

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Public Minutes
August 14, 2024**

Members Present: Becky Dunham (Chair), Bob Stephens (Vice Chair), Lise McNaughton, Michelle Siudut, Rob Wofchuck, Matt Lipinski (Secretary), Patrick Marcoux (Alternate), Doug Cowie (Alternate), Andy Laroche (Alternate), Heather Dudley-Tatman (Alternate), Emma Laham (Alternate), Paul Kleinman (Selectboard Rep) – arrived 6:35.

Chairman Dunham called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Agenda Items (Item numbers correspond to the sequence shown on posted agenda)

1. **Welcome and Introduction:** Dunham welcomed our new/reappointed members and alternates, as recently approved by the Selectboard:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Michelle Siudut	Member	June 30, 2027
Rob Wofchuck	Member	June 30, 2027
Andy Laroche	Alternate	June 30, 2027
Patrick Marcoux	Alternate	June 30, 2027
Heather Dudley-Tatman	Alternate	June 30, 2026
Emma Laham	Alternate	June 30, 2026
Doug Cowie	Alternate	June 30, 2025

Motion by Wofchuck to make newly appointed alternates Dudley-Tatman and Laham voting members for this meeting. Dunham suggested it may be better to let them observe their first meeting. Wofchuck withdrew his motion. Siudut moved to make Marcoux a voting member at tonight's meeting. Lipinski seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Upon arrival of Kleinman, Marcoux opted out of being a voting member tonight in favor of regular member Kleinman.

4. **Presentation by Brian Hotz, Society for the Protection of NH Forests (via videoconference):** Brian gave a comprehensive presentation on the mission and work of the Society, its various roles and operations. The Society serves as a land trust entity, similar to SELT and others, and either directly owns or holds conservation easements on numerous properties throughout the state. It is financed through a large, almost entirely privately funded, endowment (no federal or state funds), and maintains a small, fulltime staff. Brian then discussed its easement documents and how much more specific they have gotten over time. He noted they are a significant improvement over prior versions and are substantially consistent with those used by SELT and others. In taking questions from the Commissioners and the public, Brian urged assessing each conservation case independently in terms of property vs easement ownership, whether to use land trusts to manage easements, and other

considerations such as easement terms. After addressing other questions, the presentation was concluded. The Commission thanked Brian for his very informative presentation.

5. **R. E. Prescott Project:** As a follow up to his presentation at our last meeting, Brendan Quigley of Gove Environmental provided an update on the project plan relating to the buffer zone waiver request previously discussed, and continued to seek Commission concurrence to support granting the waiver. Bruce Scamman of Emanuel Engineering also presented an updated overall plan of the project. The basic problem in designing this project was that runoff from the highway was flowing into an existing pond which, in turn, flowed into the wetlands area behind the existing buildings and parking lot. An extensive construction and mitigation plan was developed which would raise the entire site by four feet, install comprehensive water treatment capabilities, relocate the leech field, and ensure that only fully treated water would migrate into the wetlands. Significant discussion ensued and after questions from the Commission and the audience were fully addressed, Lipinski moved that the Commission concur with granting the requested waiver set forth in Gove Environmental's letter dated August 9, 2024, to the Commission Chair. Siudut seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Upon request by Scamman that the Commission offer its concurrence with the overall project plan, Lipinski moved that the Commission express its concurrence with the overall project design as presented by Emanuel Engineering to the Commission at tonight's meeting. McNaughton seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
2. **Minutes Review:** Review of the draft Minutes from the July 10, 2024 Commission meeting. One typographical error was noted. Motion by Wofchuck and second by Kleinman to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was approved 5-0 with McNaughton and Siudut abstaining.
3. **Bills & Reimbursements:** None.
6. **MTI Polyexe site walk:** The site walk is scheduled for August 24, 2024 at 9:00AM. Dunham and other Commissioners will attend.
7. **Old Business**
 - a. **Conservation Commission Handbook Update:** The Commissioners were provided the updated handbook draft at last month's meeting and asked to review for potential approval this month. Following discussion on reformatting Exhibit 3, Wofchuck moved to approve the updated draft and adopt the handbook subject to such reformatting, which will be completed by Siudut. McNaughton seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
 - b. **Open Space Subcommittee:** Dunham provided a report on the subcommittee's activities. She also reported that the proposed consultant contract was moving forward,

that a SOW was being drafted, and all would be reviewed by the subcommittee before presenting them to the Commission.

8. **New Business**

- a. **New Easement Inquiries:** None.
- b. **DOT Permit Application:** DOT has applied for a permit to spray for invaders along Dudley Brook. That will take place later this summer or fall.
- c. **NHACC Spring Intern Grant:** Dunham distributed information about the availability of funding for interns. She encouraged Commissioners to attend the free workshop on August 23, 2024 in Hancock, NH, and the NHACC annual meeting on November 2, 2024 at Pembroke Academy.
- d. **Trails:** Dunham and others plan to walk the existing trails in Brentwood to check conditions and other site details. She also made Commissioners aware of a NH Coastal Access Map, which identifies existing trails throughout the area.

9. **Other Business:**

- a. **Next Meeting:** Dunham advised that the next Commission meeting will be on September 11, 2024.
- b. **Questions and Announcements:** Wofchuck inquired about progress on improvements to fields, removal of existing fencing, and completing cleanup. Dunham suggested Wofchuck lead that effort, including applying for grants in order to help subsidize it. Wofchuck agreed. Siudut will lead efforts to update conservation databases under the Granit Project.

Upon motion by Stephens, second by Kleinman, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50pm.