

Windham Forestry Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 20, 2015

ATTENDANCE:

Wanda Rice – Chair
Norman Babineau – Vice Chair
Holly Hanford Oliver – Secretary
Wayne Morris – Conservation Commission
James Finn – Conservation Commission (excused)

Wanda called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm.

DISCUSSION:

Our meeting was attended by a reporter from the Union Leader writing a story on Windham forestry.

Wayne motioned to approve the Oct 23 Meeting Minutes, Wanda seconded. Motion was approved 4-0-0.

Harvest update – Wanda reported the intent to cut has been filed. The road and landing were nearly complete, boulders in place around the landing, but it may need to expand based on operations. Skid trails to the south marked. Jack McCartney has moved dirt piles around at the landfill. Skidders possibly starting next week. Access road cleared with concrete blocks strategically placed around the perimeter of the landfill cap.

Harvest info signs – Wanda, Norm, and Holly posted signs on trailheads to let people know about the harvest.

BOS update – Norm said BOS was receptive and appreciative of being kept informed on harvest.

Newspaper articles – Wayne and Holly working on them, Norm to write one on harvest activities.

Status of merging lots – Wayne said merging had been approved at the BOS meeting, and just needed the chairman's notarized signature.

Forestry Fund report – Wanda asked Dave to provide account number info to Forestry Committee, Dave denied request but will supply updates. Wanda will follow up about getting a report. Wanda feels a spreadsheet of our own might be helpful for cross checking.

Tree Farm designation – Wanda working on it with Mike Powers.

Warrant article for 2016 – Dave will be submitting to BOS as we discussed at our last meeting.

NHTOA Pelham workshop review – Wanda and Norm attended and recapped. Field experts discussed wildlife habitat, including site for New England Cottontails, invasive species control, ADA trails and trail maintenance, as well as general forest stewardship. Norm brought materials to share with committee. Wanda and Norm had a chance to talk with some Pelham Forestry Committee members about their experiences which could prove useful in the future.

HDHC cellar hole workshop – Norm attended at Windham Depot and discussed topics. HDHC may want to formally document historic sites in town. NH Archeologist suggest leaving cellar holes as is – hands-off approach. Minimize impact. Something to consider with our project and the McIlvaine foundation. Since trees along the edge are damaging the stone foundation walls, it has been discussed with HDHC to remove these trees.

Long-term project planning – Wanda wants us to consider a long-range plan for forestry fund projects.

Motorized vehicle usage planning – Wanda would like the Committee to consider sending blanket letters and maps to neighbors, especially on Settlers Ridge, Poplar, Sagamore and Glen Dennin Roads, about ATV usage in the town forest. Wanda will contact the Fieldstone Woods Homeowners Association for their support. Norm to create draft letter for review.

Khan property (23 Osgood Road) buffer email request – Originally buffer was 74' from property boundary, Mike and Wanda extended and flagged a new buffer at 183' from property line in the immediate vicinity of the house to address privacy and noise concerns raised by Mr. Khan. Wanda and Norm met with Mr. Khan to review the extended buffer but he would like an additional 163' of buffer added. Norm read his Nov 20 email letter to the committee into the record. Discussed request for additional buffer to ridgeline. Norm would like to foster good relations and provide the additional buffer. Further discussion on neighboring buffers. Holly is concerned with setting a precedent for one neighbor. Wayne pointed out that neighboring property buffers are due to topology and wetland constraints. Wanda mentioned our already relocating access road for Osgood residents and away from his property. Norm motioned to honor the additional buffer request, no second. Wayne motioned to keep proposed buffer at 183', as laid out by the forester and chairman, Holly seconded. Norm again expressed his reasons for opposition. Holly and Wanda felt the compromise buffer is acceptable. Wanda wonders about the safety of large pine trees leaning toward his house and if we should ask again about removal. Wayne left to check with Dave Sullivan about town liability issues regarding overhanging trees. Wayne returned to say Dave would be joining us to discuss liability.

Timeline updates while waiting for Dave – Norm reviewed and made updates to harvesting activities.

Dave joined meeting and replied “hazardous” trees should be removed from along the Khan property if they exist. If Mr. Khan does not want them removed the only recourse is for Mr. Khan to sign a hold harmless agreement so as not to hold the town liable. Dave suggests having the forester advise whether trees are healthy or not. If no un-healthy or hazardous trees are found, then no need to remove them, or provide additional notice to the neighbor. Various methods of removing trees along the buffer were discussed. Existing motion on the floor to keep the buffer at 183' approved 3-1-0. Norm was opposed. Wanda will meet with Mike to examine boundary trees before replying to Mr. Khan's email.

Wanda was curious on the status of the state land south of the town forest. Wayne said state is exploring property status with Fish and Game. Wayne sent a letter to the state indicating the town was willing to actively manage this property if it were donated to the town with the existing

easements. Wayne is also exploring the possibility of trails connecting this property to the town forest.

Wayne motioned to adjourn, Wanda seconded. Motion approved 4-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 2:38 pm.

Next meeting is planned for Friday, December 18 at 1:00 pm in the CDD room.

Forest Management Timeline Update (11/23/15)

EVENT	TIMING	OWNER	STATUS
Competitive bidding on forest management	Completed Fall 2014	Committee	BSF bid approved 12/5
Post tree hunting stands for removal	Completed Fall 2014	Wanda/Norm/Holly	2 Stands Posted, +1 at Osgood
Submit 2014 annual town/state reports	Completed Winter 2014-15	Norm/Wanda	Town and State submitted
Removal of any remaining tree hunting stands	Completed Winter 2014-15	Norm/Wanda	2 Stands Removed 3/6
Letter to CCD for notification and technical review	Completed Winter 2014-15	Wanda	Wanda delivered
General article on forest management benefits	Completed Winter 2014-15	Wanda	Wanda published
Mark trees to be harvested	Completed Spring 2015	Forester	Weeks of 3/16 - 4/21
Newspaper/web article about forest wildlife	Completed Spring 2015	Committee	Wanda published vernal info
BOS approval to use Landfill for access landing	Completed Spring 2015	Wanda/Committee	5/18 BOS meeting
Newspaper/web article with status and goals	Completed Spring 2015	Wanda	Wanda published Silviculture
CDD Technical Review Committee	Completed Spring 2015	Wanda/Committee	5/26 Meeting
Public Forestry Workshop & Education	Completed Spring 2015	Committee	6/2 Meeting
Planning Board public hearing	Completed Spring 2015	Wanda/Committee	6/17 Hearing
Post "No Motorized Vehicles" signs	Completed Spring 2015	Wanda	6/19 (4) signs
Harvest logger bid process initiated	Completed Summer 2015	Forester	6/23 Viewing
Remove hunting stand near Corliss	Completed Summer 2015	Wanda/Norm	6/29 Eric R. assisted
Approve logger high bid.	Completed Summer 2015	Committee	7/10 Meeting
Sign logger contract	Completed Summer 2015	Wanda	8/6 Signed contract
File intent to cut with town	Completed Summer 2015	Forester	Mike submitted
File wetlands impact forestry notification	Completed Summer 2015	Forester	Mike submitted, ok rec from DES
Harvesting activities	Fall 2015	Forester/Logger	Started in Nov
Send out letters to neighbors for a forest tour	Fall 2015	Forester/Committee	Post harvest?
2016 town warrant article	Fall 2015	Committee	Wanda to submit draft to Dave
2016 Budget to fund memberships, workshops, etc.	Completed Fall 2015	Committee	Town \$ from existing budgets
Submit 2015 annual town/state reports	Winter 2015-16	Committee	