

Conservation Commission Open Space Sub-Committee Meeting
Public Minutes
June 11, 2024

Members Present: Becky Dunham (Conservation Commission Chair), Heather Dudley-Tatman, Robin Wrighton, Rob Wofchuck, Jeff Dvorak, Lise McNaughton

Dunham called the meeting to order at 4:23pm.

Members introduced themselves with their background and conservation easement experience.

Dunham reviewed the agenda, the current list of land in conservation and other materials in the from the prior open space committee.

Discussed public outreach and use of pamphlets, the Brentwood Newsletter, the town website, presentations, and social media. The Town of East Kingston is having a Conservation Easement Panel and Q&A on June 12 at 5pm.

Reviewed the existing conservation easement on the 2017 Map. Dvorak to highlight top the properties existing priority list. The priority list was not reviewed but the ranking system for the priority list was. It was identified that a few changes have been made in town such as the addition of scenic roads, the designation of Prime Wetlands, the preparation of the Wildlife Action Plan the should be added to the ranking system.

Discussed use of a consultant. Dunham stated that the conservation commission had been working on this and has selected Anna Boudreau, but she is not under contract yet. The contract has not been submitted to the Town for review and her contract requires a retainer. The members discussed and having the availability of a consultant was important.

There was a discussion on should the town hold or accept conservation easements. A discussion on the obligations on holding and easement followed. Wofchuck mentioned that most all conservation trusts now require money to go into a stewardship fund to meet these obligations. There was also a discussion that if the town was going to hold easements that standard easement language should be prepared so that it could be presented to landowner early in the process. These will need to be thought thru more and presented to the Selectmen.

The committee discussed communication with new owners of properties with conservation easements. The committee thought a letter from the committee might be helpful for getting ahead of problems with activities not allowed by conservation easements. The letter would

remind the new landowner of their conservation easement, notify them that it is recognized by the town, and provide links to some resources that may be helpful.

The committee also thought an annual letter to the existing conservation easement land owners may be useful. Can serve as a reminder to review their easement language and perhaps provide outreach for neighbors or other people.

The next Open Space Meeting will be June 28th at 4:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10pm.