

# Town of Randolph

## Conservation Commission

Minutes of November 15, 2023

**Members Present:** Gary Newfield, Jennifer Barton-Scaranza, Brandy Capozello, Nathan Peters, Philip Guiser, Michele Cormier (Selectman's Representative)

**Members Excused:** Walter Graff

**Public:** Mark Kelley, Randolph Forest Commission; June Hammond Rowan, Randolph Planning Board; Shelli Fortin, Minutes Taker

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Gary Newfield

### Approval of Minutes

**On a motion by Nathan Peters, seconded by Phil Guiser, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of February 16, 2023.**

### Donation of Land from John and Mary Brown

Gary Newfield stated that John and Mary Brown would like to donate 52.83 acres to the Town of Randolph for conservation purposes. The Brown's would retain the driveway and 17.52 acres around the house, and the remainder would become part of the parcel donated by John and Mary Berry with a lot line adjustment. The lot cannot be separate as there is no road frontage. If the Conservation Commission agrees to accept the donation, it will then go to the Selectboard for approval, and then to the Town Meeting for the voters to approve to add it to the Town Forest.

A member asked if this was the parcel that was recently logged and was advised it was not. The parcel that was logged was on Broadacres. Mark Kelley advised that this donation will protect some major sections of trails that cross the property, including the Diagonal and Beeline. Carlton Brook is also on the property. The parcels were originally together in the 1980's as part of the Boothman estate. This donation will connect the High Acres area to Durand Road.

**On a motion by Phil Guiser, seconded by Nathan Peters, the Commission voted unanimously to accept the donation of land from John and Mary Brown, R11 Lot 3 off High Acres Road, to the Town of Randolph, R11 Lot 13.**

### Wildlife Crossing

Gary Newfield provided an update on the proposed wildlife crossing on Route 2. Walter Graff advised there will be a meeting on November 22, and since Mr. Graff is unable to go, Mr. Newfield will attend. There are two alternatives, one by the Farrar property and one by

Bowman. The area by the Farrar property would allow a 15-foot tunnel, which NHFG advised is preferred by moose. The area west of Bowman is six feet high. They have discussed lights in the Bowman area with motion detectors to warn motorists. The NH Audubon Society is spearheading this effort, and NHDOT is in favor and hoping it will be a gateway to other possible crossings in the state. The Audubon Society will be meeting with the Selectman on December 11 to discuss the project.

Mark Kelley noted that of the 12 accidents that White Mountain Lumber has had with moose, most were on Route 115, and feels that there should be more research. Mr. Newfield advised it is still a work in progress. It was noted the crossing will be for a host of species, not just moose.

### **Eversource Project**

Gary Newfield advised plans were received from Eversource to replace the remaining wooden poles with steel towers along the main power lines from Whitefield to Gorham. The steel towers will be four feet taller than the wooden poles were. Some residents were worried that they will be visible in their view since they are taller. Brandy Capozello asked about the red lights on the lines, and it was assumed these were probably due to the airport in that vicinity. Phil Guiser asked if this will increase transmission, and Gary Newfield advised there was no mention of that in the plan. It was suggested that the replacement is probably because the old wooden poles are deteriorating and that steel will be less maintenance.

### **OHRV Use**

Nathan Peters asked if OHRV's are allowed on the Town Forest, as someone from the Waumbek Methna Snowmobile Club has been seen by a resident using one. Mark Kelley advised it is allowed when doing maintenance on the trails, and Mr. Kelley will send a note to the club president reminding him that it is only allowed while doing maintenance.

### **Invasive Species**

Jennifer Barton-Scarizza asked about Japanese Knotweed and noted how it has spread with the work on Durand Road. Gary Newfield advised that Joel White from Lancaster is working on being certified to use Round-Up and wondered if the town would be interested in hiring someone for Durand Road. Michelle Cormier noted that it is on their radar and she would love to see a concerted effort to control this problem.

**Adjournment: On a motion from Jennifer Barton-Scarizza, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Shelli Fortin

November 16, 2023