Walt Roy

Secretary's Report:

Minutes from the 1/11/2024 meeting were reviewed. All members present accepted the minutes with no changes. A formal vote to accept these minutes and the minutes from December 2023 will be taken at the next meeting where there is a quorum.

Treasurer's Report:

Conservation Fund: \$26,151.62
(Working Balance \$12,555.62, Aquatic Invasives Reserve \$13,596.00)

Forest Fund: \$17,446.03

Evy handed out Shaw's monthly budget report. It was noted that items in the column "Spent thru 2/8/2024" should all be changed to \$0.

Valley Lane Forest Management Plan:

Ron Klemarczyk of Foreco presented the newly created maps of Valley Lane Town Forest, including the parcels that were added by warrant article in 2023. He said that the updated plan will identify three individual timber stands, each representing different forest types.

- Stand 1 is located in the newly acquired parcel which is accessed by the new White trail and is bordered by the Red trail. There are several vernal pools and a large beaver pond in this stand. It has never been logged.
- Stands 2 and 3 were logged approximately 20 years ago, before the property was designated a town forest. These stands are adequately stocked, but not overstocked. This is in part due to spongy moth damage, which has killed many of the oaks. Mr. Klemarczyk recommended that these two stands be allowed to regenerate for another 10 years before being re-evaluated for a timber harvest.
- Stand 1 has less oak mortality and could be harvested with an approximate value of \$10,000. However, access is a problem and as there are several large vernal pools, the buffer zones would considerably reduce the size of the harvest. Mr. Klemarczyk recommended that this stand be allowed to develop into old growth.
- Mr. Klemarczyk said that he would include these recommendations in the updated Forest Management Plan.

- The maps were not yet complete as they needed to be labeled. Mr. Klemarczyk will label emergency access points, including the right-of-way emergency access from 72 Hunt Road.
- Regarding wildfire risk, Mr. Klemarczyk said that most of the brush fires in New Hampshire were caused by people being careless with fire. He noted that because of the limited access there did not appear to be any popular party spots in Valley Lane.
- Mr. Klemarczyk said that invasive species are continuing to have a devastating impact on New Hampshire's forests. He presented an Aerial Damage Survey of New Hampshire forests which shows the extent of the destruction. In the past 30 years, spongy moth, hemlock woolly adelgid, emerald ash borer, and now beech leaf disease, pose an existential threat to our forests. These invasive species are becoming more prevalent and are a result of climate change and global trade. Mr. Klemarczyk added that the latest technique under consideration to eliminate non-native invasive species is through biological controls by introducing species that are natural predators.
- Mr. Klemarczyk did not observe any woolly adelgid presence on the hemlocks. He remarked that this is probably due to the extremely cold temperatures experienced in January 2023.
- He also recommended removing some of the invasive plants at the trail head.
- Mr. Klemarczyk commented on the large cellar hole that has been recently mapped by the Heritage Commission. He asked, and was assured, that any old wells in the area had been filled in to prevent injury.

Correspondence:

- An email was received reporting that the plowed snow on Sargent Road was pushed into a berm that blocked access to the trailhead parking area. Greg will follow up with Phil to see what can be done in the future to not block access.

Planning Board, DES, OEP, ZBA:

- There were no plans to comment on at the time of the meeting.
- 23 Rockrimmon Road. A copy of the letter from NH DES to the resident regarding use of excavating equipment near a wetland.
- Building permit application - Back Road. The resident is applying for a building permit on a Class 6 road. Such applications are rarely approved as these roads are not maintained for emergency access. Evy commented that the proposed building area is near a known Blandings turtle habitat area and would require NH DES and NH Fish & Game approval.
- Conservation received a copy of the SELT annual monitoring report for the Coombs farm.

New & Ongoing Business:

- Fairgrounds Study Group. Evy gave a Powerpoint presentation to the group on wildlife found on the Fairgrounds property. The group will do a site walk in February.
- Proposed Warrant article. The original warrant article was amended at town meeting as proposed by Rick Russman. The amended article passed overwhelmingly, proposing that the Conservation Commission and Fire Department work together to establish access points and routes for wildfire control in the town forests.

- Prime Wetlands. Evy presented a list of potential areas to consider for Prime Wetlands designation. The list includes Camp Lincoln, Bayberry Pond, Folly Brook, and the area to the south of the Tucker & French Family Forest. Members to study these areas and decide which property to target in 2024.
- Town forest emergency and fire access. Evy ask Greg to meet with Chief Pellerin when Greg returns in the spring.

Pollinator Pathways:

- The Abenaki Medicinal Pollinator Plant workshop will be held at the library on Saturday February 10.
- PPNH will present to the Greenland Conservation Commission next Wednesday.
- PPNH will present to the Newmarket Conservation Commission in March.
- PPNH is planning a presentation at Castle in the Clouds this summer.
- The Seed Library is stocked and ready for events. Members have helped to organize the seed bank at Evy's home.
- A Phillips Exeter Academy student has requested assistance from PPNH for a seed library project in Exeter.

Old Business/Bucket List:

- Edit and reprint Trail Passport for Youth.
- Book of Conserved Properties/Granit – Evy has requested help.
- Handout for town: Land use regulations and water protection, start with one next year.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Next meeting Thursday, February 8, 6:45pm

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Foss, Secretary